

Remarks on the Manichaean *Book of Giants*

Once Again on Mahaway's Mission to Enoch

Jens Wilkens
Berlin

Vangir þínir tifa ótt, bera
þig svo yfir haf og land

Wings of yours that beat so fast, soaring
Over mountains and ocean waves
--Ólöf Arnalds, *Seið birki*

I. Introduction

The Manichaean *Book of Giants* is found in several lists of Mani's canonical works.¹ We have evidence that the mythical accounts that have parallels in the *Book of Giants* from Qumran were subjected to a meticulous Manichaean interpretation, linking the macrocosmic events to microcosmic psychological observations.² In a ground breaking paper Henning was the first scholar who identified fragments surviving in Middle Persian and Sogdian and one Old Uyghur leaf³ from the *Book of Giants* and several excerpts from this work and allusions to it in Manichaean literature.⁴ A Parthian version was discovered later.⁵

¹ Werner Sundermann, "Giants, the Book of," *EJL* 10:592a-94b (592a).

² Jens Wilkens, "Funktion und gattungsgeschichtliche Bedeutung des manichäischen Gigantenbuchs," in *Der östliche Manichäismus. Gattungs- und Werkgeschichte. Vorträge des Göttinger Symposiums vom 4./5. März 2010*, ed. Zekine Özertural and Jens Wilkens (AAWG 17; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 63-85.

³ For further Old Uyghur fragments see Jens Wilkens, "Neue Fragmente aus Manis Gigantenbuch," *ZDMG* 150 (2000): 133-76.

⁴ Walter Bruno Henning, "The Book of the Giants," *BSOAS* (1943-46): 52-74. Repr. pages 115-37 in *Selected Papers, Volume II* (Acta Iranica 15; Leiden/Teheran: Brill/Bibliothèque Pahlavi, 1977).

⁵ Werner Sundermann, *Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und Parabeltexte der Manichäer* (BTT 4; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1973), 76-77.

II. The Old Uyghur Fragment Mainz 317

The most well-known Old Uyghur fragment from the *Book of Giants* is the one bearing the signature Mainz 317 (T I; TM 423d 4).⁶ It was first published by Le Coq⁷ and later re-edited by Bang,⁸ but it was Henning who identified it as belonging to the *Book of Giants*.⁹ Henning also provided a fresh translation into English. Bang reversed the order of the pages in Le Coq's edition but with good reasons Henning re-established the original sequence of the recto and the verso. Henning also identified for the first time the person called *honug burhan* in the text with Enoch. Bang had speculated that *honug burhan* could perhaps refer to Mani.¹⁰

The manuscript Mainz 317 is damaged but most sentences are clearly legible. This does not mean that the leaf does not pose several philological problems. In the following the fragment is re-examined and, at the end of this essay, a new transcription and translation are provided. In addition, the contents of Mainz 317 are interpreted with reference to a broader context. Some new readings have to be discussed in greater detail. Many open questions remain and alternative explanations are sometimes possible.

III. Preliminary Textual Remarks

1. The verb *ašr(u)l-* ~ *ašr(i)l-*

The first problematic word is to be found in the third line which is now best interpreted as *ašr(u)lmatin* or *ašr(i)lmatin*, "without being carried over." The verb *ašrul-* is attested in the eleventh century Islamic work of Maḥmūd al-Kāshgārī entