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The Manichaeans of the Roman East: Manichaeism in Greek anti-Manichaica & Roman Imperial legislation

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Chapter 2: The Arrival and Spread of Manichaeism in the Roman East

Manichaeans ... have but recently advanced or sprung forth ... from their native homes among the Persians ... and have settled in this part of the world ... disturbing the tranquillity of the peoples and causing the gravest injuries to the civic communities. (Rescript of Diocletian)¹

This sect is widely reported and is talked of in many parts of the world, and as I said, owes its worldwide spread to a man named Mani. (Epiphanius of Salamis)²

2.1 Introduction

After introducing the two basic textual traditions and tracing their remnants in the Greek anti-Manichaean corpus, this chapter examines how the anti-Manichaean writers portrayed Mani and outlined the arrival and efforts of the first Manichaean missionaries on Roman soil. In particular, the issues that will be discussed in this chapter are: (1) the portrait of Mani and of Manichaeism, (2) the books of the Manichaean canon, (3) the grades of the Manichaean hierarchy, (4) the first Manichaean missionaries and their mission, (5) the ways Manichaeans diffused into Roman territories and, finally, (6) the methods and strategies (epistles, debates, etc.) used by Manichaean missionaries. In specific, this chapter discusses the setting of the debates, whereas the themes disputed during these debates (dualism, the Manichaean pantheon, cosmogony, anthropogony/logy and ethics) will be examined in ch.[5].

By building my analysis on the axes of the two basic textual traditions (the AA and the AFs), I will investigate and compare the presentation of the abovementioned topics in the two central lines of tradition, in the earlier sources, as well as in sources that constitute their own tradition (Titus of Bostra and Heraclian of Chalcedon). The comparative approach used in this chapter aims to reconstruct a picture of Manichaeism and Manichaean mission by drawing upon all extant sources which complement each other. Thus, the interdependence of the sources will emerge, their differences will be pointed out, and their case-by-case reliability will be assessed. Moreover, the aforementioned Greek anti-Manichaean sources will be examined in light of the genuine Manichaean sources and complemented by the Latin, Syriac and Arabic whenever relevant material exists.

2.2 The First Reports about Mani and Manichaean Missionaries

2.2.1 Portrait of Mani and of Manichaeism Before the *Acta*

Zosimus of Panopolis (third-fourth cent.) was an Egyptian alchemist, recognized by his contemporaries “as one of the greatest representatives of Greek alchemy”, who “enjoyed immense prestige by his successors who quoted him on every occasion”.³ Researchers have associated an enigma set by Zosimus in one of his works with Mani. As Zosimus states, in his

¹ *Mosaicarum et Romanorum Legum Collatio* 15.3 in Hyamson 1913, 130-33 (trans. in Gardner and Lieu 2004, 117-18).

² Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.1.3 (Williams, 227). For the original text in Greek see section 2.6.

³ Mertens (1995/2002), xi.

treatise entitled *On the Letter Omega*, the imitator and rival daemon (ἀντίμιμος δαίμων/*antimimos daimōn*), who calls himself son of God (λέγων ἑαυτὸν υἱὸν θεοῦ), before his advent, dispatched a precursor from Persia (πρόδρομον ἀπὸ τῆς Περσίδος), who, through his fictitious and deceptive speeches (μυθοπλάνους λόγους), attempted to mislead men, instructing them to believe in destiny (εἰμαρμένην). Rather than naming the Persian precursor of the imitator demon, Zosimus challenges his readers to guess his name by giving them the following riddle: his name consists of nine letters, two of which comprise a diphthong as is the case of the term ‘destiny’/‘εἰμαρμένη’.⁴

This has generally been taken as a reference to Mani’s name in its Greek form (i.e. Manichaios: Μανιχαῖος), a reading that fulfils the conditions of the number of letters and the diphthong (αι). Additional facts supporting this interpretation are: (1) the text says that this person comes from Persia. Both Greek and Latin authors of the era emphasized Mani’s Persian origin; (2) Mani claimed that he was the Paraclete, something that fits with the text which says that the imitator daemon will introduce himself as the son of God (the Paraclete was to be sent by the son of God); and (3) anti-Manichaean literature presents Mani as believing in destiny, as does Zosimus’ mysterious figure.⁵

Rescript of Diocletian

One of the first Roman testimonies which records the arrival of Manichaeism in the Roman territory is the famous rescript of Diocletian.⁶

During one of his visits to Alexandria, Diocletian sent this letter to Julian, the Proconsul of Africa, in response to a petition of the latter. The year is missing from the text, and from among the proposed possible dates (287, 297, 302 and 307) the majority of scholars now consider the year 302 (31 March) as the most likely. That is, just a year before the great persecution against the Christians broke out.⁷ The discussion surrounding the authenticity of the rescript is gargantuan; however, the dominant interpretation in the current academic discourse favours its authenticity.⁸ The letter is preserved in the *Collatio* or *Lex Dei*, which

⁴ Zosimus of Panopolis, *On the letter omega*, §14 (Mertens, 1995/2002, 1-11, 7): Εἰσὶ δὲ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ ἑννέα, τῆς διφθόγγου σωζομένης, κατὰ τὸν τῆς εἰμαρμένης ὅρον. See also Jackson’s (1978) edition and translation *Zosimos of Panopolis. On the letter omega*. Stroumsa (1984, 142-43) investigating the origins of the myth, suggests that the figure of *antimimos daimōn* in Zosimus’ text is a transformation of (another form for) the Gnostic leader of the archons into the false Son of God *par excellence*. Interestingly, he remarks that “the idea of imitation is also associated with the King of Darkness and with Sakla in Manichaean contexts”.

⁵ See Mertens 1995/2002, 106-09, fn. 93.

⁶ *Mosaicarum et Romanorum Legum Collatio* 15.3 (*De maleficis et Manichaeis*) (Hyamson 1913, 130-33); Cf. Adam 1954/1969, 82-84; Gardner and Lieu 2004, 116-18; Lieu 2010, 40-41, 163. For a definition and the system of rescripts, see Tony Honoré 1979, 52-56, 52: “Rescripts were not legislative. Though very occasionally they purport to derogate from existing law by granting an indulgence, they never purport to change it. They simply declare what the law is. Nor do they have the force of a judgment, or any other executive force”, and Corcoran 1996, 43-122, esp. 48-49: “a subscriptio or private rescript can be called a *lex*, but is only authoritative for a particular case, being neither precedential nor innovative. [...] Rescripts do not legislate. They do not seek to change the law. Rather they seek to make an authoritative, or even definitive, exposition of what the law already is”.

⁷ Coleman-Norton 1966, 334; Corcoran 1996, 135. Lieu and Gardner 2004, 116-118. Lieu 2010, 163. Edwards 2015, 141.

⁸ The authenticity of the rescript has been supported by many eminent legal historians. Yet, there are still other historians who challenge it. Concerning the question of authenticity, see Minale 2013, 17-128. Seston 1940, 345-54; Schwartz 1913, 50f. According to Lieu (2010, 163): “The authenticity of the rescript [...] is without doubt”.

reports that it originates from the seventh book of the *Codex Gregorianus* under the heading of “Sorcerers and Manichaeans”.⁹ The text runs as follows:

The Emperors Diocletian and Maximianus (and Constantius) and Maximianus (i.e. Galerius) to Julianus, Proconsul of Africa. Well-beloved Julianus:

(1) Excessive leisure sometimes incites ill-conditioned people to transgress the limits of nature, and persuades them to introduce empty and scandalous kinds of superstitious doctrine, so that many others are lured on to acknowledge the authority of their erroneous notions. (2) However, the immortal gods, in their providence, have thought fit to ordain that the principles of virtue and truth should, by the counsel and deliberations of many good, great and wise men, be approved and established in their integrity. These principles it is not right to oppose or resist, nor ought the ancient religion be subjected to the censure of a new creed. It is indeed highly criminal to discuss doctrines once and for all settled and defined by our forefathers, and which have their recognised place and course in our system. (3) Wherefore we are resolutely determined to punish the stubborn depravity of these worthless people. (4) As regards the Manichaeans, concerning whom your carefulness has reported to our serenity, who, in opposition to the older creeds, set up new and unheard-of sects, purposing in their wickedness to cast out the doctrines vouchsafed to us by divine favour in older times, we have heard that they have but recently advanced or sprung forth, like strange and monstrous portents, from their native homes among the Persians – a nation hostile to us – and have settled in this part of the world, where they are perpetrating many evil deeds, disturbing the tranquillity of the peoples and causing the gravest injuries to the civic communities; and there is danger that, in process of time, they will endeavour, as is their usual practice, to infect the innocent, orderly and tranquil Roman people, as well as the whole of our empire, with the damnable customs and perverse laws of the Persians as with the poison of a malignant serpent. (5) And since all that your prudence has set out in detail in your report of their religion shows that what our laws regard as their misdeeds are clearly the offspring of a fantastic and lying imagination [...] we have appointed pains and punishments due and fitting for these people. (6) We order that the authors and leaders of these sects be subjected to severe punishment, and, together with their abominable writings, burnt in the flames. We direct that their followers, if they continue recalcitrant, shall suffer capital punishment, and their goods be forfeited to the imperial treasury. (7) And if those who have gone over to that hitherto unheard-of, scandalous and wholly infamous creed, or to that of the Persians, are persons who hold public office, or are of any rank or of superior social status, you will see to it that their estates are confiscated and the offenders sent to the (quarry) at Phaeno or the mines at Proconnesus. (8) And in order that this plague of iniquity shall be completely extirpated from this our most happy age, let your devotion hasten to carry out our orders and commands.

Given at Alexandria, 31 March.¹⁰

Diocletian's fears

Three key issues are highlighted by the rescript:

(1) *The Persian origin*: The rescript depicts Manichaeism as a foreign religion, indeed, as a religion which comes from Persia, the arch-enemy of Rome at that time. The Persian origin of Manichaeism is emphatically stressed, as is the idea that Persia is “a nation hostile” to the Roman Empire. The projected imagery is that of a “malignant serpent” which has “advanced or sprung forth” from Persia and “settled in this part of the world [Roman Empire]”, which threatens to infect the Roman citizens with its poison.

⁹ Adam 1954/1969, 82; Baviera et al. 1940.

¹⁰ The above translation is from *Collatio Mosaicarum* 15.3, ed. and trans. by Hyamson (1913), 130–33, revised by Lieu in Gardner and Lieu 2004, 116–18 (for a further revised translation, see Lieu 2010, 40–41).

(2) *The vice of the new Perso-Manichaean religion threatens the virtue of the ancient Roman religion*: The entire rhetoric of the rescript seeks to highlight the superiority of Roman laws, principles, mores (“ancient Roman virtue”), by contrasting them with the respective Manichaean ones: identified as those of the Persians (“new Persian vice”).¹¹ The Manichaeans with their laws (perverse), doctrines (erroneous, superstitious, scandalous and wholly infamous creed), customs (damnable), and misdeeds (the offspring of a fantastic and lying imagination) disturb “the innocent, orderly and tranquil Roman people”, “causing the gravest injuries to the civic communities”. The question could be posed as to why Diocletian had such a problem with the Manichaeans, while he does not seem to be troubled by oriental mystery cults or Mithraism, which were also believed to have come from Persia?¹² The answer to this question relies on the third thematic axis upon which the rescript of Diocletian focuses.

(3) *The Manichaean religion aimed to substitute the ancient Roman religion*: A more careful reading of the rescript brings to light that the Manichaeans, as opposed “to the older creeds”, and apart from “importing ‘Persian customs’ aimed to substitute the ‘ancient religion’ (i.e. the ‘approved and established’ ... ‘principles of virtue and truth’, ‘the doctrines vouchsafed to us [Rome] by divine favour in older times’) for ‘new and unheard-of sects [creed]’”. For Diocletian, the latter probably meant that the Manichaeans, like the Christians and Jews, demanded exclusivity from their followers.¹³ This undermined the moral welfare and the security of the Empire. As Diocletian makes clear from the beginning of his rescript “It is indeed highly criminal to discuss doctrines once and for all settled and defined by our forefathers, and which have their recognised place and course in our system”.

As Lieu comments, “an air of patriotic conservatism [...] permeates Diocletian’s rescript”.¹⁴ According to the Roman political thought of the era, substituting “new gods for old” meant that people would be persuaded “to accept different laws and customs (ἀλλοτριονομεῖν)” which, in turn, was interconnected with the outbreak of “conspiracies and rebellions which would be injurious to the empire”.¹⁵ Since the rescript mentions that there already were many who had been “lured on to acknowledge the authority of” the principles of this unheard-of religion, Diocletian’s fear, was (in his words) that “there is danger that, in process of time, they [Manichaeans] will endeavour, as is their usual practice, to infect ... the whole of our empire”. In order to prevent this Manichaean tactic and extirpate “this plague of iniquity”, Diocletian enacted very harsh sentences for Manichaeans and ordered Julian (acknowledging his devotion) to hasten their enforcement.¹⁶

Diocletian’s fears: real or imagined?

Lieu, commenting on the rescript, argues that Diocletian’s fears were “more imaginary than real” since he seems to ignore “that the Manichaeans who flocked into the Roman Empire at the turn of the third century” were persecuted by Persian rulers, so it is unlikely that (at the same time) they were Persian secret agents.¹⁷

¹¹ Corcoran 1996, 136. Cf. Corcoran 2015, 75-76.

¹² Cf. Lieu 1992, 122-23.

¹³ Lieu 1992, 123, 146; Edwards 2015, 141. On the sense of exclusiveness/exclusivity cf. Baker-Brian 2011, 31, 53; Franzmann 2017, 76-81.

¹⁴ Lieu 1992, 123. Cf. Coleman-Norton 1966, 1:333.

¹⁵ Lieu 1992, 123.

¹⁶ According to the rescript, the leaders, with their books, had to be burnt; their adherents who would not recant were also put to death. I shall return to the issue of punishments in next chapter (section 3.3.3).

¹⁷ Lieu 1992, 122.

However, the latter is not mentioned explicitly in the rescript. The emphasis is on the corruption of the Roman morals from Persian customs, something that in the long run was believed to undermine the security of the empire. Further, from a Roman perspective, the fact that Manichaeans were persecuted by some Persian kings did not mean that Manichaeism ceased to be considered as a Persian religion. This is especially the case since there were other Persian kings who had patronized Mani; it was known (at least to one Greek anti-Manichaean author) that Mani was a member of the entourage of Shapur I.¹⁸ Worth noting is that during the reign of Narses (293-302), the policy of persecutions ceased. Dignas (following Frye) correlates this change of Persian policy with Diocletian's rescript, arguing that the former took place in order "to secure the support of Manichaeans in the Roman Empire", so that they could "be used in the battle against Rome".¹⁹ In any case, judging from the subsequent literature and legislation, it seems that Diocletian's fears regarding the corruption of the entire empire by Manichaean practices were shared by Christian emperors of the following centuries. The Manichaeans continued for many years to be considered as the most dangerous corrupters of Roman citizens.

As expressed directly in the rescript, Diocletian derives his information about the Manichaean "religion" from Julian's detailed report: "Well-beloved Julianus [...]. As regards the Manichaeans, concerning whom your carefulness has reported to our serenity [...]. And since all that your prudence has set out in detail in your report of their religion [...]. Yet, apart from the abusive characterizations (superstitious, scandalous, and wholly infamous), the rescript does not record the misdeeds and the doctrines themselves which Julian apparently reported in detail to Diocletian. The content of Julian's report remains unknown.

However, as is also illustrated in the rescript, Diocletian also seems to "have heard" about Manichaeans and their recent arrival in Roman territories from elsewhere.²⁰ It seems that the arrival and spread of Manichaeans became a general issue at that time in Egypt; roughly contemporary with Diocletian's rescript and Zosimus' enigma are two other sources written by Egyptian authors.

One of them is the work of the philosopher Alexander of Lycopolis, the only extant treatise against Manichaeans by a pagan author. In the beginning of his work, Alexander introduces Mani and Manichaeism stating, "Manichaeus himself is said to have lived during the reign of Valerianus [253–260 CE] and to have accompanied Shapur the Persian king [240–272/3 CE] during his military campaigns" against Rome,²¹ something that the *magoi*

¹⁸ See below, Alexander of Lycopolis, *Tract. Man.* 2.5-12.

¹⁹ Both Dignas and Frye date the rescript in 297. Dignas and Winter 2007, 27-28: "However, it is remarkable that persecutions of the Manichaeans ceased in Persia after 297 in order that their support could be used in the battle against Rome". Frye 1983, 131: "The religious policy of persecution of the Manichaeans, for one thing, changed to toleration under Narseh. This change may have been induced by Narseh's desire to secure the support of Manichaeans in the Roman empire, for in 297 in Alexandria Diocletian issued an edict against the propaganda of the Manichaeans".

²⁰ "As regards the Manichaeans, concerning whom your carefulness has reported to our serenity, we have heard that they have but recently advanced or sprung forth". See also Corcoran 1996, 136.

²¹ Alexander of Lycopolis, *Tract. Man.* 2.5-12 (Van der Horst and Mansfeld, 52): Μάνης ὡσπερ ὁ λεγόμενος Μανιχαῖος, ὃς Πέρσης μὲν τίς ἐστιν τὸ γένος, [...] αὐτὸς δὲ ἐπὶ Οὐαλεριανοῦ μὲν γεγονέναι λέγεται, συστρατεῦσαι Σαπῶρῳ τῷ Πέρσῃ. *1Keph.* 16.1: I a[pp]eared before Shapur the king. [...] He gave me permission to journey in [... / ... pr]eaching the word of life. I even spent some year[s / ...] him in the retinue; many years in (16) Pers[i]a, in the country of the Parthians, up to Adiabene, and / the bor[de]rs of the provinces of the kingdom of the Romans. Cf. Lieu 1992, 78. Pettipiece 2014, 37.

(Zoroastrian priests) also used to do with the previous Persian kings.²² Alexander first characterizes Manichaeism as ‘newfangledness’ (*καινοτομία*) which “has but recently come to the fore”. As he emphasizes, this Manichaean ‘novelty’, together with its astonishing doctrines, surpasses in vice any previous false doctrine (*κακοδοξία*). The lack of norms, of laws, and of theoretical precision renders the moral progress of people unachievable.²³

The other Egyptian source is an anonymous epistle against the Manichaeans. The letter is probably the earliest anti-Manichaean testimony at our disposal and is preserved in an excerpt that currently belongs to the John Rylands Library. Roberts, the editor of the first critical edition and translation of the text, dates the epistle to the end of third century (275–300 CE); as its most likely author, Roberts proposes the bishop of Alexandria, Theonas (282–300 CE).²⁴ The target and main concern of the author were the ‘blasphemous’ beliefs and prayers of the Manichaeans, their ‘abominable’ practices during their ritual meetings, their challenge of established institutions such as marriage, and the moral consequences of all these for the Roman citizens.

Again the Manich[ae]ans speak [falsely against marriage ...] [...] And the Manichaeans manifestly wor[ship the creation ...] [...] they require their [of the Manichaean elect women] menstrual blood for the abominations of their madness.²⁵

As Roberts suggests, this was a circular letter (encyclical); that is, it was not addressed to a particular recipient but was “circulated by him [the bishop] to the churches in his diocese”. Indeed, Roberts argues that Diocletian’s rescript “might well have been endorsed” by the content of this epistle. If both the Christian church and Roman state “recognized the danger with which the religion of Mani threatened them, we might well expect them to take simultaneous action”.²⁶

Thus, the first reports (of East-Roman authors) on Mani and Manichaeans, as well as the first long treatises against them come from Egypt.²⁷ However, not much later, a Manichaean presence is testified in Syria and Palestine. One of the earliest testimonies within Roman Palestine is that of the church historian Eusebius. The seventh book of his *Ecclesiastical History*, in which he presents Manichaeism, probably dates back quite early, around 312.²⁸

Eusebius uses two landmark events to date the arrival and spread of Manichaeism in Roman territories, which converge to 269 CE. These are: (1) the time of the condemnation of Paul of Samosata in the synod of Antioch (269), for as Eusebius states, it was at that very

²² As de Jong (1997, 455–56) states, highlighting the important position that the Persian priesthood had in the ancient world, the magoi “accompany the Persian armies on the move and direct the decisions on religious matters in war situations. They [...] act as advisers to the kings [...]”.

²³ Alexander of Lycopolis, *Tract. Man.* 2.5–8 (Van der Horst and Mansfeld, 51) & 1.25–28: κατά γε τὴν ἐμὴν δόξαν πάντας ὑπερβάλων τῷ θαυμάσιᾳ λέγειν· καὶ οὐ πάλαι μὲν ἐπεπόλασεν ἡ τούτου καινο-τομία; λόγον ἀκριβείας οὐκ ἐφικνουμένων [...] κανὼς δὲ οὐδενὸς ὑπόντος οὐδὲ νόμων.

²⁴ Roberts 1938, in *PRylands* 3, Gr. 469, II, pp. 38–46. Gardner and Lieu 2004, 114–15. See Lieu 2010, 36–37 for a revised English translation and Roberts 1938, 38–46, for the Greek text (42–43).

²⁵ *PRylands* 3 Gr. 469 (Roberts 1938, 42; Lieu 2010, 37): αὐτοὶ πάλιν οἱ Μανιχ[εῖ]ς κατα[ψεύδονται τοῦ γάμου ...] [...] καὶ οἱ Μανιχῆς δηλονότι προσκυ[νοῦσι τὴν κτίσιν] [...] διὰ τὸ δηλονότι χρῆζειν αὐτοὺς τοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀφ᾽ ἑδρου αἵματος αὐτῶν εἰς τὰ τῆς μανίας μυσάγματα.

²⁶ Roberts 1938, 38–39. As Lieu (2010, 161) remarks, the bishop’s fears are absolutely justified since Manichaeans had a very bad reputation, due to their antisocial and ‘immoral’ activities during their secret meetings. Thus, the Alexandrian bishop Theonas, through his circular letter, wished to make clear to both Christians and pagans, especially to the pagan authorities, that the Manichaeans had no relationship with the Catholic Church.

²⁷ The Egyptians Serapion of Thmuis (ca 326) and Athanasius of Alexandria (338–372) are also among the earliest anti-Manichaean authors.

²⁸ See ch.[1], 1.2 (Date of the AA’s composition).

moment that the Manichaean error began;²⁹ and (2) the year that Felix assumed the papal throne of Rome (269–274 CE).³⁰

His representation of Manichaeism goes as follows:

At that time also the madman, named after his devil-inspired heresy, was taking as his armour distortion of logic; for the devil, that is Satan himself, the adversary of God, had put the man forward for the destruction of many. His very speech and manners proclaimed him a barbarian in mode of life, and, being by nature devilish and insane, he suited his endeavours thereto and attempted to pose as Christ: at one time giving out that he was the Paraclete and the Holy Spirit Himself, conceited fool that he was, as well as mad; at another time choosing, as Christ did, twelve disciples as associates in his newfangled system. In short, he stitched together false and godless doctrines that he had collected from the countless, long extinct, godless heresies, and infected our empire with, as it were, a deadly virus that came from the land of the Persians; and from him the profane name of Manichaean is still commonly on men's lips to this day. So then such is the character of this falsely-called knowledge, which came into being at the time that has been indicated.³¹

Eusebius' brief presentation of Manichaeism echoes the language, style, and content of the decree of Diocletian, issued a few years earlier. Mani "a barbarian in mode of life (speech and manners)", being a vehicle of "the adversary of God", Satan, "came from the land of the Persians" and wiping off "his newfangled system" on the Roman empire, infected people as with "a deadly virus/poison".

Although the authors of the sources examined so far come from different cultural backgrounds,³² despite their differences, they have many things in common in their portrayal of Mani and their representation of Manichaeism and its arrival. These are:

- (1) The emphasis on the *Persian origin* of Mani and Manichaeism, in Zosimus, Edict of Diocletian, Alexander, Eusebius,
- (2) *Perso-Manichaean vice misleading* Roman citizens in Zosimus, Theonas, Edict of Diocletian, Alexander, Eusebius,
- (3) The *Manichaean newfangledness* (καινοτομία): the Manichaean beliefs, practices, and values are in complete contrast to the established values, the traditional codes of ethics, and the laws of the Roman Empire. Diocletian, Alexander, and Eusebius characterize Manichaeism as 'newfangledness'. Manichaeism is a 'newfangledness' either because it opposes the ancient religion and values (Diocletian), or because "the novelty of his doctrines" makes any "progress

²⁹ Eusebius, *HE* 7.pin.1.38-39: "Ὅπως ὁ Παῦλος ἀπελεγχθεὶς ἐξεκλήχθη [...] τῆς τῶν Μανιχαίων ἑτεροδόξου διαστροφῆς ἄρτι τότε ἀρξαμένης.

³⁰ Eusebius, *HE* 7.30.23-31.4: Ῥώμης ἐπίσκοπον Διονύσιον [...] διαδέχεται Φῆλιξ. Ἐν τούτῳ καὶ ὁ μανεὶς τὰς φρένας ἐπώνυμός τε τῆς δαιμονώσεως αἰρέσεως ...

³¹ Eusebius, *HE* 7.31 (slightly altered translation of Oulton LCL 265: 227 & Lieu 2010, 43): Ἐν τούτῳ καὶ ὁ μανεὶς τὰς φρένας ἐπώνυμός τε τῆς δαιμονώσεως αἰρέσεως τὴν τοῦ λογισμοῦ παρατροπὴν καθωπλίζετο, τοῦ δαίμονος, αὐτοῦ δὲ τοῦ θεομάχου σατανᾶ, ἐπὶ λύμῃ πολλῶν τὸν ἄνδρα προβεβλημένου. βάρβαρος δὴ τὰ τὸν βίον αὐτῷ λόγῳ καὶ τρόπῳ τὴν τε φύσιν δαιμονικὴς τις ὦν καὶ μανιώδης, ἀκόλουθα τούτοις ἐγχειρῶν, Χριστὸν αὐτὸν μορφάζεσθαι ἐπειράτο, τοτὲ μὲν τὸν παράκλητον καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν ἀνακηρύττων καὶ τυφούμενός γε ἐπὶ τῇ μανίᾳ, τοτὲ δέ, ὅτε Χριστὸς, μαθητὰς δώδεκα κοινωνοὺς τῆς καινοτομίας αἰρούμενος· δόγματα γε μὴν ψευδῆ καὶ ἄθεα ἐκ μυρίων τῶν πρόπαλα ἀπεσβηκότων ἀθέων αἰρέσεων συμπεφορημένα καττύσας, ἐκ τῆς Περσῶν ἐπὶ τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς οἰκουμένην ὥσπερ τινὰ θανατηφόρον ἰὸν ἐξωμόρξατο, ἀφ' οὗ δὲ τὸ Μανιχαίων δυσσεβὲς ὄνομα τοῖς πολλοῖς εἰς ἔτι νῦν ἐπιτολᾷ. Τοιαύτη μὲν οὖν ἡ καὶ τῆσδε τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως ὑπόθεσις, κατὰ τοὺς δεδηλωμένους ὑποφυσίσης χρόνους.

³² The "different cultural background" has been challenged by Edwards (2015, 138-42 & 152-57) who argues that both Zosimus and Alexander were Christians. The authenticity of Diocletian's rescript was also questioned and the possibility that in its present form it is a Christian reworking cannot be ruled out.

in virtue” “complicated and ineffectual” (Alexander), or because Mani’s system is a synthesis of all the false, long extinct, doctrines (Edict of Diocletian, Alexander, Eusebius), and (4) *Manichaeism’s spread westwards* threatens the integrity of Roman citizens and Roman Empire, in Edict of Diocletian, Alexander, Eusebius.

In addition, the language and the imagery that the above authors employ also have a lot in common.

(1) *The daemon/Antichrist sends a forerunner*: Mani is presented as the forerunner of the imitator daemon/Satan/anti-Christ (Zosimus, Eusebius). The imagery of the precursor of a royal figure was a common topos. The avant-courier is a person who would come in advance to herald the arrival of an important visitor and prepare people’s hearts for his coming.

(2) Manichaeism is depicted as a malignant Persian serpent or a virus (plague of iniquity), which with its poison infects the citizens of Roman Empire (Edict of Diocletian, Eusebius).

Table 1: Synoptic Table of the pre-Acta Sources (Portrait of Mani and of Manichaeism)

	Zosimus	Edict of Diocletian	Alexander	Eusebius
The imitator demon	the mimic daemon ... claiming the he is the son of God			Mani “attempted to imitate Christ: at one time giving out that he was the Paraclete and the Holy Spirit Himself”
The mimic daemon sends a forerunner	But before the mimic, the zealot, dares these things he first dispatches his own forerunner ... leading men			“the devil, that is Satan himself ... had put the man forward for the destruction of many”
The Persian Serpent poison/virus/plague		-Perso-Manichaeic laws and customs “infect ... Roman people” as “the poison of a malignant serpent”. -Manichaeism as a “plague of iniquity”		-Manichaeism “infected our empire [as] a deadly poison/virus”
The Persian origin	dispatches his own forerunner from Persia	-“they have but recently advanced or sprung forth ... from their native homes among the Persians – a nation hostile to us” -“the damnable customs and perverse laws of the Persians” -“those who have gone over to that ... creed ... of the Persians”	-“Manichaeus, a Persian by birth” -“Manichaeus himself is said ... to have accompanied Shapur the Persian king during his military campaigns”	Mani “came from the land of the Persians”
Perso-Manichaeic vice misleading men	telling deceptive, fabulous tales and leading	-“scandalous kinds of superstitious doctrine, so that many others are lured”	-Manichaeism as harmful and “hopelessly complicated and ineffectual thing”	-Mani “was taking as his armour mental delusion”

	men on about Fate.	-“perpetrating many evil deeds, disturbing the tranquillity of the peoples and causing the gravest injuries to the civic communities, with the damnable customs and perverse laws of the Persians” “their misdeeds are clearly the offspring of a fantastic and lying imagination”	-Mani’s “astonishing doctrines” the lack of “norms or laws” and of “theoretical precision” rendered “moral disposition” unattainable -“Ethical instruction declined and grew dim”	-Mani’s “speech and manners proclaimed him a barbarian in mode of life”
The Manichaean newfangledness		ancient religion vs a new creed -“highly criminal to discuss doctrines once and for all settled and defined by our forefathers” -“Manichaeans... who, in opposition to the older creeds, set up new and unheard-of sects, purposing in their wickedness to cast out the doctrines vouchsafed to us by divine favour in older times”	-Mani’s “astonishing doctrines, in my opinion, far surpass those of all the others. This newfangledness of his has but recently come to the fore”	-Mani “stitched together false and godless doctrines that he had collected from the countless, long extinct, godless heresies” “in his newfangled system”
Manichaeism’s spread westwards		-Manichaeans “have but recently advanced or sprung forth ... from [Persia]...and have settled in this part of the world”	-Manichaeism “has but recently come to the fore”.	-“the profane name of Manichaeism is still commonly on men’s lips to this day”

2.2.2. Portrait of Mani and of Manichaeism in the *Acta* and its Echo

These thematic axes or constituents of Mani’s representation by earlier authors (Persian origin, Perso-Manichaean vice, Manichaean newfangledness versus established tradition) are also characteristic of the AA, and are scattered throughout the whole work (introduction, debates, and letters). However, the classic portrait that became highly influential in later anti-Manichaean discourse is the biography (caricature) of Mani that bishop Archelaus recounted before the congregated audience, after the debates at Diodoris (AA 62- 65).

Mani’s biography

Archelaus begins his account promising to reveal everything about Mani: “I shall declare to you the lineage and deeds of that man who has recently thrust himself upon us from the

province of Persia ... Moreover I shall set out very clearly the origin of his doctrine".³³ Below follows a free and concise summary of the biography.

"The originator and founder of this sect" was not Mani, but a certain Scythianus (a Saracen in race) who had lived "in the time of the apostles". This is the one who introduced dualism, which he had "inherited from Pythagoras", but worsened it, introducing "enmities between the two unbegotten beings". Scythianus "married a woman prisoner from the upper Thebaid" and lived with her in Egypt, where he excelled in the "wisdom of the Egyptians", as he was very talented. He acquired a certain disciple named Terebinthus, "who wrote four books for him". However, in a trip he made to Judea, in order to meet all those who had a reputation as learned and famous teachers, he suddenly lost his life (AA 62). Terebinthus, after his death, went to Babylonia, where he was renamed Buddha, and constructed "a remarkable story about himself; he claimed that "he had been born from a virgin" and brought up "by an angel on the mountains". Although the priests of Mithras "accused him of falsehood", he continued his teachings about the creation of the world, the reincarnations, "and still more evil things". However, he "acquired not a single disciple there apart from" an old woman, a widow with whom he lived. "Finally early one morning" during a kind of a religious "ceremony or magic" which he performed on "a high roof top", he was "thrust beneath the ground" by a spirit and died (AA 63). All his inheritance, with the four books, passed to "the old woman", who obtained a boy of about seven years of age, called Corbicus, to serve her. "At once she gave him his freedom" and instructed him in reading and writing. When this boy "had reached the age of twelve, the old woman died" and left to him all her possessions, and among other things were "those four books that Scythianus had written". Corbicus then was renamed Manes³⁴ and "moved home to the middle of the city where the king of the Persians dwelt" (Seleucia-Ctesiphon). When he "had reached nearly sixty years of age", he had acquired great erudition in all the branches of learning ("he had become learned") "surpassing anyone else". He acquired also three disciples: Thomas, Addas, and Hermas. Then he copied the four books, inserting into them his own material; moreover, "he attached his own name to the books, deleting the name of the former writer, as if he alone had written them all by himself". Then he sent two of his disciples to preach the doctrines he had formed in various cities and villages into the "upper regions of that ... province", in order to attract more followers. After his disciples departed, the king's son got sick, and the king "issued an edict" offering a large reward to anyone who would heal his son. "Manes presented himself in person before the king, claiming that he would cure the boy", but "the boy died in his hands, or rather was killed off". Then the king imprisoned Mani and hunted down his two disciples, who "although fugitives", continued to preach (AA 64). When they returned to Manes (who was in prison), they told him the sufferings they went through "in each separate place". Mani counselled them to fear nothing, and sent them to districts where there were Christians, and after giving them a small amount of money, ordered them to acquire all the books of Christian Scriptures, and bring them back to him. When the books were brought to him in prison, Mani began to seek out all the statements which supported the idea of a dualism. Then, by rejecting some things and altering others in the Christian Scriptures, as well as adding the name of Christ, he advanced his own doctrines from the Christian scriptures. "He pretended to adopt that name" so that the people in the cities hearing the name of Christ, did not harass his disciples. In addition, misinterpreting the Scripture, as he "had not read carefully that the Paraclete had already come", at the time of the apostles, Mani claimed that he himself might be that

³³ AA 62.1 (Vermes, 140). All quotes in the following summary are from AA 62- 65 (Vermes, 140-47).

³⁴ The spelling of Mani's name in AA. AA 64.3 (Vermes, 144).

Paraclete. "So having put together" these impious inventions, he sent "his disciples ... to proclaim these fictions and errors with all boldness, and to make these false and novel words known in every quarter". The king of Persia learned this and wanted to punish him, but he "bribed the guards" and fled, ending up in the 'castle of Arabion', from where he sent the letter to Marcellus by "means of" Turbo. Archelaus finished his story informing the audience that "the king ordered that Manes be hunted and arrested wherever he should be found", and that he was still "sought (by the king of the Persians) right up to the present day" (AA 65). Here ends Archelaus' account.

As Hegemonius continues, Archelaus' narrative stirred up the rage of the crowd, who wanted to deliver Mani to the Persian king. Mani fled and went back to the Arabion fortress. But later, the Persian king arrested him, and ordered him to be flayed and hung his skin (infused with drugs) in front of the gate of the city, while his flesh was ordered to be given to the birds. Hegemonius explains that when Archelaus learned of this latest news he added it to his book, "so as to make it known to everybody" (AA 66.4).

(1) *The Persian origin*: As can be noted in the biography, Mani's Persian origin is repeatedly stressed. Archelaus states from the outset of his story that Mani "has recently thrust himself upon us from the province of Persia".³⁵ Subsequently, Mani is presented as making strategic moves to get the support of the Persian king: (a) he moved out from Babylon "to the middle of the city [Ctesiphon], where dwelt the king of the Persians";³⁶ (b) "He changed his name and called himself Manes [Mani] instead of Corbicius" preferring the "inflection given in the Persian language";³⁷ and (c) he presented himself as a skilful therapist promising to heal/cure the son of the king (irrespective of the result). Apart from Mani's Persian origin, the text also emphasizes the relationship of his ancestors and disciples with Persia. Mani's predecessor Terebinthus also resided in Babylonia, which as Archelaus explains, "is at present a province inhabited by Persians".³⁸ Even Basilides, whom Hegemonius presents as Mani's spiritual ancestor and an agent of dualism, is portrayed by Hegemonius as "a preacher" "among the Persians".³⁹ The Persian origin of Manichaeism is repeatedly stressed not only in the biography, but also from the very beginning of the work. Whatever is "beyond the river Stranga",⁴⁰ from where both Mani and Turbo came, is "into the territory of Persia". Marcellus' reputation crossed the border of the river Stranga, and spread into the Persian territories where Mani lived.⁴¹ During his trip on the way to Carchar, Turbo stayed in "the wayside inns that Marcellus in his great hospitality had established, upon being asked by the innkeepers where he came from, who he was or who had sent him, he would say "I am from Mesopotamia, but I come here from Persia, and was sent by Manichaeus the teacher of the Christians".⁴² Archelaus finishing his first representation of Mani at the point when the latter arrived to Carchar, comments: "his appearance was like that of an old Persian magician or

³⁵ AA 62 (Vermes, 140).

³⁶ AA 63.3 (Vermes, 142).

³⁷ AA 64.3 (Vermes, 144). This comment of AA's author is ironic, since it is commonly believed that 'Mani' was an Aramaic name/title (indicated also by Epiphanius (66.1), see fn. 67), whereas there are reasons to believe that behind 'Corbicius' there might have been a genuine Iranian name (something like Kirbagig= virtuous).

³⁸ AA 63.1 (Vermes, 142).

³⁹ AA 67.4 (Vermes, 149). This is totally unfounded, as is the idea that Basilides would have been the one who introduced dualism, see Lieu in Vermes 2001, 149, fn. 329.

⁴⁰ Lieu in Vermes 2001, 18. There are several proposals by scholars regarding the identification of the river Stranga, yet the general consensus is that we don't know which river this is.

⁴¹ AA 4.1 (Vermes, 39).

⁴² AA 15.1 (Vermes, 40).

warlord”.⁴³ Here the magician's attribute is added to highlight the Persian origin. Terebinthus is also presented as practicing magical ceremonies. Also, the story of Scythianus and his wife echoes the history of Simon Magus, which is the most iconic heresiological motif, and to whom all heresies are often said to go back.⁴⁴

It is important to underline here that all of the emphasis that Manichaeism came from Persia (i.e. the Sasanian Empire), is historically correct. That the heresiologists (in their polemical agenda) exploited this fact in order to stress the ‘otherness’ of Manichaeism, does not render the word ‘Persia(n)’ just a mere label.

During the debates, Archelaus does not miss any opportunity to call Mani a Persian: “You barbarian Persian [...]. You barbarian priest and conspirator with Mithras”.⁴⁵ The Persian origin of Mani ‘guarantees’ the unreliability of his words. It is repeated even where it is unnecessary. In Mani’s assertion that “I am, in truth, the paraclete who was predicted by Jesus would be sent”,⁴⁶ Archelaus said: “And how are we to believe that Manes, who comes from Persia, really is the Paraclete, as he says that he is?”⁴⁷ And he adds: “I would rather call him a parasite than the paraclete”.⁴⁸

That Mani dares to say that he is the Paraclete, is first reported by Eusebius,⁴⁹ and is not neglected by subsequent writers, whether they reproduce the AA or not.⁵⁰ Manichaean sources sometimes identify Mani as the Paraclete and sometimes as his envoy.⁵¹

(2) *Perso-Manichaean vice (values, beliefs & practices) misleading men/Roman citizens*: Mani is paralleled to a “barbarian or tyrant, attempting to invade people who are living under the justice of laws”.⁵² It is impressive how the words of Archelaus recall Diocletian’s rescript: “the Manichaeans [...] will endeavour to infect the innocent, orderly and tranquil Roman people”. The same is reflected in the following extracts:

AA	Diocletian’s rescript
54.3 “... Even indeed when you were assaulting us and causing us injury, and disparaging our ancestral traditions, and when you wanted to slay the souls of men that were well founded and preserved with conscientious care” ⁵³	causing the gravest injuries cast out the doctrines vouchsafed to us by divine favour in older times

⁴³ AA 14.3 (Vermes, 58).

⁴⁴ Mirecki 2007, 149.

⁴⁵ AA 40.5 & 40.7 (Vermes, 105).

⁴⁶ AA 15.3 (Vermes, 59).

⁴⁷ AA 39.4 (Vermes, 102-03).

⁴⁸ AA 25.3 (Vermes, 75).

⁴⁹ Eusebius, *HE* 7.31 (LCL 265: 227).

⁵⁰ Socrates, *HE* 1.22. *SC*, 2 (Lieu 2010, 117; 1994, 236): “I anathematize Manes who is also Manichaeus, who dared to call himself the Paraclete and Apostle of Jesus Christ, in order that he might deceive those whom he encountered”.

⁵¹ For the identification of Mani with Paraclete in Manichaean sources, see: *CMC* 17, 46, 63, 70; *1Keph.* 1,14.5-20 & 16.29-30; *2PsB* 3,21, 9-11, 33,17, 102,29-30. For the relevant bibliography on the issue see indicatively: Lieu (Vermes, 59, fn. 82); van Oort 2004, 139-57; Pettipiece 2008, 422; Brand 2019, 146, 158, 207-08 (Paraclete mentioned in the Kellis letters). As Gardner and Lieu (2004, 18) point out, “It is notable that in the personal letters of believers from fourth-century Kellis, Mani is quoted not by name but ‘as the *Paraclete* has said’”. One of the Manichaean psalms (*2PsB*, 9.3–11.32, Psalm 223) also praises Mani as ‘the Spirit of truth that comes from the Father’ and exhorts Manichaean believers to worship him: “This is the knowledge of Mani, let us worship him and bless him. Blessed is he every one that believes in him [...] Glory and victory to our lord Mani, the Spirit of truth that comes from the Father, who has unveiled for us, the beginning, the middle and the end”.

⁵² AA 40.2 (Vermes, 104).

⁵³ AA 54.3 (Vermes, 127).

(3) *The Manichaean newfangledness*: Eusebius' idea of newfangledness (i.e. that Mani's system is a synthesis of all the false doctrines and is plagiarized) is illustrated and developed in detail in the biography. Mani "is not the first author of this kind of doctrine, nor the only one" (AA 62.2). Apart from being a copyist and collector of the "countless, long extinct" false doctrines, Mani is also a copyist of the Christian Scriptures. However, he does not understand and distorts them (AA 32.5 & 44.5), aiming to find evidence in them to support his dualism (AA 65.4). In the debates, Mani appears to ground his argumentation on a distorted interpretation of Christian scriptures. Mani gives thirty-eight Biblical quotations in the first debate and fourteen in the second.⁵⁴

In their correspondence before the debates in Diodoris, the bishop Archelaus and presbyter Diodorus refer to Mani between themselves, and indicate the mark of Mani's religious identity:

On a particular day Manes had gathered a crowd and was haranguing them, and as the people stood around was propounding to them various foreign notions alien to the inherited tradition, showing no fear whatsoever of anything that could be made to block him.⁵⁵

Diodorus: a certain man called Manes has arrived in this area, who professes that he completes the doctrine of the New Testament. Indeed, there were some parts of what he was saying which belonged to our faith, but some of his assertions were a long way distant from those that have come down to us in the tradition of our fathers. For he interpreted certain things in a strange way, and added to them from his own views, which seemed to me extremely outlandish and lacking in faith.⁵⁶

Archelaus: the same fellow, who some days ago had come to me and wanted to propagate another form of knowledge, different from that which is apostolic and accepted by the Church.⁵⁷

Mani's disciples undertook the task "to teach in the various cities" these "foreign notions alien to the inherited tradition". They "never ceased inculcating from place to place this alien doctrine inspired by the Antichrist".⁵⁸

(4) *The daemon/Antichrist sends a forerunner*: The AA also presents Mani as a vehicle of the Antichrist in order to prepare the latter's arrival:

[...] for a prediction was written about you [Mani]; [...] 2. You are the vessel of the Antichrist; [...] For it is just as when some barbarian or tyrant, attempting to invade people who are living under the justice of laws, first sent ahead someone as it were destined for death ... for he himself was afraid [...] the Antichrist send you.⁵⁹

The imagery of the AA's Antichrist who "sent ahead someone[else] ... for he himself was afraid" recalls Zosimus' *antimimos daimōn*.⁶⁰ As far as Manichaeism's spread westwards is concerned, the whole of the AA records this first encounter between Manichaeism and Christianity. Hegemonius places the arrival of Mani and Manichaeism a few years later than Eusebius, that is, during the reign of emperor Probus (276–282 CE).⁶¹

⁵⁴ BeDuhn 2007a, 83.

⁵⁵ AA 43.5 (Vermes, 111).

⁵⁶ AA 44.1-2 (Vermes, 111).

⁵⁷ AA 46.2 (Vermes, 115).

⁵⁸ AA 64.9 (Vermes, 146).

⁵⁹ AA 40.2 (Vermes, 104-105).

⁶⁰ See 2.2.1. About the relationship between Antichrist and the "demon who mimics", see Stroumsa 1984, 142-43.

⁶¹ AA 31.8 & 32.1 (Vermes, 86).

The afterlife of Mani's biography in the *Acta* tradition

Cyril of Jerusalem

Cyril is the first author who draws on information from the AA's tradition. Before proceeding to the Manichaean practices, he depicts the portrait of Mani. He provides a very brief and concise but faithful version of Mani's biography from the AA, as well as adding his own comments here and there.⁶² According to Cyril, Mani began his missionary activities under the reign of emperor Probus (as in the AA). He emphasizes how recent the sect is by saying that it "is just seventy years standing", and goes on to underline that "there are to this day men who have seen him [Mani] with their own eyes".⁶³ Cyril states that Mani chose this name because it means the mighty speaker in Persian.⁶⁴

Epiphanius of Salamis

Epiphanius, in two of his works, gives the following dates for the arrival of Mani and Manichaeism. According to *De mensuris et ponderibus*, Mani "ascended from Persia" to Caschar of Mesopotamia in 262 (i.e. the ninth year of the reign of Valerian and Gallienus), where he debated with the bishop of the city, Archelaus.⁶⁵ According to the *Panarion*, where Epiphanius reproduces the biography of the AA, the Manichaean heresy was brought to Eleutheroupolis, Epiphanius' city of birth, in 273, through a Manichaean missionary named Ἀκούα.

They began to preach to the world at that time, and brought a great evil on the world after the < sect > of Sabellius. For they arose in the time of the emperor Aurelian, about the fourth year of his reign.⁶⁶

Epiphanius begins the biography of Mani stating that "Mani was from Persia". According to him, the reason why Mani chose this name is that it means a vessel/pot in Babylonian.⁶⁷ Then he continues with the biography, going back to Mani's ancestors. Epiphanius' biography of Mani does not differ in content from that of the AA, but he recounts it in his own way; he enriches it with comments, and adds his own bitter touches. The few points in which Epiphanius' version of Mani's biography is different from the AA are: (1) Apart from Mani, Terebinthus is also a slave of Scythianus, (2) Scythianus' wife is not a slave but a prostitute from Hypsele (whom Scythianus took from the brothel), (3) Scythianus too is portrayed as practicing magic⁶⁸ and as having exactly the same end as Terebinthus,⁶⁹ (4) Mani sent his

⁶² Cyril, *Cath.* 6.22-26, Mani's end in 6.30, and Mani's disciples in 6.31.

⁶³ Cyril, *Cath.* 6.20.

⁶⁴ Cyril, *Cath.* 6.24. The source of this information is unknown, but it is incorrect.

⁶⁵ Epiphanius, *De mensuris et ponderibus*, lines 548-550. The same date is given by Photius in *Contra Manichaeos* (p.139).

⁶⁶ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.1.2 (Williams, 226-27).

⁶⁷ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.1.4-5: Μάνης δὲ οὗτος ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν Περσῶν ὠρμάτο γῆς. Κούβρικος μὲν τὸ πρῶτον καλούμενος, ἐπονόμασας δὲ ἑαυτῷ τοῦ Μάνη ὄνομα, [...] καὶ ὡς μὲν αὐτὸς ᾤετο, κατὰ τὴν τῶν Βαβυλωνίων γλῶτταν δῆθεν σκεῦος ἑαυτῷ τὸ ὄνομα ἐπέθετο· τὸ γὰρ Μάνη ἀπὸ τῆς Βαβυλωνίας εἰς τὴν Ἑλληνίδα μεταφερόμενον σκεῦος ὑποφαίνει τοῦνομα. In contrast to Cyril, Epiphanius is correct in saying that Mani's name in Aramaic means vessel. For the name and other terms and titles of Mani, see Shapira 1999.

⁶⁸ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.3.17-18: πετήδευσεν δι' ὧν εἶχε μαγικῶν βιβλίων—καὶ γὰρ καὶ γόης ἦν.

⁶⁹ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.3.20-22: ἐπὶ δώματος <γὰρ> ἀνελθὼν καὶ ἐπιτηδεύσας, ὅμως οὐδὲν ἰσχύσας, ἀλλὰ καταπεσὼν ἐκ τοῦ δώματος, τέλει τοῦ βίου ἐχρήσατο.

disciples to find the Christian Scriptures before going to prison,⁷⁰ whereas in the AA he did this while he was in prison.⁷¹

Further, Epiphanius gives some additional information regarding Scythianus' commercial activity and about Mani's disciples and books, which I will examine in the following sections of the chapter.

Brief versions of the biography of Mani are reproduced by subsequent authors, who echo the AA, such as Socrates the Scholastic, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Theodorus Anagnostes, etc. That Manichaeism was a recent heresy is pointed out (apart from Cyril) by the following authors: Epiphanius ("For the sect is not an ancient one"), Socrates, according to whom "the Manichaean religion (*θρησκεία*) sprang up a few years before Constantine", and Theodoret ("First exponent of these doctrines was Simon Magus and the last was Mani, the magician, the Persian").⁷²

Some remarks concerning Mani's portrait

As I have noted in ch.[1], scholars initially considered the 'biography' to be the most unreliable part of the AA; it was seen as a caricature of Mani's 'biography', in fact, an anti-legend with its anti-heroes. Indeed, the purpose of the AA was not a historical one. Hegemonius' discrediting tactic aimed to humiliate and obliterate his opponent, Mani, something which runs throughout the whole text.⁷³ By emphasizing the foreign (Persian) character of Manichaeism, Mani's credibility and skills of persuasion are being challenged. The often-repeated wordplay with Mani's name (first introduced by Eusebius) has the same effect: his name written in Greek as *Maneis* means to 'be mad'.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, an increasing number of researchers argue that even the 'biography' preserves some historical information about Mani and early Manichaean history. As Scopello argues, Mani's biography is a synthesis of fiction and history, in which one could find true events from Mani's life, but chronologically and locally misplaced.⁷⁵ In particular, Scopello supports the view that, although Mani's predecessors Scythianus and Terebinthus are two legendary figures, the events attributed to them could be hints to those from Mani's life. So, through the presentation of three biographies, we could acquire a quite sufficient idea about Mani's life. As she characteristically says, Scythianus' conflict with the Jews could actually have been Mani's clash with the community of Baptists. Similarly, Terebinthus' renaming to Boudda reminds us of Mani's title (Mani-Buddas) in some eastern sources. Lastly, as Scopello notes, the information given by the AA and Epiphanius, that Mani moved from Babylon to Seleucia-Ctesiphon when embarking on his new career as a religious

⁷⁰ Epiphanius, *Pan.*, 66.5.1-4 (Williams, 232): "5,1 Thus Mani, or Cubricus, remained < in > confinement, [...]. 5,4 Giving his disciples money, he sent them to Jerusalem. (5) (But he had done this before his imprisonment...)"

⁷¹ AA 65.2: "But he urged them to fear nothing ... Now at last, while languishing in prison, he ordered that the books of the law of the Christians be obtained".

⁷² Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.12.3: οὐκ ἔστι γὰρ ἀρχαῖζουσα ἡ αἵρεσις; Socrates, *HE* 1.22.15: Ὅπως μὲν οὖν μικρὸν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν Κωνσταντίνου χρόνων ἡ Μανιχαίων παρεφύη θρησκεία; Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Haer.* (PG 83:337): Τούτων δὲ τῶν δογμάτων πρῶτος μὲν εὐρετὴς Σίμων ὁ μάγος ὁ Σαμαρεῖτης, ἔσχατος δὲ Μάνης ὁ γόης ὁ Πέρσης. Theodorus Anagnostes (*Epit. hist.* 1.33) places the beginning of the Manichaean heresy, quite early, during the episcopacy of Denys of Alexandria (247/8–264/5). Photius (*c. Manichaeos*, ch.53), agreeing with Alexander and Epiphanius, dates the arrival of Mani in Carchar during the reign of Valerian (253–260) and Gallienus (253–268).

⁷³ Coyle 2007a, 23-32; Coyle 2007b, 67. Kaatz 2007, 103.

⁷⁴ Coyle, 2004, 222. AA 59.10 (Vermes, 137: "you madman").

⁷⁵ Scopello 1995, 215-225, 220.

leader is confirmed in the *CMC*. Mani, after his break with the Baptists, crossed over a bridge in order to reach the cities (πόλεις); this referred to the twin cities Seleucia-Ctesiphon.⁷⁶

In the same fashion, BeDuhn and Mirecki point out that there are many parallels between Mani's biography in the *AA* and reports on "Mani's missions and death recovered in both Coptic and Middle Iranian Manichaean literature". Some of the most notable are: the name Corbicius recalls the Iranian title *kirbakkar* which means virtuous; the death age of Mani was actually around 60, as is recorded in the *AA* (64.4); that Mani sent his disciples on missions (*AA* 64.4, 64.6) and received back their missionary reports; that Mani prepared the texts for their missionary use (*AA* 65.1–6); the identification of Mani with the Paraclete (*AA* 65.6); Mani's "activities as a healer to the royal court (*AA* 64.7) and the association of his disfavor at court with a death in the royal family (*AA* 64.8, 66.3); his imprisonment in heavy chains (*AA* 64.9), and the flaying of his body and its display at the gates of the capital (*AA* 66.3)". The two authors conclude: "Hegemonius' reliance on Manichaean sources—either directly or mediated by another polemicist—seems clear".⁷⁷ In addition, accurate information recorded in this text is: the reference to the fundamental principle of Manichaeism (i.e. 'the two unbegotten beings'), the belief in reincarnation, the importance attributed by Manichaeans to missionary activities, and likely the rooftop ritual performed by Terebinthus.⁷⁸

Further, the aforementioned thematic axes of the sources 'before the *Acta*' discussed above are emphasized by all subsequent authors.⁷⁹ The emphasis on the Persian origin of Mani continues in subsequent authors, irrespectively of whether they reproduced the *AA* or not. Augustine also describes the heresy of his youth as a Persian mistake.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Scopello 1995, 214, 220, 224 & 234. *CMC* 111,1-7 (Koenen and Römer, 1988): ξφ[η δὲ πρὸς]αυτοῦς: "ἐγὼ αὐτὸν ἐ[θεα-]σάμην ἐπὶ τῆς γεφύρ[ας] περὶ εἰς τὰς πόλεις." Παττικός δὲ ὡς ἡκ[ο]υ-]σεν ἐχάρη καὶ ἐξέβη [ἐ-]λευσόμενος πρὸς με εἰς Κτησιφώντος. Although Scopello's argument might be interesting, I would like to stress that it can not be argued that *AA*'s information is 'historically correct', as if it described actual things that actually happened during Mani's life. The argument should, and can be, however, that in the *AA* we find reflections of actual Manichaean narratives of the life of the prophet.

⁷⁷ BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 1-22, 21.

⁷⁸ On this ritual see Mirecki 2007, 149-155.

⁷⁹ The *virus/infection* rhetoric/imagery is continued: Epiphanius (*Pan.* 66.1.1): the Manichaean missionary Akouas "ἐν τῇ Ἐλευθεροπόλει ἐνέγκαντα ταύτην τὴν τοῦ δηλητηρίου τούτου πραγματείαν". As Cyril (*Catech.* 6.20) warns his disciples the Manichaeans "ὅφεις γὰρ εἰσι γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν ... τὸν ἰὸν φυλάσσου". *Newfangledness* and *plagiarism* are foundational in Mani's system: For Cyril, the innovation of Manichaeism was that it surpassed everyone in the copy-paste of all evil doctrines. Cyril, *Catech.* 6.20: Καὶ μίσει μὲν πάντας αἰρετικούς, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τὸν τῆς μανίας ἐπώνυμον [...] τῆς κακίας ἐργάτην, τὸ δοχεῖον παντὸς ρύπου, τὸν πάσης αἰρέσεως βόρβορον ὑποδεξάμενον. Φιλοτιμούμενος γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς ἐξαίρετος γενέσθαι, τὰ πάντων λαβὼν, καὶ μίαν αἴρεσιν πεπληρωμένην βλασφημιῶν καὶ πάσης παρανομίας συστησάμενος [...] κλέπτῃ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀλλοτρίων κακῶν, ἐξιδιοποιούμενος τὰ κακά. Cyril, *Catech.* 16.9: Μάνης ὁ τὰ τῶν αἰρέσεων πασῶν κακὰ συνειληφώς. καὶ οὗτος τελευταῖος βόθρος ἀπωλείας τυγχάνων, τὰ πάντων συλλέξας. Epiphanius *Pan.* 66.4.1 (Williams 231): "everyone who heard Mani's teaching was annoyed, and rejected it for its novelty, shocking stories, and empty imposture" (καὶ ὡς οὐδεὶς αὐτῷ ἐπέθετο, ἀλλὰ ἀκούοντες Μανιχαίου διδασκαλίαν ἐδυσφόρουν μὲν καὶ ἐξενολεκτοῦντο πάντες ἐπὶ τῇ καινοτομίᾳ καὶ δεινῇ μυθοποιίᾳ καὶ κενῇ ἀπάτῃ). Socrates, *HE*: Κούβρικος καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ Περσῶν μέρη χωρήσας μετονομάζει μὲν ἑαυτὸν Μάνην, τὰ δὲ τοῦ Βουδδα ἦτοι Τερεβίνθου βιβλία ὡς οἰκεῖα τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πλανηθεῖσιν ἐξέδωκεν [...] τὴν Ἐμπεδοκλέους καὶ Πυθαγόρου δόξαν εἰς τὸν χριστιανισμόν παρεισήγαγεν [...] εἰμαρμένην εισάγων τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἀναρεῖ, καὶ μετενσωμάτωνσιν δογματίζει, [...] καὶ ἑαυτὸν ὀνομάζει παράκλητον, ἅπερ πάντα ἀλλότρια τῆς ὀρθοδόξου ἐκκλησίας καθέστηκεν. Apart from the *Acta* tradition, Mark the Deacon, *Vit. Porph.* 86: καὶ οἱ Μανιχαῖοι, ἐκ διαφόρων δογμάτων ἀντλήσαντες, ἀπετέλεσαν τὴν αὐτῶν κακοδοξίαν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἐκ διαφόρων ἐρπετῶν τὸν ἰὸν συναγαγόντες καὶ μίξαντες, θανατηφόρον φάρμακον κατεσκεύασαν πρὸς ἀναίρεσιν ἀνθρωπίνων ψυχῶν. Pseudo-Athanasius (ca 360), *Sermo contra omnes haereses* (PG 28:501-524, 513): Εἴπωμεν καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἀσεβεστάτους Μανιχαίους, τοὺς τρυγίους τῶν κακῶν.

⁸⁰ Augustine, *c. Faust.* 28.2-4.

2.3 The Manichaean Books in Greek anti-Manichaica

2.3.1 The Manichaean Canon

Manichaeans attributed great importance to their books, and for this reason Manichaeism is characterized as a religion of the book *par excellence*.⁸¹ A distinctive feature of Mani's biography in the AA is the story about the books of Manichaeism and that these were the result of a repeated plagiarism. The author of the books and inspirer of the Manichaean doctrines is not Mani himself, but Scythianus (or even Basilides). Mani simply appropriated and modified Scythianus' books, introducing into them his own material and his own signature, presenting them as if he had composed them all by himself.

When he [Mani] had reached the age of twelve, the old woman died and bequeathed to him all her goods, and alongside the other remnants also those four books that Scythianus had written, each containing a few lines. [...] when that boy had reached nearly sixty years of age, he had become learned in the doctrine that exists in those parts [...] yet he studied more diligently the things contained in those four books. [...] Then he took those books and copied them, not without inserting into them many other things of his own [...] moreover he attached his own name to the books, deleting the name of the former writer, as if he alone had written them all by himself.⁸²

However, according to the AA, Mani did not stop at this first stage of 'copy-pasting', but proceeded to 'selective plagiarism'; he picked over the Christian Scriptures to find the arguments or passages by which he could further support the notion of dualism. To this end, he sent his students to collect the Christian Scriptures.

[...] while languishing in prison, he ordered that the books of the law of the Christians be obtained.⁸³

To cut a long story short, they obtained all the books of our Scriptures, and delivered them to Manes residing in prison. This astute individual received the books and began to look in our writings for passages in support of his dualism - or rather, not his, but Scythianus', who had propounded this doctrine much earlier. He also tried to advance his own assertions from our books [...] by attacking some statements in them, and altering others".⁸⁴

Perhaps, this ridicule of Mani by the heresiologists (i.e. to describe him as an expert in plagiarism) was not accidental, but combated the Manichaean claim that one of the ten advantages that made their religion superior to others was that its holy Scriptures were written down and delivered to the Manichaean community by its founder, Mani himself.⁸⁵ Mani is presented to proclaim in the *Kephalaia* that,

My church surpasses in the wisdom and . . . which I have unveiled for you in it. This (immeasurable) wisdom I have written in the holy books, in the great *Gospel* and the other writings; so that it will not be changed after me. Also, the way that I have written it in the books:

⁸¹ For Manichaeism as a religion of the book (*par excellence*), see: Gardner and Lieu 2004, 111; Stroumsa 2004, 648; Tardieu 2008/1981, 33; About the importance that books and the art of book writing had in Manichaean tradition, see Brand 2019, 293-25.

⁸² AA 64.2-4 (Vermes, 144). The respective text in Epiphanius *Pan.* is 66.2.9, 3.12, 5.7 & 8 (Williams, 229-232).

⁸³ AA 65.2. Epiphanius (66.5.3, Williams, 232), in his version, mentions in detail the titles of "the books of the law of the Christians": "I mean <the> Christian books, the Law and Prophets, the Gospels, and the Apostles"; briefly: OT and NT.

⁸⁴ AA 65.4-5 (Vermes, 146-47).

⁸⁵ Or vice-versa, i.e. the *ten advantages* tradition was created in response to the heresiological ridicule?

(This) also is how I have commanded it to be depicted. Indeed, all the (apostles), my brethren who came prior to me: (They did not write) their wisdom in books the way that I, I have written it. (Nor) did they depict their wisdom in the *Picture (-Book)* the way (that I, I have) depicted it. My church surpasses (in this other matter also), for its primacy to the first churches.⁸⁶

This was the second in the list of the ten advantages. Due to the fact that the Manichaean community had a canon of its own constitutional books from the very beginning, Manichaeism is considered by many scholars as the first ‘religion’, in the modern sense.⁸⁷ In that same list, the fourth advantage seems to confirm one of the chief accusations of the AA against the Manichaeans: that the Manichaeans had appropriated Christian and other writings. The text reads:

The writings, wisdom, revelations, parables, psalms of all the first churches have been collected in every place. They have come down to my church. They have added to the wisdom that I have revealed...and have become great wisdom.⁸⁸

The technique in both sources (Manichaean *Kephalaia* and anti-Manichaean AA) is the same. What differentiates the two testimonies is their diverging points of view. In the polemical framework of the AA, this practice constitutes plagiarism and a distortion of the meaning of Christian (Holy) Scriptures. In the *Kephalaia* case, it is one of the ten advantages of the Manichaean religion, as it collects the wisdom of all previous religions. Mani's revelation as crystallised in his books comprises a synthesis of all previous wisdom. As Mani declares, “the measure of all wisdom” is recorded in his books. “Everything that has occ[ured],/ and [th]at will oc[cu]r is written in them!”⁸⁹

Lists of the titles of the books of the Manichaean canon are recorded in several Manichaean sources, but these lists are almost never the same. Their number varies between five and eight books. In the introduction of the *Kephalaia*, Mani himself gives us the titles of his books, which are seven in number:

I have written them in my books of light: in *The Great Gospel* and *Treasury of the Life*; in the *Treatise* (Gr: Pragmateia); in *The One of the Mysteries*; in *The Writing*, which I wrote on account of the Parthians; and also all my *Epistles*; in *The Psalms* and *The Prayers*.⁹⁰

The list is slightly different in the Manichaean *Homilies*, where in place of ‘the Writing [...] of the Parthians’ we find the *Book of the Giants*.⁹¹ In addition, here, apart from the seven titles, the *Picture-Book* is listed.

The Gospel and The Treasury of the Life, The Treatise and The Book of the Mysteries, The Book of the Giants and The Epistles, The Psalms and the Prayers of my lord, his *Picture (-Book)* and his apo(caly)pses, his parables and his mysteries.⁹²

⁸⁶ *1Keph.* 151, 371.20-30 (the ten advantages: 370.16–375.15) in Gardner and Lieu 2004, 265-68, 266 (no 91). Cf. Gardner and Lieu 2004, 151.

⁸⁷ See Introduction, section 5.3.

⁸⁸ *1Keph.* 151, 372.10-20 (Gardner and Lieu 2004, 266).

⁸⁹ *1Keph.* 1.5.25-30. (Gardner 1995, 12).

⁹⁰ *1Keph.* 1.5.21–25 (Gardner 1995, 11; Gardner and Lieu 2004, 153).

⁹¹ Tardieu 2008, 45: “In the preamble to the *Kephalaia*, the compiler has Mani enumerate the books of the canon of the Manichaean church, established after his death. There Mani includes *Giants*, describing it as ‘the book I wrote at the request of the Parthians’”.

⁹² *1Hom.* 25.1–6 (Gardner and Lieu 2004, 152, fn. 1: “ascribed to Koustaïos, who may well have acted as Mani’s scribe”).

The *Gospel* or *The Living Gospel*, as the whole title is (sometimes also mentioned as the *Great Living Gospel*), heads both the lists.⁹³ As reflected by later Manichaean sources, the canon of the seven Scriptures and “the one drawing” (i.e. the *Picture-Book*), continued to be in use until much later. According to the *Compendium of Manichaean Doctrines* (731 CE), the canon for the Chinese Manichaeans under the Tang Dynasty was as follows:

[1] the great *yinglun* (from Gr. *evangelion*), interpreted ‘book of wisdom which thoroughly understands the roots and origins of the entire doctrines’ (i.e. *The Great Living Gospel*); [2] [...] ‘the sacred book of the treasure of pure life’ (i.e. *The Treasure of Life*); [3] [...] ‘the sacred book of discipline’, also called ‘the sacred book of healing’ (i.e. *The Epistles*); [4] [...] ‘the sacred book of secret law’ (i.e. *The Mysteries*);⁹⁴ [5] [...] ‘book of instruction which testifies the past’ (i.e. *The Pragmateia*); [6] [...] ‘book of the strong heroes’ (i.e. *The Book of the Giants*); [7] [...] ‘book of praises and wishes (vows)’ (i.e. *The Psalms and Prayers*); [8] [...] ‘the drawing of the two great principles’ (i.e. *The Picture-book* or *Eikon*).

The seven great scriptures and the (one) drawing mentioned above, Mani [...] (he himself) transmitted (them) to the five grades (of believers).⁹⁵

The *Compendium* is certainly a much later source. Moreover, it does not come from the context of the Roman Empire. Nevertheless, sources such as the *Compendium* “do illustrate the unity and longevity Mani’s canon achieved for Manichaeism”.⁹⁶

2.3.2 The Manichaean Books in the *Acta Archelai*

The AA inaugurates the most frequently cited tradition in anti-Manichaica for the titles of the Manichaean Scriptures, which was reproduced by subsequent Christian heresiologists.

He [Scythianus] had a particular disciple [Terebinthus], who wrote four books for him, one of which he called the book of *Mysteries*, another that of the *Capitula*, the third the *Gospel*, and the last book of all he called the *Thesaurus*.⁹⁷

The ‘tetrateuch’, as Tardieu names the four books, which was “represented by Christian heresiologists, Syriac, Greek, and Latin alike, as forming the Manichaean canon, has no foundation in the Manichaean sources”.⁹⁸ Out of the four books of the AA tradition, three are

⁹³ Tardieu 2008, 35.

⁹⁴ According to later Greek sources (SAF, LAF, Photius and Peter of Sicily), the book of Mysteries refuted the Law and the Prophets. Cf. Bennett 2001a, 47.

⁹⁵ *Compendium of Manichaean doctrines in Chinese* in Gardner and Lieu 2004, 155-56.

⁹⁶ Gardner and Lieu 2004, 154. As Tardieu (2008, 49) points out, “the presence of the same canon in the *Compendium* indicates that the decision of the founding Babylonian church continued to be respected by Chinese Manichaeans under the T’ang Dynasty [...] Further, the list in the *Compendium* follows exactly the one given in the final section of the Coptic Homilies”.

⁹⁷ AA 62.6 (Verres, 141). Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.2.9.

⁹⁸ Tardieu 2008, 49.

canonical. These are: 1) the *book of Mysteries*,⁹⁹ 2) the *Gospel*,¹⁰⁰ and 3) the *Thesaurus*.¹⁰¹ The *Kephalaia*, which Manichaeans valued highly, was in fact the work of Mani's disciples. Indeed, after emphasizing the importance of his own writings and listing his books, Mani urged his disciples to record (and preserve) his oral teachings, sermons, lessons. This also provides a justification for considering the *Kephalaia* as a sub-canonical text.¹⁰²

[Yet], now [I will] entrust to you (pl.) [...] The world has not permitted me to write down [...] to me all of it; and if you, my childr[en and my discip]les, write all my wisdom [...] the questions that you have asked me [...]and the explanations that I have made clea[r to you from t/im]e to time; the homilies, the lessons, that I have proclaimed with the teache[rs/ to] the leaders, together with the elect and the catechume[ns; / and] the ones that I have uttered to free men and free women; [...] all of them, that I have proclaimed from time to time! Th[ey] are [not] writt[en. Y]ou must remember them and write th[em; ga]ther them i[n/ differ]ent places; because much is the wisdom that I ha[ve ut]tered [to y/ou].¹⁰³

So they did, and a new group of books, the sub-canonical Manichaean literature, was formed. Thus, the AA tradition combines three Manichaean canonical books with one of the greatest sub-canonical books of the community, the *Kephalaia*. Tardieu names the sub-canonical literature as the Manichaean Patrology, since it was written by Mani's disciples and not by himself.¹⁰⁴ However, this "had a problematic element in view of Mani's critique of such

⁹⁹ The book of Mysteries was one of the canonical books. Lieu 1994, 269: "A list of its chapter headings [eighteen] is known from the *Fihrist* of al-Nadim [pp. 797-98]. [...] It seems that an important part of the work is a discussion (or even a refutation) of Bardaisan's teaching, especially on the soul. Bardaisan himself according to Ephraim was also the author of a *Book of Mysteries*". Gardner and Lieu 2004, 155; Tardieu 2008, 38-41. For further information about the books, see Lieu in Vermes 2001, 141-42, fn. 309-12.

¹⁰⁰ The Gospel is a "much cited canonical work of Mani" (Lieu in Vermes, 141). Lieu 1994, 269: "We possess an extract of it in Greek in the CMC 66.4-70.10"; Lieu 2010, 147-48. Tardieu 2008, 35-36. Reeves 2011, 94-98. About a reconstruction of the Living Gospel and its content, see Mohammad Shokri-Foumeshi 2015, 2017 & 2018. The Gospel in Manichaean sources: CMC 66.4-70.10. According to *Kephalaia* (355.4-25), "*The Great Living Gospel* is the gift of the *Ambassador*" (Gardner and Lieu 2004, 154). 2PsB 139.56-59 (psalmoi Sarakwtwn): "His Great Gospel (εὐαγγέλιον): His New Testament (διαθήκη): The Manna of the skies. The inheritance (κληρονομία) of ...". About the Gospel in the *Compendium* see section 2.3.1 (The Manichaean Canon). About the Gospel in Islamic sources, see Shokri-Foumeshi & Farhoudi 2014.

¹⁰¹ Tardieu 2008, 38, 37: "the Treasure was the first systematic exposition of Manichaean theology", "Three fragments have come down to us indirectly through later authors": (1) al-Biruni, *Tahqiq*, (2) Augustine, *Nat. bon.* 44 (The Third Messenger exploits "the 'deadly unclean lust' congenital to hostile bodies in the heavens in order to cause them to release the living elements they contain" and (3) Augustine, *Fel.* [2.5]. See also Lieu in Vermes 2001, 142; Lieu 1994, 269; Lieu 2010, 149: "The longer citation from the *De Natura Boni* suggests that it contains, *inter alia*, a detailed account of Mani's cosmogonic myth, including the infamous scene known as the Seduction of the Archons". Reeves 2011, 108-109, 109: "the book [Thesaurus] must have included a narrative presentation of the fundamental Manichaean cosmogonic myths".

¹⁰² Gardner 1995, 10: "Mani then asserts his revelation of total wisdom in his canonical scriptures. However, he also stresses his oral teaching; and urges his followers to write down what he has taught them. [...] In consequence, Mani again admonishes his disciples to remember and write down his teachings". Gardner and Lieu 2004, 153 & 152 fn. 1: "Mani then [after listing his books] urges his disciples also to preserve all his occasional discourses" [*Kephalaia*], "*Kephalaia* literature was necessarily sub-canonical, since by its nature it was the recording of Mani's sermons, lessons, occasional parables and such like". The two works: (1) the *Kephalaia of the Teacher* (Berlin) & (2) The *Kephalaia of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani* (Dublin) constitute one collection (Gardner, BeDuhn and Dilley 2018, 1). Lieu in Vermes, 141. Pettipiece 2005, 247-260. See Funk (1997, 143-59) about the "Reconstruction of the Manichaean Kephalaia". See also Lieu (2010, xii) about the great importance that Manichaeans attributed to some non-canonical books and works of Mani's disciples, such as the *Kephalaia* and the Historical work (part of CMC).

¹⁰³ Gardner 1995, 12.

¹⁰⁴ Tardieu 2008, 50.

practices in prior churches”.¹⁰⁵ A further problem, is “the flimsy survival of Mani’s scriptures themselves”. “The seven works” and “the *Picture* (-Book) [...] are in very large part lost”. So, we know very little about their content. Although we have a minimal amount of texts directly attributed to Mani, it is remarkable that we have “thousands of pages of text, written by [his] followers [...] including large amounts of kephalaic material”.¹⁰⁶ This fact seems quite ironic in light of Mani’s certainty that his recorded wisdom would remain forever unchanged.¹⁰⁷

Of course, this enormous lacuna, to a certain extent, could have been recovered by the *Contra Manichaeos* works, as is usually the case with the anti-heretical literature. However, in the research conducted until now the prevailing interpretation is that we have very few exact parallels or citations from the genuine Manichaean texts in the anti-Manichaica (especially the Greek). Yet there are studies supporting the view that some Christian authors must have had the authentic works of Mani at their disposal. Thus, an additional question to be examined below, apart from the reproduction of the AA’s canon in the subsequent tradition, is whether East-Roman authors had access to the writings of Mani and, if so, what additional information they provide us about the Manichaean books.

2.3.3 Before the *Acta*

The only reference of Alexander of Lycopolis to the Manichaean books is that the Manichaean doctrines and teachings rely upon their scriptures, old and new.

[Manichaeans] using their old and new scriptures (which they believe to be divinely inspired) as underpinnings, they express their private doctrines as a conclusion drawn from these, and they are of the opinion that such conclusions admit of a refutation if, and only if, it happens that something is said or done by them which does not follow from these scriptures.¹⁰⁸

What does Alexander mean by “their old and new scriptures (τὰς παρ’ αὐτοῖς γραφὰς παλαιὰς τε καὶ νέας)”? Initially one thinks that he is referring to the Christian OT and NT. However, this interpretation is problematic because the Manichaeans did not see the OT as divinely inspired, and Alexander knew that very well. One interpretation could be that Alexander meant the books attributed to Mani as old scriptures, whereas the new ones were those attributed to his students (*Kephalaia*, *CMC*, etc.).

The anonymous author of Rylands 469 (bishop Theonas?) states that what he says in his letter is a concise citation of what he has read in a Manichaean document (*ἔγγραφο*), which fell into his hands.¹⁰⁹ What kind of document could this be? The meaning of the word *ἔγγραφο* is that of an official document, a scriptural writing, or even a Scripture. So, it is not unlikely that this was one of the books of the Manichaean canon. Unfortunately, nothing more can be said, as the author’s previous reference to his source is also missing (“As I said before” / “Ταῦτα ὡς προεῖπον”).¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Gardner and Lieu 2004, 152, fn. 1.

¹⁰⁶ Gardner and Lieu 2004, 152. See Pedersen 2015a (284-88) for fragments possibly originating from Mani’s *Book of Giants*.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Pettipiece 2005, 250, fn. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Alexander of Lycopolis, *Tract. Man.* 5 (Van der Horst and Mansfeld, 58-59): ἔρμαιόν τε ἀληθῶς ἐστὶν τὸ τῶν ἀπλῶς λεγομένων φιλοσοφῆν, οἱ τὰς παρ’ αὐτοῖς γραφὰς παλαιὰς τε καὶ νέας ὑποσησάμενοι—θεοπνεύστους εἶναι ὑποτιθέμενοι—τὰς σφῶν αὐτῶν δόξας ἐντεῦθεν περαίνουσιν καὶ ἐλέγχονται μόνον τηνικαῦτα δοκοῦσιν, ἐάν τι μὴ ταύταις ἀκόλουθον ἢ λέγεσθαι ἢ πράττεσθαι ὑπ’ αὐτῶν συμβαίνει.

¹⁰⁹ PRylands 3, Gr. 469.12-42 (Roberts, 42-43): ταῦτα, ὡς προεῖπον ἐν συντόμῳ παρεθέμην ἀπὸ τοῦ παρεμπεσόντος ἐγγράφου τῆς μανίας τῶν Μανιχέων; Cf. Gardner and Lieu 2004, 115.

¹¹⁰ Roberts 1938, 45, fn. 30.

2.3.4 The *Acta's* Echo

Cyril of Jerusalem

Cyril (6.22-24) repeats the tradition of the four books of Scythianus coming into Mani's possession through Terebinthus; he emphasizes from the outset that Mani is not their author, since "he is a thief and appropriator of other men's evils" (κλέπτης γάρ ἐστιν ἄλλοτρίων κακῶν, ἐξιδιοποιούμενος τὰ κακά) (6.21). The order of the books in his list is different from that in the AA: *Gospel*, *Kephalaia*, *Book of Mysteries* and *Thesaurus*.

Scythianus [...] composed four books, one called the *Gospel*, yet, though bearing this title is not an account of the acts of Christ; and another called *Kephalaia*; and a third called the *Book of Mysteries*; and a fourth, which Manichaeans are carrying around lastly, called the *Thesaurus*.¹¹¹

The information, emphasized by Cyril, that Mani's disciples carried their prophet's book during their missionary endeavours is accurate and attested by Manichaean sources.¹¹² Besides, according to Hegemonius, Mani himself arrived in Carchar for the debate, carrying "a Babylonian book under his left arm".¹¹³ Cyril's account additionally reveals that the Manichaean missionaries of his region (Jerusalem) were circulating their recent acquisition, the *Thesaurus*, probably for the first time in the area. Further, apart from the above books, Cyril warns his flock not to read the Gospel of Thomas, "for it is not the work of one of the Twelve Apostles, but of one of the three evil disciples of Mani".¹¹⁴

The same information is reproduced by Photius, Peter of Sicily, and the *Long Abjuration Formula* (LAF). Peter of Sicily, whose source is Cyril, slightly altered his words and admonished the faithful not to read the Gospel of Thomas because it was written by one of the "twelve evil disciples of the Antichrist Mani".¹¹⁵ Cyril, also in his fourth Catechesis, attributes the authorship of the Gospel of Thomas¹¹⁶ to the Manichaean Thomas:

The Manichaeans also wrote a *Gospel of Thomas*, which being tinged with the fragrance of the evagelic name, corrupts the souls of the simple-minded.¹¹⁷

What we know is that another apocryphon bearing the name of Thomas, *The Acts of Thomas*, was a favourite text of Mani and of Manichaeans. Further, among the Psalms of the Coptic Manichaean *Psalms-Book* are listed the "Psalms of Thomas" which, according to Lieu, may have been written by a Manichaean disciple named Thomas.¹¹⁸ However, Poirier suggested to read the word 'Thom' instead as a Greek rendering of the Aramaic word Tauma, which means 'twin'.¹¹⁹ In any case, it seems that, as Tardieu argues, "the legend of Thomas" played a definite role and "determined Mani's career".¹²⁰

¹¹¹ Cyril, *Catech.* 6.22: [Σκυθιανός] τέσσαρας βίβλους συνέταξε, μίαν καλουμένην Εὐαγγέλιον, οὐ Χριστοῦ πράξεις περιέχουσιν, ἀλλ' ἀπλῶς μόνον τὴν προσηγορίαν· καὶ μίαν ἄλλην καλουμένην Κεφαλαίων· καὶ μίαν τρίτην, Μυστηρίων· καὶ τετάρτην ἦν, νῦν περιφέρουσι, Θεσαυρόν.

¹¹² See also Scopello 1995, 227-28.

¹¹³ AA 14.3 (Vermes, 58).

¹¹⁴ Cyril, *Catech.* 6.31.

¹¹⁵ Peter of Sicily, *Hist. ref. Man.* 68.31.

¹¹⁶ See, Quispel 1957, 189-207. The apocryphal Gospel of Thomas was a collection of logia attributed to Jesus, very similar to those of the synoptical tradition, yet extended with many additions. Except for the Manichaeans, the Gospel of Thomas was used by Gnostics and Naassenes. Cf. Falkenberg 2020, 98-127.

¹¹⁷ Cyril, *Catech.* 4.36.

¹¹⁸ 2PsB 203-227. Lieu 1994, 264.

¹¹⁹ Poirier 2001, 9-28. The psalms are referenced as Psalms of Thom, which has been taken to be an abbreviation for Thomas – something that would be most unusual.

¹²⁰ Tardieu 2008, 31-32.

Cyril, from the beginning of his account, states that he will present only a part of what he knows about the Manichaean beliefs and practices, because no time would be long enough for giving a full account (ὅλον γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὸν βόρβορον, οὐδ' ὁ πᾶς αἰὼν κατ' ἀξίαν διηγήσεται) (6.21). At the end of his narrative, Cyril makes it clear to his readers that he had read the Manichaean books, explaining that he had to do this for the safety of his flock. He had to read them for himself because he disbelieved those who informed him of what was written in the Manichaean books.

These are written in the books of the Manichaeans. These we have read, disbelieving those who affirmed them. For your safety, we have inquired into their depravity.¹²¹

Cyril, wanting to anticipate any reservation towards the credibility of his testimony, reassures that he has read the things he discusses in the Manichaean books. If this statement is true, which books did he read? Probably the *Thesaurus*, since according to him, that was the book that the Manichaean missionaries in his area circulated during his days. What we know about the content of the *Treasure of Life* (*Thesaurus*) has come down to us through Augustine. The main topic of the *Thesaurus* was dualism, in particular the Manichaean cosmogonic myth which included the *Seduction of the Archons*.¹²² At the moment, it is sufficient to say that the small number of Manichaean beliefs and practices that Cyril recounts echo the *Seduction of the Archons*, another indicator in favour of the hypothesis that he had read the *Thesaurus*.

Epiphanius of Salamis

Epiphanius' work (*Against Manichaeans*), which is the most faithful reproduction of the AA, reiterates the well-known story of the four books of Scythianus, enumerating them in the same order as the AA.

Scythianus, whose mind was blind about these things, took his cue from Pythagoras and held such beliefs, and composed four books of his own. He called one the *Book of the Mysteries* the second the *Book of the Kephalalaia*, the third the *Gospel* and the fourth the *Treasury*.¹²³

From Scythianus the books passed to Terebinthus, and so on.¹²⁴ Further on, Epiphanius, in a part of his text which is not grounded in the AA, provides us with a second list of books, which he says were written by Mani himself.

Now then, the savage Mani begins his teaching, speaking and writing in his work on faith. For he issued various books, one composed of < twenty-two sections* > to match < the > twenty-two letters of the Syriac alphabet. Most Persians use the Syrian letters besides < the > Persian, just as, with us, many nations use the Greek letters even though nearly every nation has its own. But others pride themselves on the oldest dialect of Syriac, if you please, and the Palmyrene—it and its letters. But there are twenty-two of them, and the book is thus divided into twenty-two sections. He calls this book the *Mysteries of Manichaeus*, and another one the *Treasury*. And he makes a show of other books he has stitched together, the *Lesser Treasury*, as one is called, and another on astrology. Manichaeans have no shortage of this sort of jugglery; they have astrology

¹²¹ Cyril, *Catech.* 6.34.16-19: Ταῦτα γέγραπται ἐν ταῖς τῶν Μανιχαίων βίβλοις. Ταῦτα ἡμεῖς ἀνεγνώκαμεν, ἀπιστοῦντες τοῖς λέγουσιν. Ὑπὲρ γὰρ τῆς ὑμετέρας ἀσφαλείας, τὴν ἐκείνων ἀπώλειαν ἐπολυπραγμονήσαμεν.

¹²² See fn. 101 in this chapter; Cf. Tardieu 2008, 37; Lieu 2010, 149; Gardner and Lieu 2004, 159-160 & 187-191 (De Haeresibus 46).

¹²³ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.2.9 (Williams, 229, slightly altered).

¹²⁴ Epiphanius *Pan.* 66.3.12.

for a handy subject of boasting, and phylacteries—I mean amulets—and certain other incantations and spells.¹²⁵

As one notes, Epiphanius in this second list of books restates which were the three canonical books of Mani but omits the *Kephalaia*. He explicitly names the *Book of Mysteries* and the *Thesaurus*, while the first book he mentions (for which he does not give a title), was the *Gospel*; it was ‘composed of twenty-two sections’ in order to correspond to the Syrian alphabet. Epiphanius is the only Greek source that gives this information. We now know, as Shokri-Foumeshi recently said, “from both Manichaean and non-Manichaean writings [...] that Mani’s *Gospel* was divided into twenty-two chapters [...] corresponding to the twenty-two letters of the Syriac/Manichaean alphabet”.¹²⁶ According to a canon list embedded in the Medinet Madi *Psalm-Book*, “there are two and twenty compounds in his antidote: His *Great Gospel*, the good tidings of all them that are of the light”.¹²⁷ In a Middle Persian Turfan fragment, we read: “He teaches (the chapter) *Aleph* of the *Gospel*; he teaches (the chapter) *Tau* of the *Gospel*, the *Gospel* of the twenty-two wondrous things”.¹²⁸ Epiphanius, in explaining why a Persian by race (Mani) composed his books in Syriac, gives the very significant information that most Persians, apart from their own language, used the Syriac, just as many other nations used the Greek koinē together with their own ethnic language. Thus, the fact that the Manichaean books were written in Syriac does not prove the Syrian origin of the first Manichaean missionaries, as was argued by some modern scholars.¹²⁹

The second list of Epiphanius also refers to a second *Thesaurus*, the *Lesser* one. Some scholars suggested that the *Lesser Thesaurus* was a summary of *The Treasury of Life*, while others supported the view that it was a supplement of the latter.¹³⁰ Then, Epiphanius appears to quote from the beginning of one of Mani’s books:

This is how Mani begins his book: There were God and matter, light and darkness, good and evil, all in direct opposition to each other, so that neither side has anything in common with the other.

Could this quotation by Epiphanius be an extract from Mani’s Gospel? As he comments,

¹²⁵ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.13.2-7 (Williams, 240): ὅθεν δὴ ἄρχεται διδάσκειν τε καὶ γράφειν καὶ λέγειν ὁ χαλεπώτατος Μάνης ἐν τῷ περὶ πίστεως αὐτοῦ λόγῳ. βίβλους γὰρ οὗτος διαφόρους ἐξέθετο, μίαν μὲν ἰσάριθμον <τῶν> εἴκοσι δύο στοιχείων τῶν κατὰ τὴν τῶν Σύρων στοιχείωσιν + δι’ ἀλφαβήτων συγκεκριμένην.—χρῶνται γὰρ οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν Περσῶν μετὰ <τά> Περσικὰ στοιχεῖα καὶ τοῖς Σύρων γράμμασι, ὥσπερ παρ’ ἡμῖν πολλὰ ἔθνη τοῖς Ἑλληνικοῖς κέχρηται, καίτοι γε ὄντων σχεδὸν κατὰ ἔθνος ἰδίων γραμμάτων. εἴκοσι δύο δὲ ταῦτα ὑπάρχει· διόπερ καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ βίβλος εἰς εἴκοσι δύο τμήματα λόγων τέτμηται. —ταύτη δὲ ἐπιτίθησιν ὄνομα Μανιχαίου Μυστήρια, ἐτέρᾳ δὲ Θησαυρός. καὶ ἄλλας δὲ βίβλους κατύσας φαντάζεται, τὸν μικρὸν δὲ Θησαυρὸν οὕτω καλούμενον, ἄλλην δὲ τὴν περὶ ἀστρολογίας. οὐ γὰρ ἀποδέουσι τῆς τοιαύτης περιεργίας, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον αὐτοῖς ἐν προχείρῳ καυχήματος πρόκειται ἀστρονομία καὶ φυλακτήρια, φημί δὲ τὰ περιὰπτα, καὶ ἄλλαι τινὲς ἐπωδαὶ καὶ μαγανεῖαι.

¹²⁶ Shokri-Foumeshi 2018, 45, 45-47. Cf. Lieu 1994, 269 & 2010, 147; Tardieu 2008, 35.

¹²⁷ 2PsB 46.20-22. Cf. Gardner and Lieu 2004, 164.

¹²⁸ Shokri-Foumeshi 2018, 45. “Thanks to W. Sundermann, the Parthian fragment M 5510 could well shed light on the subject. This very interesting document, [...] undoubtedly speaks about the division of the *Living Gospel* into twenty-two chapters”. Al-Biruni (*Chronology*, Sachau 1879, 190) also states that Mani “arranged [his Gospel] according to the twenty-two letters of the alphabet”.

¹²⁹ Cf. Lieu 1998b, 211; Burkitt 1925, 111-19. On “the Manichaean’s use of Syriac language”, see Pedersen and Larsen 2013.

¹³⁰ Pedersen 2004, 178, fn. 3.

And this is the scum's prologue; he begins his mischief there. And broadly speaking, that is the book, which contains certain bad propositions of this sort, the difficulty of which, and the contradiction at the very outset between the words and their aim, must be understood.¹³¹

According to Williams, Titus of Bostra (1.5) records a text with relevant content "as a summary of Mani's teaching".¹³² Concerning the Gospel of Thomas, mentioned by Cyril, Epiphanius does not make any reference. Williams implies that there is an indirect reference to the following verse of Epiphanius, addressed to Mani: "Unless you play the fool by writing yourself and palming off some forged books in the names of saints [i.e. the Acts of Thomas]. Tell us where you come from, you with your primordial principle of evil!"¹³³ However, it seems unlikely that it would refer to a specific text.

Severianus of Gabala

Severianus of Gabala begins his presentation of the Manichaean beliefs saying the following, which could be interpreted as a reference to the Manichaean *Thesaurus*: "So, the faithful brings forth his faith from the good treasure, but the heretic utters his infidelity from the evil treasure".¹³⁴ Although Severianus does not say it explicitly, it is reasonable to assume that he purposefully uses the well-known evangelical maxim (from Matt 12:35 and Luke 6:45, which was a common literary wordplay used by many heresiologists), in order to hint at the homonymous Manichaean book. This is also the way the AA begins: "The true 'thesaurus' or rather the disputation held in Carchar, a city in Mesopotamia, by the bishop Archelaus against Manes" (AA 1.1). As Lieu comments, the "true 'thesaurus'", here, is used in contradistinction to the "false 'thesaurus' – the title of a canonical work of Mani".¹³⁵

Nilus of Ankara

Nilus was the abbot of a monastery near Ankara. He states that the Manichaeans call their books mysteries and treasures of goods things, giving the impression that he is referring to more than one *Thesaurus*. This recalls Epiphanius' list, with both the *Thesaurus*, and the *Lesser Thesaurus*.¹³⁶

Socrates the Scholastic

Socrates repeats the AA's story and lists the four books of Scythianus, which he organizes in an order of his own.

5. Then he composes four books, one he entitled The Mysteries, another Gospel, Treasure is the third and a fourth the Kephalaia. [...] 8. Hence the postulates of these books are Christian in voice, but pagan in ideas/beliefs.¹³⁷

¹³¹ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.14.1-2 (Williams, 240): ἀρχεται γοῦν ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ βίβλῳ λέγειν ὁ αὐτὸς Μάνης: "Ἦν θεὸς καὶ ὕλη, φῶς καὶ σκότος, ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακόν, τοῖς πᾶσιν ἄκρως ἐναντία, ὡς κατὰ μὴδὲν ἐπικοινωνεῖν θάτερον θατέρῳ." καὶ οὗτος μὲν ἐστὶν ὁ πρόλογος τοῦ ἀγύρτου [...]. As Shokri-Foumeshi and Farhoudi (2014, 53) state, according to Islamic sources, "some of the more important subject matters of Mani's Gospel were the Land of the Light and of the Darkness, the Mixture and process of the *liberatio* of the Aeons".

¹³² Williams 2013, 240, fn. 79.

¹³³ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.59.7-10 (Williams, 284).

¹³⁴ Severianus of Gabala, c. *Manichaeos* 15.

¹³⁵ Lieu in Vermes, 35.

¹³⁶ Nilus of Ankara, *Ep.* 117 (to Evandrius): Οὕτω καὶ Μανιχαῖοι μυστήρια καὶ θησαυρῶν ἀποκαλοῦσι τὰ βιβλία τῆς δυσσεβείας, καὶ τῆς παρανομίας. About the authenticity of Nilus' letters see Cameron 1976b.

¹³⁷ Socrates, *HE* 1.22.5 & 8. 5: Τῶν βιβλίων τοίνυν τούτων αἱ ὑποθέσεις χριστιανίζουσι μὲν τῇ φωνῇ, τοῖς δὲ δόγμασιν ἐλληνίζουσιν.

The same order is followed by Theodorus Anagnostes, in his *Epitome Historiae tripartitae*.¹³⁸

Later sources that recycle the AA tradition are the ninth century writers Peter of Sicily¹³⁹ and Photius,¹⁴⁰ who mention the four books according to the sequence of their source, Cyril. After describing briefly each book, they add their own abusive comments. In parallel, their contemporary chronographer, Georgius Monachus, followed the enumeration established by Socrates (without comments).¹⁴¹ The order of Socrates was also followed by later sources such as the SUDA Lexicon (tenth cent.), Constantinus VII Porphyrogenitus (tenth cent.) and the chronographer Georgius Cedrenus (eleventh-twelfth cent.).¹⁴²

2.3.5 Titus of Bostra and Heraclian of Chalcedon

Two notable cases, each of particular interest and both distinct from the rest of anti-Manichaean literature concerning the Manichaean books, come from Titus of Bostra and Heraclian of Chalcedon.

Titus of Bostra

In his first book, Titus presents the Manichaean cosmogony, declaring that Mani's books are written in the Syriac language.¹⁴³ Furthermore, part of his first book describes how the primordial mixture of the two primal principles took place according to Mani's system; Titus seems to refer to a particular Manichaean book from which he quotes, pointing out that "this is exactly what they say in their book".¹⁴⁴ At the end of the same book (1.41-42), Titus mentions something that I have not encountered again in any other Greek source: "While here on earth matter is occupied with the captive light", God in the meanwhile, "is sitting filling up the abyss from which matter comes with earth/soil". So, according to Mani, "God sits and carries eternally masses of soil, with which he gradually fills in some depths".¹⁴⁵ A similar imagery exists in one of the Manichaean Psalms:

When the Holy Spirit came he revealed to us the way of truth and taught us that there are two natures, that of light and that of darkness, separate one from the other from the beginning. [...] The sun and moon he founded, he set them on high, to purify the soul. Daily they take up the refined part to the heights, but the dregs however they scrape down to the abyss, what is mixed they convey above and below.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁸ Theodorus Anagnostes, *Epit. hist. trip.* 1.33.6-8.

¹³⁹ Peter of Sicily, *Hist. ref. Man.*, 48.1-5 (p. 25). Peter also reproduces Cyril's information that Manichaeans carry around *Thesaurus of Life*.

¹⁴⁰ Photius, c. *Manichaeos* 38.3-7 (p. 133).

¹⁴¹ Georgius Monachus, *Chronicon (lib. 1-4)* p. 468. 12-14; *Chronicon breve* (lib. 1-6) (redactio recentior), v. 110 p. 556 lines 10-14.

¹⁴² *Suda Lexicon*, entry 147 lines 10-12. Constantinus VII Porphyrogenitus, *De virtutibus et vitiis*, v. 1 p. 141 lines 13-15. Georgius Cedrenus, *Compendium historiarum* 1: 455.20-22.

¹⁴³ Titus of Bostra, c. *Manichaeos*, 1.17.

¹⁴⁴ Titus of Bostra, c. *Manichaeos*, 1.21: "Ὅτε τοίνυν, αὐτῇ λέξει φησὶν ἡ παρ' αὐτοῖς βίβλος.

¹⁴⁵ Titus of Bostra, c. *Manichaeos*, 1.42: Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ἅπασι, θαυμάσιον αὐτοῦ δὴ κάκεῖνο, ἔνθα φησὶν ὡς τῆς κακίας ἐνταυθοῖ ἀσχολουμένης, εἴτ' οὖν δεδεμένης, θεὸς ἐν τῷ μεταξὺ τὸ βάθος ἀναπληροῖ χώματι, ὅθεν ἀνέκυψεν ἡ ὕλη. [...] Κάθηται δὲ θεὸς κατὰ τὸν μανέντα δι' αἰῶνος μεταφέρων χώματα καὶ κατὰ βραχὺ προσχωνῶν βᾶθη τινά. Parts of the translated text come from Pedersen 2004, 23, 187.

¹⁴⁶ 2PsB 9.3–11.32 (Psalm 223). Cf. Gardner and Lieu 2004, 176 (The community sing 'the knowledge of Mani'). The same scenery in 1Keph. 1.15.1-19 (Gardner 1995, 20): "He unveiled to me [...] the myster[y] of the dep[ths] and the heights. [...] the mystery of the light and the darkness [...] Aft[erwards], he unveiled to me also: How the light [...] the darkness, through their mingling this universe was set up [...] the way that the ships were

According to al-Nadim, a similar concept is also developed in a chapter of the *Book of Mysteries*, entitled “The Three Trenches” (ch. 14).¹⁴⁷ As Tardieu argues, “this section is concerned to develop a point of cosmology. The trenches [...] designate a series of pits (varying between three and seven in number) dug around the world, into which the demonic waste of the firmaments is poured (see *Keph.* 43, 45)”.¹⁴⁸

In his third book, the topic of which is the Manichaean rejection of the OT, Titus refers to a specific chapter of a Manichaean book that he seems to have at his disposal. This book apparently criticized *Genesis* and *Exodus*. As Titus states, this *Kephalaion* was named, either by Mani himself or by one of his disciples, ‘*Concerning the first human moulding*’. Titus then quotes excerpts from the book, clarifying that what follows is a verbatim quotation from this *Kephalaion*.¹⁴⁹

Finally, in his fourth book, Titus states that Mani babbled endlessly in his lengthy hymns and letters, which, apart from revealing that he knew them as Mani's works, implies that he had access to their content.¹⁵⁰

et il écrit dans ses livres des psaumes sans fin et, à partir d’eux et à leur sujet, il allonge par de très inutiles détails des lettres démesurées.¹⁵¹

*The question of accessibility to the Manichaean books*¹⁵²

As Titus states (in 3.9), the Manichaeans were instructed by Mani to hide their books and not to give them to those who wanted to read them. The reason they did this was to prevent anyone from being able to check and prove the mistakes of their scripts.

They say, indeed, that his nonsenses are many and very extensive. And his followers have taken care to keep his books hidden and never show them to those who want [to read] them, obviously as if by his order, since he would no longer have the courage to talk about his fabrications if [his fraud] had already been uncovered. Because lying likes to be hidden, to deceive shamelessly and to pierce the souls [of people], in contrast to the truth, which is overtly spoken. They do keep secret [his texts] because they are ashamed of those who will be able to judge these texts before they fall victim to their mischief.¹⁵³

constructed; [to enable the go]ds of light to be in them, to purify the li[ght from] creation. Conversely, the dregs and the eff[lu]ent [...] to the] abyss”.

¹⁴⁷ Al-Nadim, *Fihrist* 2: 9 (Dodge, 798).

¹⁴⁸ Tardieu 2008, 40. *1Keph.* 43.45 in Gardner 1995, 117: “The dark were finally poured into three pits that he had constructed. However, a remnant of each remains upon earth, dark qualities that mar the light”.

¹⁴⁹ Titus of Bostra, c. *Manichaeos* 3. 4.1-5.19: Φησὶ δὲ πρὸς λέξιν αὐτὴν ἐκεῖνος, ἢ ἑτερός τις τῶν ἀπ’ ἐκείνου, ἐπιγράψας τὸ κεφάλαιον Περί τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης πρωτοπλαστίας [...]. For the rest of the text and about the content of this chapter (according to Titus) see ch.[5]. It has been argued by some scholars that Titus’ quotation comes from the Manichaean *Kephalaia*; indeed, Böhlig identified it with *1Keph.* 55.68 entitled: *Concerning the Fashioning of Adam* (Gardner 1995, 141). Cf. Pedersen 2004, 82-83. See also Pedersen (2004, 35 and esp. 189-199) for an extensive discussion of Titus’ sources in this chapter.

¹⁵⁰ Titus of Bostra, c. *Manichaeos* 4.44.21. The Hymns (Psalms and Prayers?) and the epistles (of a great importance for the Manichaeans) were among Mani’s canonical works. Al-Nadim in his *Fihrist* (2: 9, Dodge, 799-800) provides a list of titles of seventy-six letters, some written by Mani and others by his disciples and successors. Cf. Lieu 1994, 271; Pedersen 2004, 55 & 204; CCT 21, 363-64.

¹⁵¹ Titus of Bostra, c. *Manichaeos* 4.44 (CCT 21, 418-19).

¹⁵² See Pedersen (2004, 195-272) about “The Manichaean texts used by Titus of Bostra”.

¹⁵³ Titus of Bostra, c. *Manichaeos* 3.9.1-10: Πολλὰς μὲν δὴ φασὶ καὶ λίαν ἀπλέτους εἶναι τὰς ἐκείνου φλυαρίας. Κρύπτειν δὲ τούτου τὰς βίβλους ἐσπουδάκασιν οἱ ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ μηδαμῶς εἰς μέσον προστιθέναι τοῖς βουλομένοις, δῆλον ὡς ὑπ’ ἐκείνου προστεταγμένοι, σαφῶς ἐντεῦθεν ἐλεγχόμενου ἐφ’ οἷς γε ἐπενόησε παρρησιάζασθαι μὴ τολμώντος. Φιλεῖ γάρ τὸ μὲν ψεῦδος λανθάνειν καὶ ἀνεπαισχύντως ἀπατᾶν καὶ εἰς ψυχὰς

Titus repeats his conviction that the Manichaeans kept their book in secret two more times (1.17 & 3.80, both preserved only in the Syriac text). However, as some scholars argue, this may be a heresiological topos.¹⁵⁴

1.17: For he has concealed his books and has placed them in darkness because he feared the refutation which would be (made) against them on the basis of [*lit. from*] them.¹⁵⁵

3.80: [...] ils cachent leurs livres et ne les donnent pas a ceux qui peuvent les examiner et reprouver les inepties de leur folie.¹⁵⁶

Nevertheless, despite the Manichaean secrecy, a later Titus' statement might be interpreted in a way that leaves space that he might have had access to the so-called *Thesaurus*.¹⁵⁷

Heraclian of Chalcedon

From Photius' *Bibliotheca*, we know that the bishop of Chalcedon, Heraclian (ca. 500), had written an anti-Manichaean work comprising twenty books, which Photius had read. This work refuted "the [book] that the Manichaeans call the *Gospel* and the *Book of the Giants* and the *Treasures*".¹⁵⁸

To refute them, it is presupposed that he knew them. "*The Gospel* is without doubt the same as *The Living Gospel*; Heraclian himself writes the full title a little further on, when he mentions Diodore".¹⁵⁹ We note that while Photius mentions one *Thesaurus* in his own list, reproducing the AA, here he speaks of *Treasures* in the plural, confirming the testimony of Epiphanius and Nilus of Ankara that there were more than one *Treasure*. In addition, Photius' testimony "also shows that Heraclian used the so-called *Little Treasury*".¹⁶⁰ It is also important to underline here that, for the first time, a Greek source is referring to the *Book of the Giants*, a book that, according to Photius, Heraclian knew.

Moreover, Photius' text states that Heraclian listed all previous authors who combated Manichaeans through their treatises, namely Hegemonius, Titus of Bostra, George of Laodicea, Serapion of Thmuis, and Diodore of Tarsus. According to Heraclian (through Photius' voice) two of the above authors, namely Titus of Bostra and Diodorus of Tarsus, while they thought they were fighting Mani's books, in fact refuted Adda's writings. Concerning the case of Titus, the observation is quite general and does not refer to any particular book. On the other hand, in the case of Diodorus Heraclian speaks of specific books. As Heraclian says, Diodorus, in his first seven (out of 25) books, thought he was defying Mani's Gospel, whereas he was combating the *Modion* of Adda.¹⁶¹

υποδύεσθαι, ἡ δὲ ἀλήθεια θαρραλέως ἀναφανδὸν κηρύττεσθαι. Οἱ δὲ κρύπτουσιν, αἰσχυνόμενοι τοὺς πρὶν ἀλῶναι τῆς σφῶν αὐτῶν γοητείας κρίνειν μέλλοντας τὰ γεγραμμένα.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Pedersen (2004, 35, 49 and 204 fn. 62). Brand (2019, 320-25) challenges the predominant view in recent scholarship that the Manichaean Elect concealed the canonical books (or that access was restricted) of the sect from their catechumens and outsiders.

¹⁵⁵ Pedersen 2004, 204 fn. 62.

¹⁵⁶ CCT 21, 316-17, 377.

¹⁵⁷ Titus of Bostra, c. *Manichaeos*, 3.9.10-17: Ἡμεῖς ὅλως, εἰ καὶ τὸν λεγόμενον αὐτοῦ τῆς μανίας θησαυρὸν εἰλήφειμεν εἰς χεῖρας, πάντως ἂν τοῖς γε ὀλίγοις καὶ ἀναγκαίοις τὴν ἀπολογίαν προσαγαγόντες, ληρεῖν ἀπέραντα διὰ τῶν ἄλλων φλυαριῶν αὐτὸν οὐκ ἂν ἐκωλύσαμεν. Δῆλον γὰρ ὡς τὰ μείζω καὶ περιφανῆ πανταχοῦ τῶν κινουμένων, λόγου τυγχάνοντα, ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἑαυτοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐλάττω συνυπάγει. Cf. Pedersen 2004, 204.

¹⁵⁸ Photius, *Bibl.*, cod. 85, p. 65a-b (9,37-10,38). 65a.37-65b.1-3 (PG 103): Ἀνεγνώσθη Ἡρακλειανοῦ ἐπισκόπου Καλχηδόνας κατὰ Μανιχαίων ἐν βιβλίοις κ'. [...] Ανατρέπει δὲ τὸ παρὰ τοῖς Μανιχαίοις καλούμενον εὐαγγέλιον καὶ τὴν Γιγάντειον βίβλον καὶ τοὺς Θησαυρούς. Pedersen 2004, 178 & 138; Lieu 1994, 108; Vermes 2001, 10.

¹⁵⁹ Pedersen 2004, 178.

¹⁶⁰ Pedersen 2004, 178.

¹⁶¹ Photius, *Bibl.*, cod. 85, 65b.4-16. Cf. Lieu 1992, 91.

2.3.6 Abjuration Formulas

The Seven Chapters

In the introduction to the *SC*, prior to the first anathema, the editor of the text informs us that his sources are various Manichaean books, as well as the refutations “composed against them by the teachers of the Holy and Catholic Church”.

Below are seven chapters together with suitable anathemas against the most godless Manichaeans and their foul and abominable heresy, compiled from various books of theirs and from those composed against them by the teachers of the Holy and Catholic Church of God - chapters showing how those who wish to repent with their whole soul and their whole heart must anathematize their former heresy and give full satisfaction to us Christians.¹⁶²

Since the information given by the author of the *SC* is accurate and unique in the patristic literature, his claim is of particular importance, and we have every reason to believe that he really had access to the Manichaean books. Other authors who declare something similar are Cyril and Titus of Bostra.

In the second anathema, the converted Manichaean had to anathematize “all the Manichaean books” (*πάσας τὰς μανιχαϊκὰς βίβλους*), in addition to Mani, his forerunners, his disciples, and the hierarchy of the Manichaean community.

I anathematize all the Manichaean books, the one which they call *Treasure* and their dead and death bearing Gospel which they in their error call *Living Gospel*, they by doing so having mortified themselves apart from God, and that which they call the *Book of the Secrets* and that of the *Mysteries* and that of the *Recollections* and that which refutes the Law and the holy Moses and the other prophets composed by Adda and Adeimantos, and the so-called *Heptalogue* of Agapius and Agapius himself and every book of theirs together with the *Epistles* of the most godless Manichaeus and every so-called *prayer* of theirs - as being full of sorcery and paying homage to the Devil their father.¹⁶³

In the above list of the *SC*, five out of the seven canonical books of Mani are mentioned, namely: *Thesaurus* (*Θησαυρὸν*), *Living Gospel* (*Ζῶν εὐαγγέλιον*), *Book of Mysteries* (*βιβλὸν τῶν Μυστηρίων*), the *Epistles of Mani* (*τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ ... Μανιχαίου*), and the Manichaean *Prayers* (*καὶ πᾶσαν εὐχὴν αὐτῶν*). Two books of the canon are omitted: *The Treatise* (*Pragmateia*) and *The Book of the Giants* (quoted solely by Heraclian). However, according to the Manichaean sources, these two books, along with the *Book of Mysteries*, could count as one. In *Kephalaion* 148 it is expressly declared that “these three writings form only a single one”.¹⁶⁴ As Tardieu argues, commenting on it (*Keph.* 148), “by placing the three books concerned with the exposition of mythology together in this way, the Manichaean sources

¹⁶² *SC* intr. (lines 1-8) (Lieu 1994, 234 & 2010, 117): Κεφάλαια ἑπτὰ σὺν ἀναθεματισμοῖς προσφόροις κατὰ τῶν ἀθεωτάτων Μανιχαίων καὶ τῆς μαρτῆς αὐτῶν καὶ θεοστυγοῦς αἵρέσεως, συνηγμένα ἐκ διαφόρων αὐτῶν βιβλίων καὶ ἐξ ὧν κατ’ αὐτῶν συνεγράψαντο οἱ τῆς ἀγίας τοῦ θεοῦ καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας διδάσκαλοι, καὶ παριστώντα πῶς δεῖ τούτους ἐξ ὅλης ψυχῆς καὶ ἐξ ὅλης καρδίας μετανοεῖν βουλομένους ἀναθεματίζειν τὴν γενομένην αὐτῶν αἵρεσιν καὶ ἡμᾶς τοὺς Χριστιανοὺς πληροφορεῖν.

¹⁶³ *SC* ch. 2 (lines 40-51) (Lieu 2010, 119): Ἀναθεματίζω πάσας τὰς μανιχαϊκὰς βίβλους, τὸν λεγόμενον παρ’ αὐτοῖς Θησαυρὸν καὶ τὸ νεκρὸν καὶ θανατηφόρον αὐτῶν Εὐαγγέλιον, ὃ ἐκεῖνοι πλανώμενοι Ζῶν εὐαγγέλιον ἀποκαλοῦσι, νεκρωθέντες ἐντεῦθεν ἤδη ἀπὸ θεοῦ, καὶ τὴν παρ’ αὐτοῖς ὀνομαζομένην βιβλὸν τῶν Ἀποκρύφων καὶ τὴν τῶν Μυστηρίων καὶ τὴν τῶν Απομνημονευμάτων καὶ τὴν κατὰ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τοῦ ἀγίου Μωϋσέως καὶ τῶν ἄλλων προφητῶν Ἀδδᾶ καὶ Ἀδειμάντου συγγραφὴν, καὶ τὴν λεγομένην Ἑπτάλογον Ἀγαπίου καὶ αὐτὸν Ἀγάπιον καὶ πᾶσαν αὐτῶν βιβλὸν μετὰ καὶ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ ἀθεωτάτου Μανιχαίου καὶ πᾶσαν εὐχὴν αὐτῶν λεγομένην, ὅτα γοητείας οὖσαν ἀνάπλωε καὶ τὸν διάβολον, τὸν αὐτῶν πατέρα, θεραπεύουσιν.

¹⁶⁴ *1Keph.* 148, see Tardieu 2008, 49.

themselves show that the primitive and authentic heptateuch can *also* be considered as a pentateuch. This view is confirmed by the testimony of the Manichaean Felix”.¹⁶⁵ It is true that earlier authors did refer to all of the five canonical books mentioned in the *Seven Chapters*, but none of them has mentioned all of them together.

Some remarks are necessary here concerning the four new books in the list of the *Seven Chapters*:

(1) The *Book of Secrets* (βιβλὸν τῶν Ἀποκρύφων) which is presented “as distinct from the *Book of Mysteries*” is unattested in Manichaean sources.¹⁶⁶ It is also mentioned by the LAF (fifth in order), but by no other source.

(2) It has been argued that the *Book of Recollections* probably recorded Mani’s biography and the early history of Manichaeism. It was found in Medinet Madi but has been very poorly preserved. It has been suggested that the CMC could have been the first part of the *Book of Recollections* in Greek, but there is no evidence for this.¹⁶⁷

(3) The writing of Adda and Adeimantos, which was directed against the Jewish Law and prophets, is a work based on the *Antitheses* of Marcion; it combats the OT with a parallel juxtaposition of corresponding passages in the OT and NT to prove the contradiction between the two testaments.¹⁶⁸ As said above, according to Heraclian, both Titus of Bostra and Diodorus of Tarsus combated Adda’s writings.¹⁶⁹

(4) Lastly, both Agapius and his work *Heptalogue* (Ἑπτάλογον Ἀγαπίου), which is anathematized as a Manichaean work, are unattested in Manichaean sources. I will further examine the case of Agapius and his work in ch.[7].¹⁷⁰

At the beginning of the second anathema, there is a reference to the *Zaradean prayers*, which Mani allegedly had composed in honour of Zoroaster. As far as I know, we still do not know whether such a Manichaean work existed.¹⁷¹

I anathematize Manes [...] and Zarades, whom he [...] also calls [...] the Sun and therefore compiled the Zaradean prayers for the successors of his own (i.e. Manes’) error.¹⁷²

Other references to the Manichaean books, specifically to their magical works, are found in the third anathema. The converted Manichaean, after anathematizing in detail the whole Manichaean pantheon, concluded:

I anathematize all these myths and condemn them [...] and to put it simply, (I anathematize) whatever is contained in the Manichaean books, especially their magical works.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁵ Tardieu 2008, 49: “Felix during his debate with Augustine in December 404 referred to the five auctores (Contra felicem, I, 14)-that is, to the totality of Mani’s works, classified as a pentateuch for reasons of theological concordance, as the very title of *Keph.* 148 makes clear: ‘On the Five Books insofar as They Belong to the Five Fathers’”.

¹⁶⁶ Lieu 1994, 269.

¹⁶⁷ Lieu 1994, 270.

¹⁶⁸ Lieu 1994, 270. This work was refuted by Augustine. About Augustine’s text see van den Berg 2010 and Baker-Brian 2006.

¹⁶⁹ Photius, *Bibl.*, cod. 85, 65.b 4-20.

¹⁷⁰ Lieu 1994, 270-71, 123.

¹⁷¹ Further about the Zaradean prayers see Lieu 1994, 261. On Zoroastrian motifs in the Manichaean texts see also Sundermann, 2008.

¹⁷² SC ch. 2 (lines 27-33) (Lieu 2010, 117, 119): Ἀναθεματίζω Μάνην [...] καὶ Ζαραδὴν, [...] ὃν καὶ ἥλιον ἀποκαλεῖ, ὥστε καὶ Ζαραδίας εὐχὰς συνθεῖναι τοῖς διαδόχοις τῆς αὐτοῦ πλάνης.

¹⁷³ SC ch. 3 (lines 81-82, 85-87) (Lieu 2010, 119): Τοὺς μύθους τούτους ἅπαντας ἀναθεματίζω καὶ καταθεματίζω [...] καὶ ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν ὅσα ταῖς μανιχαϊκαῖς, μᾶλλον δὲ ταῖς γοητευτικαῖς αὐτῶν περιέχεται βίβλοις.

In the last, seventh, chapter/anathema is anathematized a book entitled *Theosophy*, which equates Judaism, Hellenism, Christianity, and Manichaeism. It was written by a certain Aristocritus whose motive was “to make all men Manichaeans”.

I anathematize in the same way that most atheistic book of Aristocritus which he entitled *Theosophy*, through which he tries to demonstrate that Judaism, Hellenism, Christianity and Manichaeism are one and the same doctrine, with no other ulterior motive than to make all men Manichaeans, as far as he can.¹⁷⁴

However, “we do not now possess a work entitled *Theosophy* by Aristocritus”; moreover, there is no other reference anywhere else linking such a book to Manichaeism.¹⁷⁵

Long and Short *Abjuration Formulas*

The list of the books in the *LAF* is exactly the same as that in the *SC*, while the list in the *SAF* is different. According to the latter, the books composed by Mani himself were five, namely the *Living Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life*, the *Collection of Letters*, the *Book of Mysteries*, and the *Treatise of the Giants*.

Anathema to Mani otherwise known as Manichaeus and Cubricus and to his doctrines and all that is expounded or composed by him and those who have been persuaded by him and, as I have said before, the five books which are impiously set forth by him. He entitled them: the *Living Gospel* (which in actual fact causes death), the *Treasure of Life* (which truly is the treasure of death). And I anathematize (his) *The Collection of Letters* and the (*Book*) of *Mysteries* which is intended by them for the overturning of the Law and the holy Prophets,¹⁷⁶ and the *Treatise of the Giants* and the so-called Heptalogus of Agapios and Agapios himself and every book of theirs and every prayer uttered by them, especially the sorcery.¹⁷⁷

The *SAF* is the second Greek source (after Heraclian) that mentions the *Treatise of the Giants*. Instead of *τὴν τῶν γιγάντων πραγματείαν*, Goar's text gives *τὴν τῶν πάντων πραγματείαν*. According to Lieu this is a misreading “and appears to be a crasis of the titles of two Manichaean works, *The Book of the Giants* and *Treatise (Pragmateia)*”.¹⁷⁸ It is strange that the latter (*Pragmateia*) is not mentioned as a book of the Manichaean canon by any other Greek source, since according to Tardieu, “the picturesque aspect of its accounts of the birth of the gods and of men furnished heresiologists with a great many piquant and comical details, well suited to confound and ridicule the disciples of a teller of such tales”.¹⁷⁹ It is also worth noting, that while the *SAF* refers to a book (?) of prayers (*πᾶσαν εὐχὴν*),¹⁸⁰ our source does not include

¹⁷⁴ SC ch. 7 (lines 222-227) (Lieu 2010, 125): ἀναθεματίζω κατὰ τὸν ὅμοιον τρόπον καὶ τὴν ἀθεωτάτην βίβλον Ἀριστοκρίτου, ἣν ἐκεῖνος Θεοσοφίαν ἐπέγραψεν, δι' ἧς πειράται δεικνύναι τὸν Ἰουδαϊσμόν καὶ τὸν Ἑλληνισμόν καὶ τὸν Χριστιανισμόν καὶ τὸν Μανιχαϊσμόν ἐν εἵναι καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ δόγμα.

¹⁷⁵ About Aristocritus, see Lieu 1994, 295-96.

¹⁷⁶ Both the *SAF* and the *Book of Mysteries* refuted the Law and the Prophets. Cf. Bennett, 2001a, 47. Incidentally (?), according to the *Compendium of Manichaean doctrines* the *Mysteries* (4th book in the list) is characterized as ‘the sacred book of secret law’ (Haloun and Henning 1952, 194).

¹⁷⁷ *SAF* (e cod. Barb. gr. 336, sec. 148) (Lieu 2010, 132-33, slightly altered): Ἀνάθεμα Μάνεντι ἦτοι Μανιχαίῳ τῷ κα<ι> Κουβρίκῳ καὶ τοῖς δόγμασιν αὐτοῦ καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐκτεθεῖσιν καὶ συγγραφεῖσιν παρ' αὐτοῦ καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς πειθομένοις αὐτῷ καὶ τοῖς—ὡς προεῖπον—παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀσεβῶς ἐκτεθεῖσιν πέντε βίβλοις, αἱ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν οὕτως· τὸ Ζῶν εὐαγγέλιον, ὅπερ νεκροποιεῖ, καὶ τὸν Θησαυρὸν τῆς ζωῆς, ὅπερ ἐστὶν θησαυρὸς θανάτου, καὶ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν ὁμάδα, καὶ τὴν τῶν μυστηρίων, ἥτις ἐστὶν πρὸς τὴν ἐπιτηδευθεῖσαν αὐτοῖς ἀνατροπὴν τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν ἁγίων προφητῶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν γιγάντων πραγματείαν, καὶ τὴν λεγομένην Ἑπτάλογον Ἀγαπίου, καὶ αὐτὸν Ἀγάπιον καὶ πᾶσαν αὐτῷ<ν> βίβλον, καὶ πᾶσαν εὐχὴν παρ' αὐτῷ<ν> λεγομένην, μᾶλλον δὲ Γοητείαν.

¹⁷⁸ Lieu 1994, 230.

¹⁷⁹ Tardieu 2008, 42-43.

¹⁸⁰ If “πᾶσαν εὐχὴν” refers to the book of Prayers.

it among Mani's writings. Another source that gives the titles of the Manichaean books is Timothy the Presbyter (late sixth-early seventh century). Timothy starts his list with the books of the *SAF*, including the prayers, and listing them with almost the same order. Then, he adds some of those previously mentioned works (*Heptalogue* of Agapius, *Kephalaia*, *Gospel of Thomas*), as well some new titles. He also states that these books are the innovation of Mani's followers.¹⁸¹

Some remarks from the comparison of the *Abjuration Formulas*

As we can observe in table (2), the main source of Timothy's *De receptione haereticorum* was the *SAF* while the source of the compiler of the *LAF* was the *SC*. Among the many similarities between the *SAF* and Timothy, it is characteristic that in both texts "the title of the *Epistles* is given as the 'Collected Letters' (τῶν ἐπιστολῶν ὁμάδα)".¹⁸² As Lieu notes, "the similarity between the list of Mani's writings in the *Short Formula* and the one provided by Timothy requires further investigation as does the question of the source of the differences between the *Short Formula* and the other two formulas".¹⁸³ However, as both Timothy and (mainly) the *LAF* are later sources that draw information from the *SAF* and the *SC* respectively, the similarities are to be expected. What I think is worth investigating are the deviations (and their cause) between the two earlier sources (i.e. the *SC* and *SAF*). I will deal with this question at the end of next section.

Table 2: The Manichaean Canon in the Abjuration Formulas Tradition

Keph. 5,22–25/Homilies 25.1–6/Chinese Compendium	The Seven Chapters	Short Formula	Long Formula	Timothy ¹⁸⁴
The Great Gospel (1) The Gospel (1) The great yinglun (= Evangelion): 'book of wisdom which thoroughly understands the roots and origins of the entire doctrines' (1)	(2) The Living Gospel τὸ νεκρὸν καὶ θανατηφόρον αὐτῶν Εὐαγγέλιον, ὃ ἐκεῖνοι πλανώμενοι Ζῶν εὐαγγέλιον ἀποκαλοῦσι	(1) The Living Gospel τὸ Ζῶν εὐαγγέλιον, ὅπερ νεκροποιεῖ	(2) The death-bearing Gospel τὸ νεκροποιὸν αὐτῶ εὐαγγέλιον, ὅπερ Ζῶν καλοῦσι	(1) The Living Gospel Τὸ Ζῶν Εὐαγγέλιον
The Treasury of Life (2) The Treasury of Life (2) 'the sacred book of the treasure of pure life' (2)	(1) The Treasure Θησαυρόν	(2) The Treasure of Life τὸν Θησαυρόν τῆς ζωῆς, ὅπερ ἐστὶν θησαυρὸς θανάτου	(3) The Treasure of Life Θησαυρόν ζωῆς	(2) The Treasure of Life Ὁ Θησαυρὸς τῆς ζωῆς
the Pragmateia (3) the Pragmateia (3) 'book of instruction which testifies the past' (5)	-	-	-	-

¹⁸¹ Timothy the Presbyter, *Recept. Haer.* (PG 86^A:12-73; 20-24, 21): Οἱ δ' ἀπ' αὐτοῦ θεοστυγεῖς Μανιχαῖοι καινοτομοῦσιν ἑαυτοῖς δαιμονιώδη βιβλία ἅπερ εἰσὶ τάδε.

¹⁸² Lieu 1994, 271 & 230.

¹⁸³ Lieu 1994, 230.

¹⁸⁴ Timothy's list provides, additionally, the following titles: The *Kephalaia* (7), The *Gospel of Thomas* (9), The *Gospel of Philip* (10), The *Acts of the Apostle Andrew* (11), The *Fifteenth Epistles to the Laodiceans* (12), The so called *Infancy of the Lord* (13).

the Book of the Mysteries (4) the Book of the Mysteries (4) 'the sacred book of secret law' (4)	(4) The (Book) of Mysteries [βιβλόν] τὴν τῶν Μυστηρίων	(4) The (Book) of Mysteries (described as an anti-O.T. work) τὴν τῶν μυστηρίων	(4) The (Book) of Mysteries Μυστηρίων βιβλόν	(4) The (Book) of Mysteries Ἡ τῶν Μυστηρίων
the scripture I have written for the Parthians (5) ¹⁸⁵ The Book of the Giants (5) The 'book of the strong heroes' (6)	-	(5) The (Book) of the Giants τὴν τῶν γιγάντων πραγματείαν	-	(8) The (Book) of the Giants Ἡ τῶν Γιγάντων πραγματεία
the Epistles (6) the Epistles (6) 'the sacred book of discipline or of healing' (3)	(8) The Epistles of Mani τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ ... Μανιχαίου	(3) The collected letters τῶν ἐπιστολῶν ομάδα	(1) The Book of Epistles τὸ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν αὐτοῦ βιβλίον	(3) The collected letters Ἡ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν ομάς
Psalms and Praises (7) The Psalms and The Prayers (7) 'book of praises and wishes (vows)' (7)	(9) Prayers πᾶσαν εὐχὴν... λεγομένην, ... γοητείας	(7) Prayers πᾶσαν εὐχὴν ... λεγομένην, μᾶλλον δὲ Γοητείαν	(9) Prayers πᾶσαν εὐχὴν, μᾶλλον δὲ γοητείαν	(6) The (Book) of Prayers Ἡ τῶν Εὐχῶν
'the drawing of the two great principles' (Picture-book or Eikon) (8)	-	-	-	-
<i>The Book of as-Saburaqan</i> , containing the chapters 'The dissolution of the Hearers', 'The dissolution of the Elect', and 'The dissolution of life'-	(3) The Book of Secrets Βιβλόν τῶν Ἀποκρύφων?		(5) The (Book) of Secrets τὴν τῶν Ἀποκρύφων?	
CMC?	5) The (Book) of Recollections τὴν τῶν Ἀπομνημονευμάτων		(6) The (Book) of Recollections τὴν τῶν Ἀπομνημονευμάτων	
	(6) The anti-OT work of Addas and Adminatus Ἀδδᾶ καὶ Ἀδειμάντου συγγραφὴν		(7) The anti-OT work of Addas and Adminatus Ἀδδᾶ καὶ Ἀδειμάντου	
	(7) The Heptalogue of Agapius Ἑπτάλογον Ἀγαπίου	(6) The Heptalogue of Agapius Ἑπτάλογον Ἀγαπίου	(8) The Heptalogue of Agapius Ἑπτάλογον Ἀγαπίου	(5) The Heptalogue of Alogius Ἡ Ἑπτάλογος Ἀλογίου

¹⁸⁵ In this first canonical list (1Keph. 5.22-26) it appears that *The (Book of the) Giants* is called 'the writing for the Parthians' (Gardner and Lieu 2004, 153).

2.4 The Manichaean Hierarchy

The structure of Manichaean hierarchy–Institution

The most important distinction among the members of the Manichaean community was, of course, its division into the two classes, the catechumens and the Elect. Some of the latter constituted the Manichaean ministry and administration by assuming additional offices and tasks (e.g. priestly, missionary, educational, etc.).

The only Greek anti-Manichaean source that records the whole hierarchical structure of the Manichaean church in detail is the *SC*. The second chapter of the formula, where the converted ex-Manichaean anathematized Mani, his forerunners, his disciples, and his books, concludes with the following words:

I anathematize them all and curse them together with their leaders, and their teachers and bishops and presbyters and elect (ones) and hearers with their souls and bodies and their impious tradition.¹⁸⁶

The titles of the six Manichaean hierarchical grades (i.e. *archegos*/leader, teacher, bishop, presbyter, elect, and hearer), given by the *SC* in Greek, are well attested both in Manichaean and anti-Manichaean (Syriac, Arabic and Latin) literature.¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, Augustine informs us about the number of the members in each grade: (1) there was one leader at a time, (2) the number of the Manichaean teachers was 12 and remained stable from the time of Mani until his days, and (3) there were 72 bishops. He also provides information on the relationships between lower and higher grades in the hierarchy. The leader had to belong to the class of teachers, and therefore was the thirteenth teacher. The 72 bishops were consecrated and received orders from the teachers and in turn, they ordained the presbyters of the sect.¹⁸⁸ These grades are attested in Arabic sources, which also provide brief details about the basic qualitative feature of each class. Thus, according to al-Nadim, the five grades represent the five essences/qualities of God:

the teachers, who are the offspring of intellect; the deacons, who are the offspring of knowledge; the priests, (who are) the offspring of intelligence; the Elect, (who are) the offspring of what is invisible; and the catechumens, (who are) the offspring of sagacity.¹⁸⁹

More importantly, the Manichaean *hierarchical* rank structure is well attested by Manichaean texts. Indeed, according to the Coptic Kephalaion, entitled “On the ten advantages of the Manichaean religion”, its organizational structure is one of the key advantages that will allow Mani’s religion to remain indestructible over the years:

¹⁸⁶ *SC* ch. 2.51-55 (Lieu 1994, 238 & 2010, 119 slightly altered): “Ἀπαντας τούτους ἀναθεματίζω καὶ καταθεματίζω σὺν ἀρχηγοῖς αὐτῶν καὶ διδασκάλοις καὶ ἐπισκόποις καὶ πρεσβυτέροις καὶ ἐκλεκτοῖς αὐτῶν καὶ ἀκροαταῖς μετὰ τῶν ψυχῶν αὐτῶν καὶ σωμάτων καὶ τῆς ἀθέου αὐτῶν παραδόσεως. The same text is reproduced in *LAF* 3 (PG 100:1466/D/8A, Lieu 2010, 140). Apart from minor changes in grammatical forms of words, interestingly, the anathema refers separately to male and female Elect: ἀναθεματίζω καὶ καταθεματίζω [...] ἐκλεκτοὺς καὶ ἐκλεκτάς.

¹⁸⁷ Lieu 1994, 272. Cf. BeDuhn, 1995 (PhD), 76-93; BeDuhn 2000b, 30. For the office of Teacher in fourth-century Egypt see Gardner 2006.

¹⁸⁸ Augustine, *Haer.* 46.16 (Lieu 2010, 91; Gardner and Lieu 2004, 190-91: “The Manichaeans keep this number even today. For they have twelve of their elect whom they call ‘masters’, and a thirteenth who is their chief, but seventy-two bishops who receive their orders from the ‘masters’, and any number of priests who are ordained by the bishops. The bishops also have deacons. The rest are called merely the Elect”.

¹⁸⁹ Al-Nadim, *Fihrist* in Reeves 2011, 209-210. Cf. Van Tongerloo 1982, 274-75: “Les docteurs (...), fils de la clémence (...); les évêques (...), fils de connaissance (...); les anciens (...), fils de l’intelligence (...); les élus (litt. les justes: (...), fils du secret (...); les auditeurs (...), fils de la perspicacité (...).”

Older religions (remained in order) as long as there were holy leaders in it; [...] However, my religion will remain firm through the living (. . . tea)chers, the bishops, the elect and the hearers;¹⁹⁰

Mani himself appears to have introduced the dual structure of the community and to have established the upper tiers of its hierarchy. In an Iranian Manichaean text, apart from the number of teachers (12) and bishops (72), we find that the number of presbyters was 360. At the top of the hierarchical pyramid is found the 'Chef de l'Église':

[...] a l'entière cinq-...-Église:" a son Altesse le Chef de l'Église," les 12 Docteurs, les 72 Évêques, les 360 Anciens, les Dendars élus et justes, et les pieux Auditeurs.¹⁹¹

This hierarchical structure remained in force until much later, as is shown by Manichaean sources found in Central Asia and China, such as the *Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of Mani the Buddha of Light* (eighth cent.). Here again (article four) a brief description of the task of each class is provided. The twelve teachers are characterized as the "trustee of the Law and teacher of the Way"; the seventy-two bishops as "attendant of the Law"; the three hundred and sixty presbyters as the "principal of the hall of law"; the elect as "all immaculately good men" and the auditors as "all purely faithful listeners".¹⁹²

In another Chinese Manichaean hymn, the *Hymnaire*, the Manichaean believers firstly invoke and praise "the universal venerable Lord Mani", as the "Wise Light [...] and the awakening Sun, Who came from that great Light-realm into this world" [...] Who selected the twelve great Mu-she [teachers], The seventy-two Fu-tuo-tan [bishops], The Doctrine-receivers who dwell in the Hall of Law, The clean and pure good Masses, and the Hearers".¹⁹³

As one observes, the numerical structure 1-12-72-360 "of the central Manichaean administration" was widespread and in force in all the Manichaean communities regardless of time and place.¹⁹⁴ Further, as is evident, this structure is reminiscent of the corresponding organization of the Christian Church.¹⁹⁵ Therefore, it is surprising that it is not recorded by any other Greek anti-Manichaean source. Regarding Mani's successors in the office of the Manichaean leadership of the Manichaean church, our sources cite the first two, namely Sisinnius, and Innaios. The name of Sisinnius (*archegos* after Mani's death) is found in both the AA and AF tradition, while that of Innaios is recorded only by the SC (and the LAF), yet, without mentioning his office.¹⁹⁶ According to several researchers, the seat of the Manichaean leader (*archegos*) was located at Seleucia-Ctesiphon "until at least the end of the eighth century",¹⁹⁷ something that our sources apparently did not know. Otherwise, the lack of any

¹⁹⁰ 1Keph. 151.370.16–375.15 in Gardner and Lieu 2004, 109. BeDuhn 1995b, 28: "Puech considered the well-organized structure of the Manichaean Church one of its principal strongpoints in terms of success and survival".

¹⁹¹ Van Tongerloo 1982, 276.

¹⁹² Haloun and Henning 1952, 188-212, 195. See also Lieu 1981a, 157, 161.

¹⁹³ Mo-ni Chiao Hsia Pu Tsan. "The Lower (Second?) Section of the Manichaean Hymns" (in Giles 1943, trans. by Tsui Chi), 188. Cf. Van Tongerloo 1982, 275.

¹⁹⁴ BeDuhn 1995b, 77: "The 1-12-72 structure of the central Manichaean administration was known to all Manichaeans, from North Africa to China". The stable structure of the higher Manichaean hierarchy strengthened the perception of the unity of the Manichaean church and mission, despite the diversity of local traditions, see Lim 1989, 231-50.

¹⁹⁵ Lieu 1994, 168-69: "The organisation of the Manichaean Church, with its twelve apostles and seventy-two bishops, also closely parallels that of the Christian Church"; Tongerloo 1982, 281: "the title (épithète) 'bishop' (évêque), "a été influencé par l'Église chrétienne". On the question of the origin (Christian tradition or astronomy) of the scheme 1-12-72-360, see Leurini 2009, 169-79; Leurini 2013, 141; Leurini 2017.

¹⁹⁶ I will discuss both of them in the next subsection.

¹⁹⁷ Lieu 2010, XX: "After the death of Mani, the first *archegos* was Sisinnios but he too suffered martyrdom and was succeeded by Innaios. Subsequent *archegoi* remained in Ctesiphon until the centre of the archdiocese was

comment linking the Byzantine Manichaeans with the headquarters of their religion would indeed be strange. Concerning the other grades of the Manichaean hierarchy, there are only few and scattered references to individual ranks (i.e. teachers, bishops, and presbyters) in the literature.¹⁹⁸

2.5 First Manichaean Missionaries in Greek anti-Manichaica

2.5.1 Before the *Acta*

Alexander of Lycopolis is the oldest and the only Greek anti-Manichaean source before the AA that records the names of the first Manichaean missionaries and expositors of Mani's teaching in his area, Egypt. He strongly emphasizes the intimate relationship between them and Mani. These are Papos and Thomas and others after them.

This newfangledness of his has but recently come to the fore. The first expounder of his doctrines to visit us was a man called Papos, after whom came Thomas, and again some others after both of these. [...] So, our knowledge concerning his doctrines came to us from those who know him intimately.¹⁹⁹

Concerning Papos, his name is attested in Manichaean sources, where he is presented as belonging to a circle of students around Mani.²⁰⁰ The case of Thomas will be examined in the next sub-chapter, since his name appears again in the AA tradition.

2.5.2 The *Acta* and its Echoes. The Trio: Addas, Thomas, and Hermas

The AA and Epiphanius

The AA tradition always cites three Manichaean missionaries together: Addas, Thomas, and Hermas. That the inner circle of Mani's disciples consisted of three students is also attested by the CMC. However, in that source, the names of Mani's three original disciples are Simeon, Abizachaeus, and Patticius.²⁰¹ Both Hegemonius and Epiphanius, in Mani's biography and Turbo's account, inform us about how the aforementioned students of Mani embarked

moved to the outskirts of Baghdad in the Islamic period. Later (c. 908 CE) the seat of the *archegos* was moved to Chorasan in Central Asia as the religion attracted increasing numbers of followers on the Silk Road". Gardner and Lieu 2004, 24: "Until the tenth century the Twin-Cities (al-Mada'in) remained the seat of the *archegos* or *imam*. Ecclesiastical authority was mediated downwards via twelve teachers (magister), thence to the bishops (episcopus), then the elders (presbyter), and so to the general body of the elect and hearers". Lieu 1994, 104-105: "From An-Nadim's testimony, we know that the seat remained there until at least the end of the 8th century. "In the time of Abu Ja'far al-Mansur (754-775), a Manichaean from Africa, Abu Hilal al-Dayhuri became the Imam (i.e. *archegos*) of the sect at al-Madain (formerly Seleucia-Ctesiphon) - the traditional seat of the supreme head of the Manichaean church". BeDuhn 1995b, 28: "At its headquarters in "Babylon" (no doubt Seleucia-Ctesiphon) resided the Manichaean "pope" [...] This leader consecrated the twelve teachers, who in turn ...".

¹⁹⁸ I will examine all these references in ch.[7].

¹⁹⁹ Alexander of Lycopolis, *Tract. Man.* 1-2 (Van der Horst and Mansfeld, 52 altered): οὐ πάλαι μὲν ἐπεπόλασεν ἢ τοῦτου καινοτομία—πρῶτός γέ τις Πάπος τοῦνομα πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐγένετο τῆς τοῦ ἀνδρὸς δόξης ἐξηγητῆς καὶ μετὰ τοῦ-τον Θωμᾶς καὶ τινες ἕτεροι μετ' αὐτούς [...] Τοιάδε οὖν τις φήμη τῆς ἐκείνου δόξης ἀπὸ τῶν γνωρίμων τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἀφίκετο πρὸς ἡμᾶς.

²⁰⁰ Lieu 1994, 265. In the Coptic *2PsB* 34.12, Pappos appears in a list of Manichaean saints.

²⁰¹ According to CMC 106.7–23: Παττικί[ο]ς πρῶτός σου τῆς ἐκλο[γ]ῆς γενήσεται καὶ συνα- [κο]λουθήσει σοι. [τότε] τοῖνυν παρεγένον-[<τό> μοι] νεανία δύο ἐκ τῶν [βαπ]τιστῶν, οἳ καὶ πλη-[σιόχω]ροί μου ὑπῆρχον, [Συμεῶ]ν καὶ Αβιζαχίας. [ἤ]λθον δὲ πρὸς ἐμέ συνε-[λευσόμεν]οι εἰς πάντα τό-[πον· καὶ παρ]ῆσάν [μοι]συνεργ-[γοί] ὅπου ἐπορεύθη]μεν.

upon their missionary career. The three of them appear together in three different parts of the texts: twice at the end of Mani's biography and once in Turbo's account. The first reference to the three in Mani's biography concerns their election as students of Mani.

So when that boy [Mani] had reached nearly sixty years of age [...] also acquired three disciples whose names are as follows: Thomas, Addas, and Hermas.²⁰²

In Epiphanius' version, it appears that while Mani was in prison, he had formed a group of students who visited him and who, according to Epiphanius, were 22 in number. Of these, he chose three, "with the intention of sending them to Judaea" to find the Christian books.

Thus Mani, or Cubricus, remained < in > confinement, visited by his own disciples. For by now the scum had gathered a band, as it were, already about twenty-two, whom he called disciples. He chose three of these, one named Thomas, and Hermeias, and Addas, with the intention < of sending them to Judaea* >. For he had heard of the sacred books to be found in Judaea and the world over—I mean < the > Christian books, the Law and Prophets, the Gospels, and the Apostles.²⁰³

The second reference in the biography and the reference in Turbo's account concern the dispatch of the three by Mani for missionary action. According to Mani's biography in the AA:

Next he decided to send his disciples with the things he had written in the books to the upper regions of that same province, and among the scattered cities and villages, in order to obtain some other people to follow him. Thomas decided to take the regions of Egypt, Addas those of Scythia, while only Hermas chose to remain with Manes.²⁰⁴

According to Epiphanius' version of Mani's biography:

After he had died like that and had left his disciples whom we have mentioned, Addas, Thomas and Hermeias—he had sent them > out before he was punished as we described—(4) Hermeias went > to Egypt. [...] (5) Addas, however, went north and Thomas to Judaea, and the doctrine has gained in strength to this day by their efforts.²⁰⁵

The mission of the three students is also the subject of the third reference at the end of Turbo's account. According to it, Mani delivered his teachings to those three disciples and "ordered them to go to the three areas of the world".

AA: Addas obtained the regions of the East, Thomas received the lands of the Syrians, and Hermas set out for Egypt. Right down today they remain there in order to preach this faith.²⁰⁶

Epiphanius: Mani imparted this entire teaching to his three disciples and told each of them to make his way to his own area: Addas was assigned the east, Syria fell to Thomas, but the other, Hermeias, journeyed to Egypt. And they are there to this day for the purpose of establishing the teaching of this religion.²⁰⁷

We note the following discrepancies in the above texts:

- (1) The acquisition of the three disciples in the AA is placed prior to the imprisonment of Mani, whereas in Epiphanius it takes place while Mani was in prison.
- (2) Different missionary destinations: While the missionary destinations given by the AA and Epiphanius are the same in Turbo's narration, they differ in Mani's biography. What seems odd, however, is that the destinations of the three missionaries in both the AA and Epiphanius

²⁰² AA 64.4 (Vermes, 144).

²⁰³ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.5.1-3 (Williams, 232).

²⁰⁴ AA 64.6 (Vermes, 144-45).

²⁰⁵ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.12.3-5 (Williams, 239).

²⁰⁶ AA 13.4 (Vermes, 58).

²⁰⁷ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.31.8 (Williams, 261).

are different between Mani's biography and Turbo's account. The following table delineates the different versions of Mani's disciples' apostleship:

	Addas	Thomas	Hermas
Acta 64, biography	Scythia	Egypt	remain with Manes
Epiphanius 12, biography	North	Judaea	Egypt
Acta 13.4, Turbo	East	Syria	Egypt
Epiphanius 31, Turbo	East	Syria	Egypt

Scopello also raises the question as to how to explain this difference.²⁰⁸ In any case, what can be said is that the three missionaries departed from Seleucia-Ctesiphon (or somewhere else in the Sasanian Empire) and moved northwards towards the Roman Empire, "to the upper regions of that same province, and among the scattered cities and villages, in order to obtain [followers]" (AA 64.6). Despite the highlighted differences, what is important to note here, is "how far beyond Iran Manichaeism had spread at that time".²⁰⁹

Cyril of Jerusalem

Cyril, in contrast to the AA and Epiphanius, just mentions the names of the three disciples (Baddas instead of Addas), at the end of Mani's biography. Also, he does not give any comments about their mission: "Mani had three disciples, Thomas and Baddas and Hermas".²¹⁰

Theodoret of Cyrrhus

The next writer who reproduces the trio of the AA and their mission is Theodoret, who seems to adopt his own version for the destinations.

At first, Manes had three students, Aldas, and Thomas and Hermas. And he sent Aldas as a missionary to the Syrians and Thomas to the Indians.²¹¹

At this point, it would be worth examining what genuine Manichaean sources have to tell about these three missionaries.

The Acta's three missionaries in Manichaean sources

Addas

Among the three disciples of Mani named in the AA tradition, Addas is the best testified in both the anti-Manichaean and Manichaean sources (eastern and western).²¹² In general, Addas is considered to be the most important name in Manichaean missions. According to a Syriac testimony "he was [...] sent by Mani to establish Manichaean communities", both in the

²⁰⁸ Scopello 1995, 228.

²⁰⁹ Tardieu 1986: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/archelaus-author>

²¹⁰ Cyril, *Catech.* 6.31: Τοῦτου μαθηταὶ τρεῖς γεγόνασι, Θωμᾶς καὶ Βαδδᾶς καὶ Ἑρμᾶς.

²¹¹ Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Haer.* (PG 83:380.54-55). Apparently, Theodoret confuses the Manichaean with the Christian Thomas, who was believed (wrongly, it seems) to have gone to India.

²¹² CMC: (165.) πάλιν [..... ..] α βε[..... ..] Ἀδδᾶ[ν] ἄνδρα[..... ..]. 2PsB 34. Lieu in Vermes 2001, 39 fn. 10. Cf. Sfameni Gasparro's (2000, 546-559) "Addas-Adimantus".

East, (to Karkā de Bēt Selōk in Bēt Garmai, i.e. in modern Kirkuk), coinciding with the AA's testimony, and in the West, in the Roman Empire.²¹³

They went to the Roman Empire [...]. Hereafter the Lord sent three scribes, the Gospel, and two other writings to Adda. He gave the order, "Do not take it farther, but stay there like a merchant who collects a treasure!" Adda labored very hard in these areas, founded many monasteries, chose many elects and hearers, composed writings, and made wisdom his weapon.²¹⁴

In the *Acta*, Addas is also presented as Turbo's instructor,²¹⁵ while according to Epiphanius, Turbo was a disciple of Mani.²¹⁶ According to a third version of the text (in Latin) preserved in the Codex Bobiensis, Turbo and Addas were one and the same person.²¹⁷ It is well known that Addas was a prolific writer. As said, according to Heraclian, both of the works against Manichaeans written by Titus of Bostra and Diodorus of Tarsus actually refuted Adda's writings and not Mani's.²¹⁸ Adda's book, *Antitheses*, has been suggested as one of Hegemonius' sources, in specific, for the report of Diodorus to Archelaus (AA 44-45).²¹⁹

Thomas

Thomas, according to the accounts of Hegemonius and Epiphanius, was sent by Mani to Syria and/or Judea and/or Egypt. Alexander of Lycopolis also testified to this mission to Egypt, and he writes that Thomas was the second Manichaean missionary who came to Egypt after Papos. According to Cyril, this Manichaean Thomas was also the author of a Gospel of Thomas. As Lieu argues, "this same Thomas may have also been the author of the 'Psalms of Thomas'".²²⁰ However, since no Manichaean source mentions that Mani had a disciple named Thomas, some researchers have questioned the AA's testimony. An argument against these reservations and in favour of the AA's credibility is that more reliable sources, such as the pagan philosopher Alexander and the author of the *Seven Chapters*, give the same testimony as the heresiologists of the AA's tradition.²²¹

Hermas

If the lack of testimonies in Manichaean sources casts doubt as to whether Thomas was a student of Mani, things are even more complicated in the case of Hermas, since even his name is entirely unknown in Manichaean literature. However, some scholars have suggested that

²¹³ *The Acts of the Martyrs of Karkā de Bēt Selōk* in Lieu 1994, 263: Addas "also appears in a Chinese Manichaean text as a model disciple of Mani".

²¹⁴ Skjaervø 2006, 7 (BT 11 no. 1 M 2 MP): "The coming of the apostle into the countries 'They went to the Roman empire and experienced many doctrinal disputes with the religions. Many elects and hearers were chosen. Pattig was there for one year. [...] He opposed the dogmas with these. In everything he acquitted himself well. He subdued and enchained the dogmas. He came as far as Alexandria. He chose Nafsha for the religion. Many wonders and miracles were performed in those lands. The religion of the apostle was advanced in the Roman empire". Gardner and Lieu 2004, 111.

²¹⁵ AA 4.3 (Vermes, 39-40): "He summoned one of the disciples of Addas called Turbo, who had been instructed by Addas, gave him the letter and told him to go and deliver it to Marcellus".

²¹⁶ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.25.1 (Williams, 252): "But next I appropriately insert Mani's doctrine word for word as Turbo himself revealed it, one of Mani's disciples whom I mentioned earlier"; 66.5.12 (Williams, 233): "But he sent him a letter from the boundary of the river Stranga, from a place called Fort Arabio, by Turbo, one of his disciples, and this is what it said".

²¹⁷ Tardieu 2008, 64.

²¹⁸ Photius, *Bibl.*, cod. 85, 65.b 4-20. Lieu 1994, 263. Lieu 1992, 91.

²¹⁹ BeDuhn 2007b, 131-147.

²²⁰ Lieu 1994, 264.

²²¹ Lieu 1994, 264. Church and Stroumsa 1980, 47-55.

‘Hermas’ could be just a Hellenized version of the name of Mar Ammō, who was an outstanding disciple of Mani and founder of the Manichaean religion in the East.²²²

According to the story of the AA, Hermas was either sent to spread the Manichaean religion to Egypt or he preferred to stay with Mani. However, according to the Manichaean sources, it was Ozeos and not Hermas who stayed with Mani during his last moments.²²³ Interesting in this regard is Epiphanius’ claim, that he himself knew “people who had met this Hermeias” in Egypt and “described him to” Epiphanius.²²⁴ This testimony recalls Cyril’s claim that he also knew people who had seen Mani with their own eyes.²²⁵

Turbo and Sisinnius

Turbo, who plays such an important role in the AA, is not referred to by any Manichaean source either. According to the AA, Turbo converted to Christianity and was ordained by the bishop Archelaus as a deacon.²²⁶ Apart from the trio and Turbo, other references to Manichaean students, we have, pertain to Sisinnius in the AA and Akouas in Epiphanius. Both the Manichaean and anti-Manichaean sources testify that Sisinnius was a disciple and successor of Mani in the leadership (*archegos*) of the Manichaean Church.²²⁷ In the AA, Sisinnius is mentioned by Archelaus as the source of Mani’s biography. Archelaus, at the end of the second debate, confesses to his audience that his source of Mani’s biography is Sisinnius, one of Mani’s twenty-two ex-companions in Carchar, whom he could call upon to attest his words, since he converted to Christianity, as Turbo had also done.

But now I beseech you to listen to me in silence as I wish to speak very briefly, to enable you to learn who he is that has arrived, and where he comes from and what he is like. A certain Sisinnius, one of his comrades, has given me this information, and I am prepared to call him to testify to what I shall state, if you desire. But not even he will prevent me saying what I am saying in Manes’ presence, for the man I have named has become a believer in our doctrine, just as another called Turbo when staying with me.²²⁸

As Klein remarks, the AA presented Sisinnius as one of Mani’s retinue, without any allusion to the important role he had in the Manichaean mission.²²⁹ Needless to say, Hegemonius’ claim that his sources (for Mani’s doctrines and biography) were two converted Manichaeans (Turbo and Sisinnius respectively), clearly serves his anti-Manichaean propaganda. What better way to achieve his goals than to present the main follower of Mani (Sisinnius) as a convert to Christianity? Besides, if Sisinnius had actually converted, Hegemonius certainly would not have failed to refer to his status, for such information would have made Archelaus’ testimony more reliable. Epiphanius’ text makes no such reference to Sisinnius. This omission is an indication that Epiphanius had used another Greek version of the AA.

²²² Lieu in Vermes 2001, 144, fn. 320. Lieu 1994, 263.

²²³ Lieu in Vermes 2001, 145, fn. 323.

²²⁴ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.12.4 (Williams, 239). About Thomas’ mission in Egypt see also Lieu in Vermes 2001, 145 fn. 322 & 58, fn. 79.

²²⁵ Cyril, *Cath.* 6.20.

²²⁶ AA 43.4 (Vermes, 111): “His servant Turbo was handed over to Archelaus by Marcellus, and when Archelaus had ordained him deacon, he remained in Marcellus’ household”.

²²⁷ Tardieu 1991, 3-8. Cf. Augustine, *Fund.* 25-26.

²²⁸ AA 61.3-4 (Vermes 139-40).

²²⁹ Klein 1991, 21. Cf. Lieu 1994, 262. Sisinnius was Mani’s successor and a martyr (Lieu in Vermes 2001, 139-140, fn. 306). Scopello (2000, 541; 1995, 203-234, 211) considers plausible that Turbo had been a Manichaean convert.

Akouas (Acvas)

Epiphanius begins his work with the Manichaean 'veteran' from Mesopotamia, Akouas. As he says, this Akouas brought the Manichaean heresy to Eleutheropolis of Palestine, Epiphanius' city of birth, in the fourth year of the reign of Aurelian (273), shortly after the heresy of Sabellius. Indeed, according to Epiphanius, Manichaeans (in his region) were also called *Akouanites*, after Akouas' name.

The Manichaeans < are > also called Acvanites after a veteran from Mesopotamia named Acvas who practiced the profession of the pernicious Mani at Eleutheropolis.²³⁰

Epiphanius is the only Greek source that mentions the name Akouas.²³¹ Some scholars have proposed that this Akouas could have been Mār Zaku, one of Mani's early students and a leading missionary (d. ca. 301).²³² Williams does not rule out the possibility of him being a local Manichaean missionary at Eleutheropolis.²³³ From the word 'veteran', de Stoop concluded that Manichaeism like the mysteries of Mithras, would have appealed to the military classes and especially to those at the frontiers with Persia.²³⁴ However, according to Lieu, the prohibition of taking one's life, which was very strict in Manichaeism, makes it very improbable that Manichaeism attracted soldiers.²³⁵ Besides, according to Tardieu the word veteran could also mean 'ascetic' or 'monk', (i.e. 'veteran of faith'), or could alternatively be a title of a highly posed person in the hierarchy of the Manichaean community.²³⁶

In a similar fashion, Theodoret of Cyrhus employed the military terms *ταξιάρχης* and *λοχαγός*. According to him, Mani, for the missionary purpose of his religion, appointed commanders (*ταξιάρχαις*) and centurions (*λοχαγοῖς*) who would become the ministers of his doctrines.²³⁷ Thus, interpreting the term 'veteran' as 'the high-ranking missionary', it is not unlikely that the veteran mentioned by Epiphanius was Mār Zaku, who brought the Manichaean heresy to Palestine. The fact that the Manichaeans of Epiphanius' region were called after his name denotes his leading position in the Manichaean hierarchy. Besides, Epiphanius' dating of Akouas' arrival fits well with what is known for Mār Zaku, who was one of the "Manichaean missionaries of the second wave sent to the Roman Empire",²³⁸ after Mani's death. Furthermore, this interpretation is strengthened by the following reasons: first because the spelling and the phonetic pronunciation of the two names are very similar (Akouas/Zaku); secondly, because Epiphanius' description of Akouas in military terms matches the description of Mār Zaku in the Manichaean texts. Some titles, among the many in the *Elegy on the Death of Mar Zaku* that reflect the great honour attributed to this prominent missionary of the early Manichaean Church, are the following: "Battle-stirrer who left (his) army",

²³⁰ Epiphanius, *Pan.*, 66.1.1 (Williams, 226).

²³¹ John of Damascus (*Haer.* 66.1), much later (7th-8th cent.), reproduces Epiphanius' information that the Manichaeans are also called Akonites: Μανιχαῖοι, οἱ καὶ Ἀκονῖται. Οὗτοι Μάνη τοῦ Πέρσου μαθηταί.

²³² Burkitt 1925, 3; Henning 1977; Lieu 1994, 53-4, 265; Lieu 1981b, 28; Williams 2013, 226, fn. 2. Cf. Stroumsa 1985, 275; Dubois 2003, 281.

²³³ Williams 2013, 226, fn. 2.

²³⁴ de Stoop 1909, 57-58.

²³⁵ Lieu 1994, 53-4.

²³⁶ Tardieu 1979, 253.

²³⁷ Theodoret, *Haer.* (PG 83.381.20-24): Τοιοῦτο τοῦ Μάνεντος τὸ τέλος, ταῦτα τῆς δυσσεβοῦς αἰρέσεως τὰ κεφάλαια. [...] Τοιαῦτα [...] ἐνήχησε δόγματα, τοιοῦτοις ἐχρήσατο λοχαγοῖς καὶ ταξιάρχαις, κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας παραταπτόμενος.

²³⁸ Stroumsa 1985, 275.

“Greatest Caravan-leader”, “terror seized the troop, and the military column was confused”, “Great Giant”, “Hero”, etc.²³⁹

2.5.3 Abjuration Formulas, Photius, and Peter of Sicily

The Seven Chapters

The SC are surprising for the accuracy of their information, as attested by comparison to the Manichaean sources. In the second anathema the converted Manichaean had to anathematize Mani’s first disciples together with his predecessors and ancestors.

2. [...] (I anathematize) Sisinius who he says appeared with a body in much the same fashion before him among the Persians. I anathematize the disciples of Mani, Addas and Adeimantos, Thomas, Zarouas and Gabriabios and Paapis, Baraies and Salmaios and Innaios and the rest, and Pattikios, the father of Mani as being a liar and a father of the lie and Karosa his mother and Hierax, the historian of Manichaean atheism [...] (I anathematize) [...] and the so-called *Heptalogue* of Agapius and Agapius himself.²⁴⁰

As one can note from the names of Mani’s disciples in the AA tradition, in the SC appear only those testified in the Manichaean sources (i.e. of Addas and Thomas), while Hermas and Turbo are omitted. Further, another testified name that reappears is Paapis, who is identified with Alexander’s Papos. Thus, the compiler of the SC brings back onto the lists a name forgotten in the Greek anti-Manichaean literature for about two centuries. The name of Zarouas, which seems to be a new name on the list, is considered by Kessler as an altered form of Epiphanius’ Akouas,²⁴¹ who in all probability (as said above) was Mār Zaku. This list, therefore, collects all those names mentioned by the previous authors which appear in the Manichaean sources. Moreover, apart from them, the SC also records another four new names, which appear for the first time in Greek anti-Manichaica, and which are also attested in genuine Manichaean sources. These are: Gabriabios (Γαβριάβιον), Baraies (Βαραίην), Salmaios (Σαλμαῖον), and Innaios (Ἰνναῖον). The author of the SC seems to correct the inaccuracies of previous authors and to complement them. The only inaccuracy in his disciples’ list concerns Sisinnius. Although he is mentioned, his name precedes the list of students and strangely is presented as Mani’s predecessor, despite the fact that he was Mani’s student and his successor in the leadership of the Manichaean religion.

Another name which appears for the first time in Greek anti-Manichaica is that of Adeimantos. In the whole text it appears three times (twice in the second anathema and one in the fourth) and is always placed next to Addas. The first time that the two names appear in the second anathema, they head the list of Mani’s disciples. The second time, they are presented as the author/s of the Manichaean book which refutes the Law, Moses, and the other prophets.

I anathematize the disciples of Mani, Addas and Adeimantos ...

²³⁹ References to Mar Zako/Zaku in a Manichaean Parthian text (M 6, Parthian, MM III pp. 865–867, Cat. p. 2) cited in Asmussen 1975, 31–32.

²⁴⁰ SC, ch. 2 (Lieu 1994, 236, 238, 252 & Lieu 2010, 119, slightly altered): Ἀναθεματίζω ... καὶ τὸν Σισίνιον, ὃν μετὰ σώματός φησι φανῆναι κατὰ τὸν ὅμοιον τρόπον πρὸ αὐτοῦ παρὰ Πέρσας. [...] Ἀναθεματίζω τοὺς Μανιχαίου μαθητάς, Ἀδδάν καὶ Ἀδεϊμαντον, Θωμᾶν, Ζαροῦαν καὶ Γαβριάβιον καὶ Πάαπιν, Βαραίην καὶ Σαλμαῖον καὶ Ἰνναῖον καὶ τοὺς λοιπούς, καὶ Παττίκιον τὸν πατέρα τοῦ Μανιχαίου, οἷα ψεύστην καὶ τοῦ ψεύδους πατέρα, καὶ Καρῶσαν τὴν αὐτοῦ μητέρα καὶ τὸν συγγραφέα τῆς μανιχαϊκῆς ἀθεΐας Ἰέρακα. [...] Ἀναθεματίζω [...] καὶ τὴν λεγομένην Ἑπτάλογον Ἀγαπίου καὶ αὐτὸν Ἀγάπιον.

²⁴¹ Kessler 1889, 364, fn. 3, cited in Lieu 1994, 265.

I anathematize [...] that [book] which refutes the Law and the holy Moses and the other prophets composed by Adda and Adeimantos.²⁴²

In both cases above, the author of the SC does not make it clear whether Addas and Adeimantos were one or two different persons; whereas, in the fourth anathema, where the two names reappear together, he is clearly referring to them as two separate persons.

even if Manichaeus and his disciples Addas and Adeimantos, who along with the Hellenes (i.e. pagans) and Jews do not believe in the mystery of the holy incarnation, explode with fury!²⁴³

However, many modern scholars support the view that Addas and Adeimantos are one and the same person.²⁴⁴ The same opinion was also held by Augustine.²⁴⁵

With regard to the new names, Gabriabios, Baraies, Salmaios and Innaios, no further information is provided. The latter three also exist in the CMC and in other Manichaean sources. The Manichaean *Psalm-Book* records Gabriab, Salmaios and Innaios among others.²⁴⁶ In the CMC, Baraies the Teacher (*Βαρ<α>ίης ὁ διδάσκαλος*) is “the source of several extracts on Mani’s early life”;²⁴⁷ Salmaios, who apart from the CMC also appears in Coptic sources, has the epithet of the Ascetic (*Σαλμαῖος ὁ ἀσκητής*);²⁴⁸ and Innaios, indeed, became the *archegos* after Sisinnius’ martyrdom.²⁴⁹ As far as Gabriabios (Gabryab) is concerned, we know from Manichaean texts that he was a missionary active in the area of Erevan in Armenia.²⁵⁰

Lastly, Hierax, who is referred to as the historian of the Manichaean atheism, clearly did not belong to the first disciples of Mani and surely was a figure of a later era. Besides, his name is not included in the list of Mani’s students but follows the reference to the names of Mani’s parents. The name Hierax is also mentioned by the later abjuration formulas, as well as by Photius and Peter of Sicily. Both the cases of Hierax and Agapius will be examined further in ch.[7].

Short Abjuration Formula

The SAF records only five names of Mani’s disciples, and all of them also are attested in Manichaean sources.

Furthermore I anathematize both Sisinnios, the successor of this Mani and Adda the Adimantus (τὸν καὶ Ἀδείμαντον), whom this same impious Mani sent to different regions. In addition to this, I anathematize and curse together with all those stated above, Hierax and Heracleides and

²⁴² SC, ch. 2 (Lieu 1994, 236; 2010, 119): Ἀναθεματίζω [...] καὶ τὴν κατὰ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Μωϋσέως καὶ τῶν ἄλλων προφητῶν Ἀδδᾶ καὶ Ἀδείμαντου συγγραφὴν.

²⁴³ SC, ch. 4 (Lieu 1994, 242; 2010, 121): κἂν διαρρήγνυνται ὁ Μανιχαῖος καὶ οἱ τούτου μαθηταί, Ἀδδᾶς καὶ Ἀδείμαντος, σὺν Ἑλλήσι καὶ Ἰουδαίοις ἀπιστοῦντες τῷ μυστηρίῳ τῆς θείας ἐνανθρωπήσεως.

²⁴⁴ Lieu 1994, 263-64. Van den Berg (2010, esp. 19-20), following Prosper Alfarc and Tubach argues that Adeimantos is an epithet for Addas which in Greek means fearless. Baker-Brian 2006.

²⁴⁵ Augustine, *Adim.*, cf. Baker-Brian 2006, 63-80, 66-67.

²⁴⁶ 2PsB 34.10-13 (rest names: Sisinnius, Pappos, Ozeos and Addas). About the aforementioned missionaries, cf. Lieu 1994, 265-266, 262.

²⁴⁷ CMC 14.4-26.5; 44.9-72.7; 79.13-23. Cf. Lieu 1994, 266.

²⁴⁸ CMC 5.14 Cf. Lieu 1994, 266.

²⁴⁹ Lieu 1994, 266.

²⁵⁰ BT 11 no. 3.4 “The account of Gabryab: He sent [Gabryab] to [...] to preach”, in Skjærvø 2006b, 11; Lieu 1992, 106-07. Lieu 1994, 265: “An early disciple of Mani. In a Sogdian Turfan fragment [...] we find Mār Gabryab achieving missionary success at the city of ryβ’n (probably Erevan in Armenia)”.

Aphthonius, the expositors and commentators of this lawless and profane Mani, and Thomas and Zarouas and Gabriabios.²⁵¹

The first two names on the list are the two most important missionaries whose role in the spread of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire was decisive. These are Sisinnius and Addas. Further, Sisinnius, in the *SAF*'s list, assumes his proper role, that is, the successor of Mani. Addas' name appears again along with Adeimanthos. However, as opposed to the *SC*, for the author of the *SAF* it was clear that the two names concerned one and the same person. This person was Addas, otherwise known as Adeimantos, whom Mani sent for missionary action to various regions. The latter, moreover, is in agreement with the picture we previously formed that Addas acted both eastwards and westwards (Roman Empire). In the next paragraph of the *SAF*, after the names of the expositors and commentators of the Manichaean writings (Hierax, Heracleides, and Aphthonius), the names of Thomas, Zarouas, and Gabriabios are mentioned without any comment.

In conclusion, the compiler of the *SAF* names five Manichaean missionaries (Sisinnius, Addas, Thomas, Zarouas, and Gabryab), all of which are found in *SC*, and three of which in the *AA*. For the first time in the Greek literature Sisinnius is restored in his actual role, that of the leader of the sect. However, he omits four of the names provided by the *SC* (i.e. Paapis/Papos, Baraies, Salmaios, and Innaios).

Peter of Sicily and Photius

Peter of Sicily, in his list of the first Manichaean missionaries, seems to combine information from the *SAF* and Cyril. However, he seems to ignore the *SC*, as he also does not mention any of the following four disciples listed there: Paapis, Baraies, Salmaios, and Innaios.

The disciples of the antichrist Mani were twelve in number; Sisinnios his successor, and Thomas who composed a Manichaean Gospel named after him, Bouddas and Hermas, Adantos and Adēmantos, whom he sent to various regions to teach his error. The commentators and expositors of his writings were Hierax and Heracleides and Aphthonius. There were also three other disciples Agapius who composed the Heptalogue and Zarouas and Gabriabios.²⁵²

Photius provides exactly the same names and in the same order. Only his comments differ slightly, not in terms of their content but in terms of language.²⁵³

Long Abjuration Formula

The *LAF* based the part of the anathemas against Manichaeans on the *SC* and returned to their place the four disciples omitted by the *SAF* (i.e. Paapis, Salmaios, Innaios, and Baraies), as well as by Peter and Photius.

²⁵¹ *SAF* in *Euchologium* (e cod. Barb. Gr. 336) sec. 148: "Ετι ἀναθεματίζω καὶ Σισίννιον τὸν διάδοχον τοῦ αὐτοῦ Μάνεντος, καὶ Ἀδδᾶν τὸν καὶ Ἀδείμαντον ὃν ἀπέστειλεν ὁ αὐτὸς δυσσεβῆς Μάνης εἰς διάφορα κλίματα. Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ἀναθεματίζω καὶ καταθεματίζω σὺν τοῖς προγεγραμμένοις πᾶσιν· Ἰέρακα καὶ Ἡρακλείδην καὶ Ἀφθόνιον, τοὺς ἐξηγητὰς καὶ ὑπομνηματιστὰς τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀνόμου καὶ βεβήλου Μάνεντος, καὶ Θωμᾶν καὶ Ζαροῦαν καὶ Γαβριάβιον. Goar's edition instead of Ἀδδᾶν has Ἀδδαντον.

²⁵² Peter of Sicily, *Hist. ref. Man.* 67.

²⁵³ Photius, c. *Manichaeos*, 50: Μαθηταὶ μέντοι τοῦ δυσωνύμου Μάνεντος γεγονᾶσι δώδεκα· Σισίνιος ὁ καὶ τὸ ἀξίωμα αὐτοῦ τῆς δυσσεβοῦς διδασκαλίας ἀναδεξάμενος, καὶ Θωμᾶς ὁ τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν ὀνομαζόμενον συνταξάμενος Εὐαγγέλιον, Βούδας τε καὶ Ἑρμᾶς καὶ Ἀδᾶμαντος καὶ Ἀδείμαντος, ὃν καὶ διαφόροις διέπεμψε κλίμασι τῆς πλάνης καὶ τῆς ἀποστασίας αὐτῶν κήρυκα. Ἐξηγηταὶ δὲ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ὑπομνηματισταὶ γεγονᾶσιν Ἰέραξ τε καὶ Ἡρακλείδης καὶ Ἀφθόνιος. Ἡριθμοῦντο δὲ τῷ χορῷ τῶν μαθητευθέντων αὐτῷ καὶ Ἀγάπιος ὁ τὴν Ἑπτάλογον καλουμένην συντάξας καὶ Ζαρούας καὶ Γαυριάβιος.

(1468 B) I anathematize Patekios (Patticius), the father of the Mani, as being a liar and a father of the lie and his mother Karossa and Hierax and Heracleides and Aphthonius, the commentators and expositors of his writings, and all his remaining disciples, Sisinnios the successor of his madness, Thomas who composed the Gospel named after him, Bouddas, Hermas, Adas, Adeimantus, Zarouas, Gabriabius, Agapius, Hilarius, Olympius, Aristokritus, Salmaius, Innaius, Paapis, Baraias ...²⁵⁴

The *LAF*, which is the most recent *AF*, combines the traditions of the *AA* and of the previous *AFs*. Among the names of all the previous traditions, which are just listed in a series without comments, are added two new ones: those of Hilarius and of Olympius. The seventh anathema of the *SC* anathematizes two supposed offshoots of Manichaeism. These are the Hilarians and the Olympians about whom we know nothing and who probably were “groups labelled as Manichaeans”.²⁵⁵ The compiler of the *LAF* considered it appropriate to include their leaders in his list of Mani’s students. After them, the list continues with the names of the Paulicians.

In conclusion, what is important to note is that the information of the *SC* is not reproduced by subsequent authors, until the *LAF*. Various questions arise. If the editor of the *SAF* had as his source the *SC* (as Lieu argues) why did he omit the names of Salmaios, Innaios, Paapis, and Baraias? As it seems, the *SC* were neither based on a previous textual tradition, nor did they create their own. For some strange reason, Greek authors seem to have ignored them for at least three centuries. An answer to this could be that their use was purely sacramental. The document was not intended to be circulated as a piece of literature. Its purpose was to be used in an actual situation, namely in the conversion of real Manichaeans. Further, it is possible that the *SC* was not the text of the anathema that was read in public (“εἰς ἐπήκοον πάντων”), but a more extensive written version of it, which the converted Manichaean had to sign, and which the Chartophylax kept in the ecclesiastical archives.²⁵⁶ The same applies for the *SAF*. In brief, my suggestion regarding the interrelation of the two *AFs* is that the *SC* and the *SAF* are two contemporary and independent documents. It is plausible to assume that other *AFs* with varied content were in use too.

2.5.4 The (Fluctuating) Number of Mani’s First Disciples (3, 12, 22, 7)

Alexander names two Manichaean missionaries and states that many others followed after them. Some of the sources refer to the first twelve teachers in the history of Manichaeism, the disciples of Mani, and highlight that Mani himself established this grade. Eusebius was the first one to introduce the tradition of the twelve disciples of Mani: “Mani chose twelve students as participants of his innovation”.²⁵⁷ The tradition of the twelve is reproduced by Theodoret,²⁵⁸ Photius,²⁵⁹ Peter of Sicily,²⁶⁰ and *Suda Lexicon*.²⁶¹ What is mostly criticized by anti-Manichaean authors is that Mani elected twelve disciples in imitation of Christ and his

²⁵⁴ Lieu 2010, 141.

²⁵⁵ Lieu 1994, 232.

²⁵⁶ As is stated in *SAF*: This is “How those who came into the Holy Church of God from the Manichaeans should abjure in writing” (Lieu 2010, 130-31). As stated, according to the *SC*, the converted Manichaean at the end of the anathemas had to sign that he is truly converted (Lieu 2010, 124-25). See ch.[1], 1.3.

²⁵⁷ Eusebius, *HE* 7.31: μαθητὰς δώδεκα κοινωνοὺς τῆς καινοτομίας αἰρούμενος.

²⁵⁸ Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Haer.* (PG 83.381): “Having appointed twelve disciples in the manner of the Lord” (Οὗτος δυοκαίδεκα μαθητὰς κατὰ τὸν Κυριακὸν ποιησάμενος τύπον).

²⁵⁹ Photius, c. *Manichaeos*, 50: Μαθηταὶ μέντοι τοῦ δυσωνύμου Μάνεντος γεγόνασι δώδεκα.

²⁶⁰ Peter of Sicily, *Hist. ref. Man.*, 67: Μαθηταὶ δὲ τούτου τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου Μάνεντος γεγόνασι δώδεκα.

²⁶¹ *Suda Lexicon*, entry 147.

twelve apostles.²⁶² The same information is also given by Augustine.²⁶³ Further, the number twelve is also confirmed by some Manichaean sources.²⁶⁴

The authors of the AA tradition do not make any reference to twelve disciples. There, the basic number is three. Further, the number twenty-two also seems to have had a specific gravity in relation to the disciples, both in the AA and in Epiphanius. Epiphanius speaks about twenty-two disciples who were visiting Mani in prison, out of whom Mani elected the three. This could have derived from the AA's testimony that twenty-two young Elect men and women accompanied Mani to his first debate.²⁶⁵ Cyril limits the number to three, and says that Thomas was one of these three evil disciples of Mani; Peter, whose source was Cyril, harmonizes Cyril's testimony with the tradition of the twelve and states that Thomas was one of the twelve students of Mani. Theodoret also combines the two traditions by saying that Mani originally had three disciples, and then stating that Mani chose twelve disciples like Jesus.²⁶⁶

Lastly, unique testimony in anti-Manichaica is Turbo's statement that the first group of Elect around Mani did not exceed seven in number.²⁶⁷ As BeDuhn and Mirecki comment, this is probably a misrepresentation or a simple factual error, since it does "not serve any definite polemical purpose or set up any future line of polemic later in the document".²⁶⁸

The listed disciples of Mani in the abjuration formulas, which do not give a specific number, are respectively: eight or nine in the SC, five in the SAF (Ἀδδάν, τον καὶ Ἀδείμαντον as one person), and sixteen in the LAF (Ἀδδάν, τον καὶ Ἀδείμαντον as two persons).

Table 3: First Manichaean Missionaries in Greek anti-Manichaica

Alexander ca 300 CE	Acta 300/350 CE Theodoret 5 th cent	Cyril 348/50 CE	Epipha- nius ca 374/7 CE	Seven Chapters 5 th or 6 th cent.	Short formula 5 th or 6 th or 7 th cent.	Peter Sic. 9 th century	Photius 9 th century	Long formula 9 th or 10 th century	Manichae an sources
	(1) Addas (AA) (1) Aldas (Theod.) Ἀλδᾶς (Theod.)	(2) Baddas Βαδδᾶς	(1) Addas Ἀδδᾶς	(1) Addas and Adeiman- tos Ἀδδᾶς καὶ Ἀδείμαν- τος	(2) Addas the Adiman- tus Ἀδδάν τον καὶ Ἀδείμαν- τον	(3) Adantos and Adēman- tos Ἀδαντος καὶ Ἀδήμαν- τος	(5) Adaman- tos and Adeiman- tos Ἀδάμαν- τος καὶ Ἀδείμαν- τος	(5) Adas, Adeiman- tos Ἀδᾶς, Ἀδείμαν- τος	Adda (2PsB)
						(3) Bouddas	(3) Boudas Βούδας	(3) Boudas Βουδᾶς	

²⁶² Theodoret, *Haer.* (PG 83.381.8-10): "Mani imitating Christ elected twelve disciples" (Οὗτος δυοκαίδεκα μαθητάς κατὰ τὸν Κυριακὸν ποιησάμενος τύπον); *Suda Lexicon*, entry 147: Μάνης οὗτος ὁ τρισκατάρτος ἐπὶ Αὐρηλιανοῦ βασιλέως ἐφάνη, Χριστὸν ἑαυτὸν καὶ πνεῦμα ἅγιον φανταζόμενος-μαθητάς ιβ' ὡς ἂν ὁ Χριστὸς ἐπαγόμενος.

²⁶³ Augustine, *Haer.* 46.8. Cf. Lieu 1994, 168-69, 262.

²⁶⁴ Sundermann (1974, 135) in Lieu 1994, 262. BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 19.

²⁶⁵ Epiphanius, *Pan.*, 5.1 (Williams, 232).

²⁶⁶ Theodoret, *Haer.* (PG 83.380, l. 54 & 381, l. 8).

²⁶⁷ AA 11.4 (Vermes, 56): "He also instructed only his elect, who are not more than seven in number, that when they have stopped eating they should pray and put on their head olive oil....". The same is found in Epiphanius *Pan.* 66.30.3.

²⁶⁸ BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 19. Yet, see BeDuhn 2013, 279: "Seven angels shall be engendered by the fasting of each one of the Elect; and not only the Elect, but the Catechumens engender them on the Lord's Day (kyriakē)".

						Βουδδᾶς ²⁶⁹			
(2) Thomas Θωμάς	(2) Thomas (AA) (2) Θωμάς (Theod.)	(1) Thomas Θωμάς	(2) Thomas Θωμάς	(2) Thomas Θωμάς	(3) Thomas Θωμάς	(2) Thomas Θωμάς	(2) Thomas Θωμάς	(2) Thomas Θωμάς	
	(3) Hermas (AA) (3) Ερμᾶς (Theod.)	(3) Hermas Ερμᾶς	(3) Hermeias Ερμείας			(4) Hermas Ερμᾶς	(4) Hermas Ερμᾶς	(4) Hermas Ερμᾶς	Mār Ammo?
			Akouas Ἀκούας	(3) Zarouas Ζαρούας	(4) Zarouas Ζαρούας	(5)/(10) Zarouas Ζαρούας	(5)/(10) Zarouas Ζαρούας	(6) Zarouas Ζαρούας	Mār Zaku?
	Turbo (disciple of Addas or Addas?) (AA)								
	Sissinius (one of Mani's comrades) (AA)			Sisinius Σισίνιος	(1) Sisinnios Σισίννιον	(1) Sisinnios Σισίννιος	(1) Sisinnios Σισίννιος	(1) Sisinnios Σισίννιον	Sisin Σισίνιος (2PsB)
				(4) Cabriabios Γαβριάβιος	(5) Cabriabios Γαβριάβιος	(6)/(11) Cabriabios Γαβριάβιος	(6)/(11) Cabriabios Γαβριάβιος	(7) Cabriabios Γαβριάβιος	Gabryab Γαβριάβ
(1) Papos Πάπος				(5) Paapis Πάαπις				(14) Paapis Πάαπις	Pappos (2PsB)
				(6) Baraies Βαραίης				(15) Baraiaes Βαραίαις	Baraies Βαραίης the Teacher (CMC)
				(7) Salmaios Σαλμαῖος				(12) Salmaios Σαλμαῖος	Salmaios Σαλμαῖος the Ascetic, (CMC) & (2PsB)
				(8) Innaïos Ἰνναῖος				(13) Innaïos Ἰνναῖος	Innaïos Ἰνναῖος (2PsB) & (CMC) ²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹ Bouddas in Photius and Peter of Sicily is Addas. See also, Baudrillart, et al. (1912, 512).

²⁷⁰ Other names of Manichaean first disciples mentioned in CMC are: Abiesous (Ἀβησοῦς) the Teacher, Sitaïos (Σιταῖος) the elder of their council, Sabbaïos (Σαββαῖος) the Baptist, Timothy (Τιμόθεος), Symeōn (Συμεών), Koustaïos (Κουσταῖος) the son of the treasure of Life, Ana (Ἀνᾶ) the brother of Zacheas (Ζαχέου) the disciple, Abizachias (Ἀβιζαχίας). Ozeos is mentioned in the Psalm Book.

2.6 The Ways of Diffusion

The texts under examination record the dynamic that the Manichaean spread already had achieved in the fourth century. According to Epiphanius, at the time he was writing his *Panarion*, Manichaeism was already a legendary widespread heresy, “widely reported and ... talked of in many parts of the world” and, as Epiphanius underlines, owed “its worldwide spread to a man named Mani”.²⁷¹ About ten years earlier (364), Libanius, the famous rhetor from Antioch, reported in a letter addressed to Priscianus, the governor of Palaestina Prima, that the Manichaeans were “found in many places of the world but everywhere they ... [were] only few in number”.²⁷²

It has been argued that Manichaeism was spread westwards through the trade routes, in specific the Silk Road(s), firstly in urban centres, and later in rural areas. It also has been claimed that the popularity of pilgrimages during the fourth century could have reinforced that diffusion. Two distinct trade routes were suggested as possible channels of Manichaean penetration into the Roman Empire: a) a land route, through Palmyra and Sinai, and b) a maritime route, through the Red Sea ports to Berenice and subsequently overland to the Nile Valley, via the Nile, and up to the Nile Delta.²⁷³

As mentioned above, Scythianus’ and Terebinthus’ activities may reflect Mani’s own activity.²⁷⁴ Following the same rationale, some scholars suggest that under Mani’s mask in the AA, could be Adda.²⁷⁵ Besides the above assumptions, what seems certain is that the routes recorded in the sources we examined reflect the ways that the Manichaean mission spread westwards. According to the AA tradition, the missionary itineraries of Mani’s first disciples (the trio) in Syria, Judaea, and Egypt reflect the spread of Manichaean missionaries in the Roman Empire by the land route. The same applies to the Akouas mentioned by Epiphanius, who reached Eleutheropolis in Syria-Palaestina through Mesopotamia.²⁷⁶ On the other hand, the itineraries of the proto-Manichaean Scythianus reflect the Manichaean spread westwards through the maritime route.

Epiphanius, in his version of Mani’s biography, records in detail the itinerary that the merchant Scythianus used to follow for his mercantile activities, which coincides with the above maritime route of the Manichaean spread. Thus, starting from Epiphanius, we could map out the lines of early Manichaean diffusion. As Epiphanius narrates, Scythianus was brought up in Saracene (Arabia), where he had a profound Greek education. He “made continual business trips” due to his commercial activity. He was merchandising goods from India, which he transported through the ports of the Red Sea (Aelon, Castrum in Clysma, and Berenice) to Thebais, and he distributed them to the whole land of Egypt, up to Pelusium, via the Nile.

Scythianus had been taught the language and literature of the Greeks there, and had become proficient in their futile worldly doctrines. But he made continual business trips to India, and did a great deal of trading. And so he acquired worldly goods and as he traveled through the Thebaid—there are various harbors on the Red Sea, at the different gateways to the Roman

²⁷¹ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 1.3. (Williams, 227): ἔστι δὲ ἡ αἵρεσις αὕτη πολυθρύλητος καὶ ἐν πολλοῖς μέρεσι τῆς γῆς φημιζομένη, ἐκ Μάνη τινός, ὡς ἔφην, λαβοῦσα τὸ πλατυνθῆναι ἐν μέρεσι τῆς γῆς.

²⁷² Libanius, *Ep.* 1253.

²⁷³ Lieu 1994, 28-30, 37, 92, 105; Lieu 1992, 97-106, 119; van Lindt 1992, 227.

²⁷⁴ Scopello 1995, 215-225.

²⁷⁵ BeDuhn 2007a, 82.

²⁷⁶ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.1.1.

realm. One of these is at Aelan—Aelon [...] Another harbor is at Castrum in Clysmā, and another is the northernmost, at a place called Bernice. Goods are brought to the Thebaid by way of this port called Bernice, and the various kinds of merchandise from India are either distributed there in the Thebaid or to Alexandria by way of the river Chrysorroes—I mean the Nile, which is called Gihon in the scriptures— and to all of Egypt as far as Pelusium. And this is how merchants from India who reach the other lands by sea make trading voyages to the Roman Empire.²⁷⁷

As Lieu argues, the above itinerary “could not have been invented by Epiphanius”. On the contrary, it “fits exceedingly well with our knowledge of the diffusion of early Manichaeism”.²⁷⁸ There, in the Thebaid, was also located Hypsele, the town where Scythianus met his wife and decided to live with her.²⁷⁹

To begin with, then, Scythianus was puffed up by his great wealth, and his possessions of spices and other goods from India. And in traveling over the Thebaid to a town called Hypsele, he found a woman there who was extremely depraved though of evident beauty, and made a deep impression on his stupidity. Taking her from the brothel—she was a prostitute—he grew fond of the woman and set her free, and she became his wife.²⁸⁰

It is important to underline that Hypsele is very close to Lycopolis (ca. 7 km), one of the first cities which the Manichaean missionaries visited according to Alexander’s testimony. In addition, most of the extant Manichaean texts in Coptic were written in the dialect that was spoken in the area of Hypsele at that time.²⁸¹

Some further remarks regarding the spatio-temporal dispersion of Manichaeism throughout the East-Roman Empire (fourth-sixth cent.) will be presented, following the production of the anti-Manichaean literature. As said (in the Introduction), passing from the fourth into the fifth century, it is possible to note a change in the produced anti-Manichaean literary genre.²⁸² This seems to reflect a shift of the Manichaean ‘problem’ from the metropolises to smaller provincial towns, or even to monasteries. The truth is that this period also coincides with a more general shift of social life from towns to villages.²⁸³ However, one cannot exclude the possibility that this shift reflects the impact of the penalty of exile from the cities, a religious policy against Manichaeans; this was inaugurated since 389 in the Roman

²⁷⁷ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.1.8-12 (Williams, 227-28): [...] οὗτος ὁ Σκυθιανὸς ἐν τοῖς προειρημένοις τόποις παιδευθεὶς τὴν Ἑλλήνων γλῶσσαν καὶ τὴν τῶν γραμμάτων αὐτῶν παιδεῖαν δεινὸς τε γέγονε περὶ τὰ μάταια τοῦ κόσμου φρονήματα. αἰεὶ δὲ στελλόμενος τὴν πορείαν ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν Ἰνδῶν χώραν πραγματείας χάριν πολλὴν ἐμπορίαν ἐποιεῖτο. ὅθεν πολλὰ κτησάμενος ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ διὰ τῆς Θηβαΐδος διῶν, ὁμοί γὰρ τῆς ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης διάφοροι, ἐπὶ τὰ στόμια τῆς Ῥωμανίας διακεκριμένοι, ὁ μὲν εἰς ἐπὶ τὴν Αἰλᾶν, [...] ὁ δὲ ἕτερος ὁμοῖ ἐπὶ τὸ Κάστρον τοῦ Κλύσματος, ἄλλος δὲ ἀνωτάτω ἐπὶ τὴν Βερνίκην καλουμένην, δι’ ἧς Βερνίκης καλουμένης ἐπὶ τὴν Θηβαΐδα φέρονται, καὶ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς ἐρχόμενα εἶδη ἐκέϊσε τῇ Θηβαΐδι διαχύνεται ἢ ἐπὶ τὴν Ἀλεξανδρέων διὰ τοῦ Χρυσορρόα ποταμοῦ, Νείλου δὲ φημι, τοῦ καὶ Γεῶν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς λεγομένου, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων γῆν καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ Πηλούσιον φέρεται· καὶ οὕτως εἰς τὰς ἄλλας πατρίδας διὰ θαλάσσης διερχόμενοι οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς ἐπὶ τὴν Ῥωμανίαν ἐμπορεύονται.

²⁷⁸ Lieu (Vermes, 2001, 8-9) considers very likely that Epiphanius “drew material from Manichaean missionary history”.

²⁷⁹ AA 62.4 (Vermes, 14): “This Scythianus came from the race of the Saracens, and married a woman prisoner from the upper Thebaid, who persuaded him to live in Egypt rather than in the desert”.

²⁸⁰ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.2.3-4 (Williams, 228): [...] ἐν ἀρχῇ τοίνυν οὗτος ὁ Σκυθιανὸς πλούτῳ πολλῷ ἐπαρθεὶς καὶ κτήμασιν ἡδυσμάτων καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰνδίας καὶ ἐλθὼν περὶ τὴν Θηβαΐδα εἰς ὕψηλὴν πόλιν οὕτω καλουμένην, εὐρὼν ἐκεῖ γύναιον ἐξωλέστατον καὶ κάλλει σώματος πρόοπτον ἐκπλήξαν τε αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀσυνεσίαν, ἀνελόμενός τε τοῦτο ἀπὸ τοῦ στέγους (ἔστηκε γὰρ ἡ τοιαύτη ἐν τῇ πολυκοίνῳ ἀσεμνότητι) ἐπεκαθέσθη τῷ γυναικί καὶ ἐλευθερώσας αὐτὸ συνήφθη αὐτῷ πρὸς γάμον.

²⁸¹ Lieu 1994, 92. For Hypsele: next to Lycopolis, see Steven Armstrong 2004.

²⁸² Introduction section 5.2.

²⁸³ See Mango 1980, 83 ff.

legislation and gradually intensified in the long run (at least until 450).²⁸⁴ This does not mean that there were no Manichaeans in the cities. Indeed, their existence is implied by the continuous repetition of the exile penalties in the laws. As Theodoret of Cyrrhus complains in a letter addressed to the imperial officer Nomus, while it was prohibited to him by a decree (449) to visit other cities, these cities were open not only to Arians and Eunomians but also to the Manichaeans, Marcionites, Valentinians, Montanists, Greeks (pagans), and Jews.²⁸⁵ Theodoret is the only one from the church historians of the fifth century (the Theodosian trio) who refers to his contemporary Manichaeans. The other two, Socrates the Scholastic and Sozomenus, mainly record episodes that took place in the fourth century.²⁸⁶ The production of new lengthy *Adversus Manichaeos* treatises and of pagan reports (e.g. Simplicius' testimony about his discussion in Athens with a Manichaean teacher) during the sixth century suggests that Manichaeans reappeared in the cities.²⁸⁷ There are also many reports of historians (both ecclesiastical and secular) and chronographers who record episodes and incidents that happened during their days which involved Manichaeans (real or imagined). Generally, the impression is that in the sixth century, there is a comeback, or a re-emergence of Manichaeans in the cities and metropolises.

2.7 Manichaean Missionary Methods and Strategies

2.7.1 Epistles

Apart from their books, which, as we have seen, the Manichaeans carried under their arms, another literary weapon in their quiver born from their missionary endeavours was their letters. The fact that the Manichaeans attributed great importance to their letters is testified by the inclusion of Mani's letters in the Manichaean canon. Such a letter, recorded in the AA, could have been the one that Mani is said to have written to Marcellus.²⁸⁸ What do we know about it?

Mani sent his epistle to Marcellus via Turbo, from the fortress Arabion where he fled after his persecution by the Persian king. The purpose of his epistle was to convert Marcellus to Manichaeism and through him the whole province. Key themes in the epistle are dualism and Docetism. While Mani's letter to Marcellus claimed that they had discussed the same topics in a previous talk (*ὡς προείπομεν*),²⁸⁹ in the epistle-response of Marcellus, it seems as if Marcellus had heard of Mani for the first time: "Marcellus, a man of standing, to Manichaeus who has made himself known by means of his letter, greetings".²⁹⁰ From the introductory

²⁸⁴ I will discuss in detail this issue in the next chapter.

²⁸⁵ Theodoret, *Epist. Sirm.* 1-95, ep. 81. Nomus was an influential officer of Theodosius II, being "Magister Officiorum" in 443, consul in 445, and patrician in 449, and was a friend of Dioscorus. He opposed Theodoret and was instrumental in procuring the decree which confined the bishop to his diocese in 449.

²⁸⁶ Socrates, *HE*, books 1, 2, 5, 6 & 7. Sozomenus, *HE* 7.1 & 8.12.

²⁸⁷ Simplicius, *Comm. Man. Epict.*

²⁸⁸ AA 5-6 (Vermes 40-43). On "Mani's Epistles and Manichaean Letter-Writing", see Gardner 2013, 291-314. On "the earliest Manichaean letter from Egypt", see Gardner, Nobbs, and Choat 2000, 118-24. The Byzantines were aware of the importance the epistles of Mani had for the Manichaean mission. By attributing to Mani epistles supposedly written by himself, they turned the Manichaean missionary means into their own literary weapon in the frame of their polemic against the *μανιχαϊόφρονες* and *μανιχαϊζοντες*. Cf. Eustathius Monachus, *Ep. Tim.* 3 & 30.

²⁸⁹ AA 5.3 & Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.6.5.

²⁹⁰ AA 4.2. Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.7.5: Μάρκελλος ἀνὴρ ἐπίσημος Μανιχαῖω τῷ διὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς δηλουμένῳ χαίρειν.

greetings in Mani's letter, we are informed that a group of his disciples (Electi and Electae) was in touch with him, and was visiting him at jail: "Manichaeus, apostle of Jesus Christ, and all the saints and virgins with me, to Marcellus his very dear son".²⁹¹

It is important to note from the outset that, although it is attested that Mani used to send letters to eminent citizens urging them to convert, at least until today, nothing parallel to this letter has been found among the Manichaean sources.²⁹² The only relevant evidence is al-Nadims' testimony, that one of Mani's letter was entitled "To Kaskar", which could have been the place where our story is unfolding.²⁹³ Initially, the letter was considered as fictional, as was Marcellus' response to it. Researchers thought that it was a contrived device, and argued that, apart from the introduction of the letter and especially the expression "may the Right Hand of Light preserve you from the present evil age" (ἡ δεξιὰ τοῦ φωτὸς διατηρήσῃ σε),²⁹⁴ which is typically Manichaean, the rest of the letter does not resemble authentic Manichaean letters.²⁹⁵ However, academic opinion concerning the authenticity of the above letter has shifted recently.

Gardner, in his "Mani's Letter to Marcellus: Fact and Fiction in the Acta Archelai Revisited" compared the epistle's structure, aim, terminology, biblical quotations, and doctrine, to authentic Manichaean letters. He concluded that "The 'letter to Marcellus' is not an entirely fictional creation of the author of the AA", and that the writer (Hegemonius) not only composed it using genuine Manichaean letters that he had at his disposition as a model, but was probably also holding an authentic letter of Mani.²⁹⁶

BeDuhn agrees with Gardner that the epistle is genuine, and building on his argument suggests that the letter is part of a longer authentic letter of Mani, the rest of which was used by Hegemonius for the construction of the debates. This hypothesis is based on his remark that the two main issues briefly mentioned in the epistle are extensively developed in the debates. As BeDuhn argues, if the words of Archelaus and the judges are removed from the debates, the continuing and coherent argumentation of Mani is revealed.²⁹⁷ So, it is quite possible that Hegemonius' source was one letter of Mani in which he exposed the two basic subjects that Manichaean missionaries—recruited in the Roman territories—used to discuss, namely the two principles and Jesus' nature.²⁹⁸

According to BeDuhn, the only part of the AA that draws material from another source is the epistle that Diodoros sent to Archelaus. The main topic of this letter is the contradiction between the Old and the New Testament. BeDuhn, after examining the biblical references cited in this letter, concluded that Hegemonius' source was another genuine Manichaean source, probably Adda's *Antitheses*.²⁹⁹

²⁹¹ AA 5.1. (Vermes 41). The same text in Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.7: Μανιχαῖος ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ πάντες ἅγιοι καὶ παρθένοι Μαρκέλλῳ τέκνῳ ἀγαπητῷ. The words 'ἅγιοι καὶ παρθένοι' are conceived as 'electi and electae', as in *Hom.* 22.6, see Lieu in Vermes (2001, 41 fn. 15).

²⁹² Gardner 2007b, 35.

²⁹³ Al-Nadim 2.9 (Dodge 799). Al-Nadim provides us a list with the titles of Mani's letters. Gardner 2007b, 35.

²⁹⁴ The rest of the letter: "[...] Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ; and may the Right Hand of Light preserve you from the present evil age and from its disasters and from the snares of the evil one. Amen" (AA 5.1, Vermes, 41); Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.6.1.

²⁹⁵ Lieu in Vermes 2001, 41, fn. 14; Cf. Lieu 1994, 150-51.

²⁹⁶ Gardner 2007b, 33-48, 47.

²⁹⁷ BeDuhn 2007a, 83-84.

²⁹⁸ BeDuhn 2007a, 77.

²⁹⁹ BeDuhn 2007a, 84.

2.7.2 Door-to-Door Visits (Canvassing)

As Archelaus states in the *Acta*, Mani used to visit private places and entered the houses, pressuring and asking people to convert to Manichaeism. He succeeded to convert some of them, but others he questioned, and some others he begged.

So how can this man stand here, urging and asking everyone to become a Manichaean, going round and entering houses, seeking to deceive souls that are burdened with sins? This is not just our own feeling; rather we should bring the situation into the open and compare it, if you are willing, with the perfect Paraclete. For you can see that sometimes he causes people to repent, at others he asks questions, and frequently he uses entreaty.³⁰⁰

However, in Marcellus' case, Mani appeared more prudent. He was vacillating between two methods of action: either to visit Marcellus directly, or to send him an epistle first. He chose the second option as the more sensible one. According to Hegemonius, Mani was afraid lest his unexpected visit would become harmful.³⁰¹

According to an anonymous author of the fourth century, the 'door to door' practice was one of the dearest methods of the Manichaean missionaries

Although this would fit all heretics, as they (all) inveigle themselves into houses and charm women with persuasive and crafty words so that through them they might deceive the men... it matches the Manichaeans above all others... they seek out women, who always want to hear something for sheer novelty, and persuade them through what they like to hear to do foul and illicit things.³⁰²

2.7.3 The Debates

Introduction

The culture and historicity of the debates

The central theme of the AA, which constitutes its major part, is the three debates that were conducted between Mani and local clergymen in Carchar and Diodoris. Accordingly, an important part of the academic discourse about the AA concerns the investigation of the question of the historicity of these debates. Were they real or imagined? Further, were debates, indeed, a method that the Manichaean missionaries used to employ or is this historically unattested?

The (re)presentation of public disputations in the AA as one method of Manichaean propaganda is historically consistent.³⁰³ It is generally accepted, that from the end of the third century to the end of the fourth century, public debates between Christians and Manichaeans, or other religious 'deviant' groups, were in fashion.³⁰⁴ This reflects a multicultural environment of religious freedom and tolerance, which gradually faded out by the end of the fourth century with the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Empire. The new order of things entailed that minority groups, including the Manichaeans, "could no longer compete as equals in the religious market of late antiquity".³⁰⁵ A characteristic example that eloquently reflects this change is that by the late fifth to early sixth century Christians did

³⁰⁰ AA 42.8-9 (Vermes, 108-09).

³⁰¹ AA 4.2 (Vermes, 39).

³⁰² Ambrosiaster, *ep. ad Tim.* in Gardner and Lieu 2004, 119.

³⁰³ Lieu in Vermes 2001, 24.

³⁰⁴ Pettipiece 2005, 256. Lim 1995, 70-108.

³⁰⁵ Lim 1995, 104.

not need to debate with Manichaeans anymore. It was sufficient to ask all those suspected of heresy to sign a written abjuration formula in which they had to anathematize their previous faith.³⁰⁶ Apart from the debates in the AA, there are three more debates in Byzantine literature, which were conducted by three eponymous Manichaeans from different eras: Aphthonius, Julia, and Photinus, from the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries respectively.³⁰⁷

The testimony of the Manichaean sources

The fact that Manichaeans and Christians confronted each other in public debates is also testified by Manichaean sources. "They went to the Roman Empire and experienced many doctrinal disputes with the religions [...] Adda labored very hard in these areas [...] chose many elects and hearers, composed writings, and made wisdom his weapon. He opposed the dogmas with these. [...] The religion of the apostle was advanced in the Roman empire".³⁰⁸ So, even if the specific debates were imagined, they could provide us with valuable information on the real thing. It is important to note that both Manichaean and anti-Manichaean literature record the same motifs. The difference between these types of sources is their point of view. For instance, in the Manichaean sources, the Manichaean missionaries always triumph in the debates,³⁰⁹ while in the anti-Manichaean sources they are always defeated and fleeing.³¹⁰ However, despite the hagiographic or libellous character of these texts, as well as their precariousness as historical sources, the two types of sources complement each other. To contemporary researchers they offer important evidence for the history of Manichaeism. If we remove the part of fiction, the two kinds of literature are in agreement with regard to the ways of diffusion, the names of the Manichaean missionaries, as well as with the Manichaean missionary methods and strategies.

The aim of the debates

We have always to keep in mind that the period we are discussing was a transitional era, during which the passage from the ancient Roman cults to Christianity took place. Christianity was not yet the official religion of the State. The final Christian dogma that clearly distinguished 'orthodoxy' from 'heresy' had not yet been formulated. There were several groups claiming to represent the truth of the Christian teaching. Among these, the Manichaeans presented themselves as the authentic Christian Church, whilst for them all the others were heretic.³¹¹ So, the aim of those debates, for which Christians and Manichaeans were competing, as Lim puts it, was "the hearts and minds of the pagan elites".³¹² During the debates, both parties could count their forces and estimate their effectiveness in persuading

³⁰⁶ Lim 1995, 103-04.

³⁰⁷ I will briefly refer to these debates in the next sections, and in more detail in ch.[6], 6.2.3 and ch.[7], 7.3.

³⁰⁸ Skjærvø 2006b, 7 (BT 11 no. 1 M 2 MP, The coming of the apostle into the countries); Gardner and Lieu 2004, 111.

³⁰⁹ Skjærvø 2006b, 7-11.

³¹⁰ AA 15-33 & 54-60. Mark the Deacon, *Vit. Porph.* 87-91. See also the episode with the Manichaean who was challenged by Corpes to trial by fire in *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* 10.30-35. Cf. Gardner and Lieu 2004, 121. The following narration of Palladius (*Lausaic History* 37.8) belongs to the same literary genre, which captures the missionary success of Christianity over Manichaeism. As Palladius narrates, the holy man Sarapion the Sindonite (pretending to be a servant) managed to convert to Christianity a prominent citizen of Sparta, and all his family.

³¹¹ See Pettipiece 2005, 247-260. BeDuhn 2007a, 77-102. Cf. BeDuhn 2015a, 31-53.

³¹² Lim 1995, 78.

people, something that was important for their missionary organization and strategies. Thus, public disputations serviced as a religious strategy for social acceptance and 'legalization'.

Who provoked the debates?

An often-posed question is whether it was the Manichaeans or the local authorities who provoked the debates.³¹³ Were public disputes a distinctive weapon of Manichaean strategy and propaganda, or is this unattested? Were they in fact forced to participate in such debates due to their opponents' challenges?

According to Augustine, the Manichaeans declared that "no one [had] to believe until the truth had first been discussed and then explained".³¹⁴ The debates offered a perfect setting in which Manichaeans could manifest their knowledge. For this reason, even if they did not provoke the debates themselves, they did not avoid them when challenged.³¹⁵ As recorded in the debates of the AA, the Manichaeans were experts in refuting other doctrines, and in bringing to light the contradictions of Christian doctrine. The inconsistency between the Old and New Testament is a common topic of all the AA debates, especially of the second one.³¹⁶ Works such as the *Antithesis* of Marcion and the *Modion* of Addas served this task. This method, according to Augustine, was very clever, because technically it was much easier to refute others than to support their arguments.³¹⁷ Another subject dear to Manichaeans and discussed extensively during the first debate was the "whence evil" question, which the Manichaeans considered as their strong point.³¹⁸

Historicity of the specific debates

Concerning the historicity of the specific debates, it has been argued that they are fictional fabrications. However, even in that case, since it is testified that debates between Christians and Manichaeans were actually conducted, even fictional stories may reflect facts. Kaatz, in commenting on the historicity of the first debate, emphasizes that even if the debate never took place, the author is well informed about the argumentation used by the Manichaeans. The biblical verses, which the author puts in Mani's mouth (Matt 7:18, John 8:44, and 1 John 5:19) "have a number of parallels" in Manichaean and anti-Manichaean literature.³¹⁹ According to BeDuhn, there are three possible alternative suggestions: (1) the debate is entirely fictional, based on plausible argumentation with dualistic and docetic elements, (2) the debate took place, but (as is supported by some scholars) Adda or Sisinnius was the real protagonist and not Mani, and (3) Mani's words in the debate originate from an authentic

³¹³ According to Lim (1995, 86, 103), it was not the Manichaeans but the local Catholic bishops who provoked those debates, in order to estimate Manichaeans' missionary influence upon their flock and populace.

³¹⁴ Augustine, *De utilitate credendi* 1.2 (Vermes, 24).

³¹⁵ Lieu in Vermes 2001, 26. Lim 1995, 86: "However, though Manichaeans did not generally initiate public debates as part of a grand missionary strategy, they rarely avoided public contests with opponents less ready for such encounters. A Manichaean missionary-teacher could not afford to be seen backing down from a contest, however contrived and fraught with peril".

³¹⁶ This is well-attested Manichaean method. See Lieu in Vermes 2001, 25.

³¹⁷ Augustine, *De utilitate credendi* 1.2 (Vermes, 26, fn. 98).

³¹⁸ As Lim (1995, 103) states, "the use of formal public disputation as part of the Manichaean missionary effort is almost unattested. Instead, we find an emphasis on aporetic disputation using such questions as "Whence evil?" Their purpose was not to draw listeners into debate, though this sometimes happened, but to allow them to appreciate the Manichaean kerygma as the solution to real theological problems."

³¹⁹ Kaatz 2007, 117-18.

Manichaean source, the writer of which could be Mani himself.³²⁰ BeDuhn, after comparing the biblical quotations and argumentation of Mani in the *Acta* to those of genuine Manichaean texts, proposed that, while the narrative framework of the debate (time, location, and characters) could be Hegemonius' contrivance, the content of the discussion (biblical quotation and Mani's argumentation) is genuine and probably comes from an authentic epistle of Mani. Hegemonius segmented this text and created the imaginary framework of the two debates (first and third). In that way, he had the opportunity to refute Mani's theses word for word.³²¹ Likewise, Epiphanius puts an argument in the mouth of Mani that accords well with the well-known Manichaean hatred of Judaism. According to him, Mani referred to the conquest of Palestine by the Jews after the Exodus and argued against the injustice and partiality of the Jewish God towards other nations: "He spoiled the Egyptians, expelled the Amorites and Girgashites and the other nations, and gave their land to the children of Israel; he who says 'You shall not covet' how did he gave them other people's property?"³²²

In any case, independently of whether or not the debate actually happened, even if Marcellus, Archelaus and Turbo did not exist, the author of the AA creates a fiction in order to narrate facts: the Manichaeans were there, actively missionizing, threatening the newly established Christian communities. Under the same rationale, the subsequent reproduction of the AA could be an indication that, for the later authors who echoed the AA, the Manichaean threat was still present.

In addition, as I will present below, the AA provides us with useful information about the protocol during these debates, such as that the debates took place either in public or in private houses; that when the debate took place in a private place there were invitations; that the Christians were represented by their bishop or local clerics, while the Manichaeans were represented by a group of Elect; that there were referees who judged the debate's outcome; that these judges were pagan for impartiality; that the proceedings of the debates were recorded and edited, etc.

Locations of the two debates in the *Acta*

Carchar (Kashkar- Carrhae- karkā)

According to the majority of researchers, the debate was fictional. If we consider this scenario to be the most likely, the question to answer is not where the debate took place, but where Hegemonius locates it.

According to the AA, the first debate took place in Mesopotamia, on Roman soil, in a city near the Persian-Roman frontier, named Carchar,³²³ or Caschar (*Κασχάρη*) according to

³²⁰ BeDuhn 2007a, 77-102.

³²¹ BeDuhn 2007b, 131. This, as said, was also Epiphanius' method of refutation of Mani's doctrines: ἄτινα κατὰ λέξιν διελεῖν καὶ τὰ πρὸς ἀντίθεσιν πάντων αὐτῶν γράψαι (*Pan.* 66.21.1, cf. Williams 248: "I intend > to analyze them phrase by phrase, and set down the arguments against them all").

³²² Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.83 (Williams, 310, modified): ἐσκύλευσε μὲν τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους, ἐξέβαλε δὲ Ἀμορραίους καὶ Γεργεσαίους καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἔθνη, καὶ ἔδωκε τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ ὁ λέγων 'μὴ ἐπιθυμήσης' πῶς ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς τὰ ἀλλότρια; On Manichaean anti-Judaism see BeDuhn 2020 (forthcoming).

³²³ AA 1.1 (Vermes, 35). About the venue of the debate see Lieu (1994, 140-46) and Lieu in Vermes 2001, 16-23. BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 9.

both Epiphanius³²⁴ and Socrates the Scholastic.³²⁵ Some researchers assume that these Greek writers located the place of the debate in the Persian city Kashkar/Kaskar in the Characene-Mesene area of southern Mesopotamia because of the form of the name of the city (i.e. 'Κασχάρη'). The suggestion that the debate was located in Kashkar/Kaskar has been supported by at least one scholar.³²⁶ However, this scenario is unlikely, since in the story line of the AA it is clear that *Carchar* was located on Roman soil. Archelaus speaks of his place as a place not held by the Persians, thus excluding the scenario of Kashkar.³²⁷ Beyond that, I consider that interpreting Epiphanius' use of 'Κασχάρη' to mean the Persian city of Kashkar in southern Mesopotamia is not consistent with his wording in *De mensuris et ponderibus*. The latter supports the view that Epiphanius located 'Κασχάρη' in northern Mesopotamia: Mani "ascended from Persia to Caschar of Mesopotamia".³²⁸

According to another proposal, Carchar could have been a city in the region of Osrhoene in northern Mesopotamia, near the border between Persia and the Roman Empire, specifically Carrhae (=Harran), known as a centre of paganism.³²⁹ In favour of this view are the testimonies of the Syrian authors (Afrahat and Ephrem) "about infiltration of Manichaeism into Osrhoene in the early years of the fourth century".³³⁰

Lastly, it has been claimed, that since the word 'carchar' is similar to the Syriac word *karka* that means 'town', it could be any other city across the border except Harran, because the *Acta's* framework suggests a town with a strong Christian community and not at all a centre of paganism.³³¹

That Carchar was a Roman city is the first claim in the document. The second claim is that the city was near the borderline that was formed by the river Stranga. The geographical information provided in the AA supporting these two claims is abundant. "Marcellus' reputation was being spread abroad [...] had even crossed the river Stranga" and brought his name into the territory of Persia.³³² The crowd in Diodoris "wanted to [...] hand Mani ... over

³²⁴ Epiphanius *Pan.* 66.5.10: Μαρκέλλου τοῦνομα, κατοικοῦντος ἐν Κασχάρῃ πόλει τῆς Μεσοποταμίας [...] συζητήσιν δημοσίᾳ ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ Κασχάρῃ, <Μάρκελλός τε καὶ Ἀρχέλαος>. In *Pan.* 66.11.1, the form 'Καλχάρων': ἔρχεται εἰς κώμην τινὰ τῆς Καλχάρων. Epiphanius, *De mensuris et ponderibus* 551.48-50: Ἀρχέλαον τὸν ἐπίσκοπον Κασχάρων τῆς Μεσοποταμίας [...] Διοδωρίδα κώμην τῆς Κασχάρων περιοικίδος.

³²⁵ Socrates, *HE* 1.22.13: Ἀρχελάου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου Κασχάρων, μιᾶς τῶν ἐν Μεσοποταμίᾳ πόλεων. Whereas Photius (c. *Manichaeos* 135.46.3 & 139.53.5) gives the version with the 'ρ' instead of 'σ': Ὁ δὲ τῶν Καρχάρων ἐπίσκοπος, Ἀρχέλαος [...] εἰς Διωρίδα Καρχάρων κώμην.

³²⁶ This scholar was Kessler (see Lieu in Vermes 2001, 16-17). As BeDuhn (2007a, 86-87) comments, "in that occasion Marcellus could have probably been the leader of the community of the Christian refugees who king Shapur brought as war captives (250-60 CE)". Cf. BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 10.

³²⁷ AA 63.1 (Vermes, 142).

³²⁸ Epiphanius, *De mensuris et ponderibus* 547-550: ἀνέβη Μάνης ἀπὸ τῆς Περσίδος [...] πρὸς Ἀρχέλαον τὸν ἐπίσκοπον Κασχάρων τῆς Μεσοποταμίας. The ascent of Mani in northern Mesopotamia is also illustrated by the wording of Photius (c. *Manichaeos* 39.53.3-5: φυλακὴν διαφυγὼν—οὐδὲν γὰρ κωλύει διελθεῖν ἃ τῆς ἱστορίας ὁ δρόμος παρήλθεν ἄνωθεν—καὶ κατὰ Μεσοποταμίαν γεγωνώς. Less clear is the wording in Cyril, *Catech.* 6.27 (Mani "escapes from the prison, and come (ἔρχεται) to Mesopotamia"), and in Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Haer.* (PG 83:381): "Mani arrived (ἀφίκετο) in the middle of the rivers (εἰς τὴν μέσην ... τῶν ποταμῶν) [Tigris and Euphrates]".

³²⁹ Fiey 1968 (*Assyrie chrétienne*). See also Tardieu 1986. Lieu in Vermes 2001, 17-18. BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 10-11: "Some researchers have proposed that Carrhae stands behind the Latin text's "Carchar." The idea was already put forward by the AA's first editor, Zacagni, in 1698, and has been favorably repeated by, among others, Fiey and Pennacchietti".

³³⁰ Tardieu 1986 (Archelaus): <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/archelaus-author>

³³¹ Lieu 1994, 45. BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 10-11. Lieu in Vermes 2001, 21.

³³² AA 4.1 (Vermes 39).

to the powers of the barbarians [Persians] who were their neighbours beyond the river Stranga".³³³ Thus, a crucial point of reference for the identification of the city is the identification of the river Stranga which, according to the AA, was the boundary between the two empires. Notable is that from the Greek sources reproducing the AA, only Epiphanius refers to the name Stranga.³³⁴

The above scenarios (i.e. of Harran or of any city along the border in Osrhoene), presuppose that the river Stranga is identified with the Khabur, which is supported by many scholars. However, the Khabur did not mark the Roman frontier with Persia, neither at the time of the AA's narrative nor in Hegemonius' time.³³⁵ In addition, the name 'Stranga' is extremely rarely encountered in Greek sources. It is, in fact, restricted to two clusters of tradition: the AA (only in Epiphanius' text) and the Alexander Romance.³³⁶ In the latter, the name Stranga is given to the river Tigris. So, if Hegemonius used the name Stranga to refer to the Tigris, then Kaschar/Carchar could be identified with "Hatra [...] or Singara, or even Nisibis".³³⁷ Yet, all of these are just scenarios; the research conducted so far suggests that the identification of the river Stranga (and therefore of Carchar) is extremely difficult. Both the anachronisms that exist in the AA, and the continuous shifting of the borders between Mani's and Hegemonius' era, render Hegemonius' information unreliable and his sense of geography problematic.³³⁸ Moreover, the consensus among scholars that the events in the AA are fictitious further explains this confusion of the text (AA).

Diodoris

As far as Diodoris is concerned, it must have been located nearby Carchar. According to the AA, "Manes [...] reached a village far distant from the city, which was called Diodoris".³³⁹ According to Epiphanius, after Mani was crushed by Archelaus at the first debate, he "withdrew and came to a village [κώμην] < in the neighborhood > of Caschar [τῆς Καλχάρων] called Diodoris"³⁴⁰. Cyril describes this κώμη as 'insignificant' (εὐτελεστάτην) and adds that Archelaus went there on foot as a good shepherd in order to find Mani, which suggests that the two locations were close to one another.³⁴¹ In ancient Greek, the word κώμη, apart from small town/village, also can mean neighbourhood/ward/quarter of a city. Therefore, it is likely that Diodoris was a district of Carchar, a poor one, in contrast to the area where Marcellus' house was located.

The 'usual place for the debates'

The debates usually took place in public places, such as public squares, church courtyards, and monasteries. According to our texts, the first debate was held at the house of the eminent

³³³ AA 66.1 (Vermes 147-48).

³³⁴ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.5.11.

³³⁵ BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 12.

³³⁶ The *Alexander Romance* by Ps.-Callisthenes is a legendary version of the history of Alexander the Great composed in Greek and dated ca. 200 CE (translated into Latin ca. 300 CE) Cf. Nawotka, 2017; BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 12-13 fn. 33. Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.5.12: ... γράφει δὲ αὐτῷ ἐπιστολὴν διὰ Τύρβωνος τινὸς τῶν αὐτοῦ μαθητῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ πέρατος τοῦ Στράγγα ποταμοῦ, ἀπὸ καστέλλου Ἀραβίωνος οὕτω καλουμένου ...

³³⁷ BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 13.

³³⁸ Cf. BeDuhn and Mirecki 2007, 12-14.

³³⁹ AA 43.3 (Vermes, 111). Lieu in Vermes (111, fn. 229): "There is no town or village by that name in Mesopotamia in the Late Roman period".

³⁴⁰ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.31-32 (Williams 238).

³⁴¹ Cyril, *Catech.*, 6.30: Ἀρχέλαος [...] ἀκούσας τὴν φυγὴν, εὐθέως δρομαῖος [...].

citizen of Carchar, Marcellus (AA 14), and the second at the central square of Diodoris. The debate at Marcellus' house, although it occurred in a private place, should have been an event that involved a large part of the town.³⁴² The huge house of Marcellus was full of people who were invited to attend the debate.³⁴³ Among them were all the upper layers of the city.

To return to the question about who was provoking the debates, the first debate in Marcellus' house was organized and held by Mani's opponents, whilst Mani initially tried to convert Marcellus through his epistles. Coyle, agreeing with Lim, points out that it was not Mani who came to confront Archelaus. Manichaeans did not start the debates; their opponents started them in order to counteract the Manichaeans' successful propaganda and proselytizing activity.³⁴⁴ However, this does not apply to the second debate. Things at Diodoris, at least initially, were more spontaneous. One particular day, Mani gathered the crowd around him and talked to them for a long time in the usual place for the debates, something that forced Diodorus to clash with him after having been advised by Archelaus.³⁴⁵ Late in the evening, because it became dark, Diodorus/Trypho asked that the debate would stop and be continued next morning.³⁴⁶ Very early next morning, Mani went to the centre of the κώμη. When the crowd gathered, "once again" he "began publicly to challenge Diodorus to engage with him in a debate".³⁴⁷

The participants

In the first debate, apart from the debaters (Mani and bishop Archelaus) and Marcellus, there were four outstanding persons who would act as chair and would judge the outcome of the debate. These were pagans for reasons of impartiality.³⁴⁸ "Bishop Archelaus [...] debated with him [Mani] before philosophers as judges, bringing together a Gentile audience, lest if Christians judged, the judges might be considered partial".³⁴⁹ In the beginning of the *Acta*, Hegemonius just mentions their names, Manippus, Aegialeus, Claudius, and Cleobulus, stating that they would act as judges.³⁵⁰ Further on, after Turbo's narration, just before the beginning of the debate, Hegemonius clarifies that the four judges were chosen by Marcellus "amongst them who were Gentiles by religion", and informs us about their professions. Manippus was "very learned in grammar and the skill of rhetoric". Aegialeus was "a very distinguished physician and [was] supremely knowledgeable in literature". Claudius and Cleobulus were brothers and "excellent rhetoricians".³⁵¹ Epiphanius' version slightly differs in the professions and names he gives for the first judge. For him both Marcellus and Archelaus chose the four judges.

³⁴² Lim 1995, 77.

³⁴³ AA 14.6 (Vermes, 59).

³⁴⁴ Coyle 2007b, 70.

³⁴⁵ AA 43.5, 52.1 & 52.3 (Vermes, 111, 124 & 126, respectively).

³⁴⁶ AA 52.9 (Vermes, 125).

³⁴⁷ AA 53.1-2 (Vermes, 125). Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.1.4-6.

³⁴⁸ AA 53.9 (Vermes, 127): "I request you only, as I said earlier, to be impartial judges, and to give the true honour and the prize to the one who speaks the truth".

³⁴⁹ Cyril, *Cathech.* 6.27.1-5 (LFHCC 73, altered): [...] Ἀρχέλαος ἐπίσκοπος. Καὶ ἐπὶ φιλοσόφων κριτῶν ἐλέγξας, ἀκροατῆριον Ἑλληνικὸν συστησάμενος, ἵνα μὴ χριστιανῶν κρινάντων δοκῶσιν οἱ κριταὶ χαρίζεσθαι.

³⁵⁰ AA 1.1 (Vermes, 35).

³⁵¹ AA 14.5-6 (Vermes, 59).

< Marcellus and Archelaus > [...] had previously chosen a man named Marsipus, and Claudius, and Aegeus and Cleobulus as judges of their disputation. One was a pagan philosopher, one a professor of medicine, another, a professional teacher of grammar, and the other a sophist.³⁵²

As Coyle comments, “these four judges (who, though given individual names, never act as individuals) have been chosen for this encounter in order to project the illusion of impartiality. They are clearly pagan, [...] but it is also clear early in the debate whose side they are on”.³⁵³ As Lim comments, “that pagans presided in this public debate between two who were emphatically not pagan, and that these iudices rendered their opinion in a communal voice throughout the dialogue, are particularly noteworthy aspects of this narrative”.³⁵⁴ The pagans that attended the debate in Gaza, between the Manichaean Julia and the bishop Porphyry, are also adumbrated in the same fashion.³⁵⁵ In Lim’s words, “As in the *Acta Archelai*, the pagans in the *Vita* constituted the silent partner in this confrontation between a Christian and a Manichaean”.³⁵⁶

Apart from the protagonists and the judges, the AA states that Mani was accompanied by twenty-two young *Electi* and *Electae*,³⁵⁷ while Epiphanius (E66.10) speaks of a retinue of men of unknown number.³⁵⁸ It seems that it was a common Manichaean practice for the leader of the debate to be accompanied by young Elect. From the life of Porphyrius of Gaza, we learn that at the debate in Gaza, the Manichaean Julia was accompanied by “two men and two women. All four of them were young and good-looking, but very pale”.³⁵⁹ It seems that dress codes were important in Manichaean propaganda. Impressive is the vivid and detailed description of Mani’s appearance given in the *Acta*, which gives the reader the impression that he has seen a portrait of Mani.

When he saw Manes, Marcellus was first astonished at the garments he was wearing. For he wore a kind of shoe which is generally known commonly as the ‘trisolium’, and a multi-coloured cloak, of a somewhat ethereal appearance, while in his hand he held a very strong staff made of ebony-wood. He carried a Babylonian book under his left arm, and he had covered his legs with trousers of different colours, one of them scarlet, the other coloured leek-green. His appearance was like that of an old Persian magician or warlord.³⁶⁰

For researchers, Hegemonius’ intention was to ridicule Mani. However, Diodorus in his epistle to Archelaus presents Mani as showing no fear and being self-confident, something mirrored in his appearance: “the man is extremely forceful both in what he says and what he does, as is also clear in his appearance and in his dress”.³⁶¹ As Brown put it, “The arrival in the forum of a group of pale men and women, clasping mysterious volumes and dressed with ostentatious barbarity, was a sight to be seen”.³⁶²

³⁵² Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.10.3 (Williams, 237-38).

³⁵³ Coyle 2007a, 26.

³⁵⁴ Lim 1995, 77-78, 87.

³⁵⁵ Mark the Deacon, *Vit. Porph.* 91.

³⁵⁶ Lim 1995, 87.

³⁵⁷ AA 14.2 (Vermes, 58).

³⁵⁸ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.10 (Williams, 237): ἰδοὺ ὁ Μάνης παρεγένετο μεθ’ ὧν εἶχε μεθ’ ἑαυτοῦ ἀνδρῶν. On the contrary, for Epiphanius, the disciples that visited Mani at the jail (in Persia) were twenty-two, three of whom were chosen for his missionary plans to the Roman West.

³⁵⁹ Mark the Deacon, *Vit. Porph.* 88: Τῇ δὲ ἐπαύριον παραγίνεται [...] ἔχουσα μεθ’ ἑαυτῆς ἀνδρας δύο καὶ τοσαύτας γυναῖκας· ἦσαν δὲ νεώτεροι καὶ εὐειδεῖς, ὥχροι δὲ πάντες, ἡ δὲ Ἰουλίᾳ ἦν προβεβηκυῖα.

³⁶⁰ AA 14 (Vermes, 58).

³⁶¹ AA 44.4 (Vermes, 111).

³⁶² Brown 1969, 100-101.

When all those invited to attend the debate gathered and absolute silence had been established, the judges sat above all the rest and the floor was given to Mani.³⁶³ In the debate in Diodoris, as it was spontaneous, there were neither judges nor invited people. Judges and audience were the congregated crowd. Additionally, there is no reference to Mani's retinue.

The audience

According to Hegemonius, the house of Marcellus, though huge, was full of all those invited to attend the first debate. It is worth noting that at the second debate in Diodoris, among the audience also were all those who came with Archelaus "from his province and from other neighbouring areas".³⁶⁴ This transfer of followers from other nearby locations reminds us of contemporary electoral speeches of politicians, or football games. The audience at both locations is presented by Hegemonius as acting emotionally. At times they celebrated, became aggressive, or deeply moved. Indeed, to Hegemonius' eyes, the audience in Diodoris was particularly vulnerable to the Manichaean danger. During the third debate, for a moment, when Mani had finished his speech, "the crowds were deeply moved, as if the words held an account of the truth and Archelaus had nothing to oppose to them. This was indicated by the uproar that had arisen amongst them".³⁶⁵ However, at the end of both debates, when Archelaus was declared as winner, the crowd wanted to attack and lynch Mani.³⁶⁶ In general, the Manichaean answer to the question of the origin of evil was more convincing and consoling than the respective Christian answer. In specific, for those cities on the frontiers, where life was troublesome and 'evil' existed in the everyday routine of people being taken captive from both sides of the borders, the Manichaean approach provided the Manichaean missionary argumentation with an extra advantage.

The proceedings of the debates

It is to be noted that minutes of the confrontations were taken. The proceedings of the debates were recorded by the stenographers and could be used as a simplified, popularized guide on how to confront Manichaeans or other 'heretics'.³⁶⁷ The practice of stenographers, who recorded the confrontation verbatim, was first introduced in the debate between Paul of Samosata and Malchion. This practice gave the opportunity to control the inconsistencies of the opponents and therefore made it much easier to refute their arguments.³⁶⁸ In the debate in Gaza, after the permission of bishop Porphyrius, the deacon Cornelius, who knew the "signs of Ennomos", undertook the task to record the debate assisted by two instigators (Mark the Deacon and Baruchas). As these minutes were too lengthy, Mark the Deacon proposed to write them down in a separate work, which unfortunately did not survive.³⁶⁹

³⁶³ AA 14.6 (Vermes, 59).

³⁶⁴ AA 61.2 (Vermes, 139).

³⁶⁵ AA 56.1 (Vermes, 130).

³⁶⁶ AA 66.1 (Vermes, 147-48). As Lim (1995, 78) remarks, "here we glimpse one possible role of a partisan audience, namely, to impose firm closure on a debate".

³⁶⁷ Coyle 2007b, 76.

³⁶⁸ Lieu in Vermes 2001, 24. See also Lim 1995, 78.

³⁶⁹ Mark the Deacon, *Vit. Porph.* 88: "τὰ Ἐννόμου σημεία". The 'signs of Ennomos' is a reference to the system of stenography, which was probably named likewise after the Neo-Arian Eunomius, who was a skilled tachygrapher and teacher of tachygraphy in Constantinople. See entry "Byzantium" in *ODB*, 746.

Irrespective of the historicity of the debates in the AA, the following statement that Archelaus (or Hegemonius) is presented to claim, after the end of the first debate, reveals the importance attributed to the keeping of minutes.

[...] since this disputation should be recorded and written down [...] [I] have trusted in the good will of my readers that they will pardon me, if my narration shall sound at all naïve or colloquial. For my only purpose is this, that an awareness of what took place should not elude any serious enquirer".³⁷⁰

The grand success the AA had among "enquirers" of later centuries, until the late Byzantine era (and afterwards), makes it hard to resist the temptation to comment on how well he (Archelaus or/and Hegemonius) achieved his purpose!

2.8 Conclusions

After the comparative examination of the sources, we can summarize the most important points of analysis and make some concluding remarks.

Regarding the representation of Mani and of Manichaeism, despite the different cultural background of the authors and the different literary genre of the sources, we have seen that they use the same language and imagery to represent the arrival of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire. The basic common features which they underline are: (1) the Persian origin of Mani and Manichaeism, (2) that the Perso-Manichaean beliefs and practices misled Roman citizens, (3) that Manichaeism is a 'novelty' seeking to replace traditional (pagan and Christian) institutions/values, and (4) that Manichaeism's spread westwards threatens the integrity of Roman citizens and of the whole of the Roman Empire.

These thematic axes are also basic structural elements of the *Acta*, and are emphasized by all subsequent authors, irrespectively of whether they reproduced the AA or not. Mani's biography in the AA was the most extended portrait of Mani and subsequently influential. Of this work, it has been highlighted that despite being considered as the most unreliable part of the AA, it in fact reflects true events of Mani's life. Both Epiphanius and Cyril give additional information, not recorded in the rest of the AA tradition, such as about Mani's disciples, books, commercial activity and itineraries of proto-Manichaeans, as well as their rituals. The trace of the AA in later sources is limited to a brief presentation of Mani and of Manichaeism that draws from the core of the AA's biography: the time Mani appeared, the time of his arrival in the Roman Empire, that he confronted Archelaus in debates, the names of his students and their mission, the titles of the Manichaean books. There is a divergence among the sources regarding the time of Mani's arrival. Epiphanius' dating is more realistic. He dates Mani's missionary activity during the reign of Valerian and Gallienus (253-268), as Alexander also did. He also dates the arrival of the second wave of Manichaean missionaries in Palestine in the time of the emperor Aurelian (270-275), just before Mani's death. According to our sources, Manichaeism had already spread throughout the Roman Empire since the mid-fourth century.

Regarding the question of the titles of the Manichaean Scriptures, the AA recorded the titles of three out of the seven canonical books (*Gospel*, *Mysteries* and *Thesaurus*) and one of the sub-canonical tradition, the *Kephalaia*, a work of Mani's students. Epiphanius and Cyril provide some additional information which denotes a provenance from different sources (another version of the AA?) or first-hand information. Especially important because it is unique and accurate is Epiphanius' testimony that Mani's Gospel comprised twenty-two

³⁷⁰ AA 43.3 (Vermes, 110-11).

chapters which corresponded to the Syriac alphabet. Combining Cyril's testimony that Manichaean missionaries were carrying around copies of the *Thesaurus*, with the fact that the latter was the most cited book not only in the AA's tradition but also by individual writers (Titus, Severianus, Nilus of Ankara), it appears that the *Thesaurus* was the most well-known and widespread Manichaean book in the Roman East.

Of particular interest is Titus' testimony, who knew that Mani's books were written in the Syriac language. He names as titles of Mani's books, the *Thesaurus*, *Prayers*, and *Epistles*; from the quotation he gives, it seems that he had access to other genuine Manichaean books too (*Mysteries*, *Kephalaia*, *Homilies*?). Heraclian and the *SAF* are the only sources that refer to the book of *Giants*.

The *SC* and *SAF* (contemporary works?) together give the most accurate information regarding the titles of the Manichaean canonical books. The *SC* gives us the titles of five out of the seven canonical books of Mani (*Thesaurus*, *Living Gospel*, *Book of Mysteries*, the *Epistles of Mani*, and the *Manichaean Prayers*). Indeed, the above pentateuch can be expanded into a heptateuch, given that the *Treatise*, the *Book of the Giants*, along with the *Book of Mysteries* could count as one, according to Manichaean sources. Similarly, the *SAF* states that the canonical books are five (it gives six titles but does not include the *Prayers* in the canon), while among the five canonical works includes the *Book/Treatise of the Giants*.

Regarding the question of accessibility, Theonas, Cyril, Titus, and the compiler of the *SC* explicitly declared that they had access to and read Manichaean books, whereas in the case of Epiphanius and Heraclian this is only implied. The *Treasure* is the only book which at least Cyril explicitly states that he had read (this is probable for Titus too). The question of the canon's secrecy (i.e. that the access to Manichaean canonical books was restricted), is raised only by Titus.

With regard to the question of the names of the first Manichaean missionaries, the *SC* again gives the most accurate information. Seven out of the nine names it gives are testified in genuine Manichaean sources. For the remaining two (Thomas and Zarouas), there are sound arguments in favour of their Manichaeanness. On the other hand, from the AA's trio only one (Addas) is testified. The AA also refers to Sisinnius, however ignoring, as it seems, his role in the Manichaean leadership. The value of the *SAF* lies in the fact that, for the first time in Greek literature, Sisinnius assumes his proper role as the successor of Mani. The *SC* is the only Greek anti-Manichaean source that records the six grades of the Manichaean hierarchy in detail.

Concerning the similarities/differences between the *SC*, *SAF*, and *LAF* the following comments can be made: The fact that the *SC* neither derives from earlier/previous literature nor leaves its footprint in posterior tradition until the *LAF* is probably due to its sacramental use: the conversion ceremony of real Manichaeans. Logically, many of such *AFs* would have been stored in the *chartophylakeion* (Archives) of the several dioceses. One of them could have been the *SAF*. It is reasonable to assume that, although the basic structure of these formulas was standardized, there would have been (minor) deviations in their content.

The Manichaean missionary methods recorded in the AA (the conversion of important persons, the use of letters, the debates) are also testified by Manichaean texts. Indeed, it has been argued that the AA probably contains genuine Manichaean documents, such as the 'letter to Marcellus' which could have been an authentic letter of Mani. The debates of the AA, although they are considered fictitious, preserve accurate information concerning the protocol of the debates and Mani's statements during the debates. I will examine the latter together with the Manichaean cosmogony narrated by Turbo in ch.[5].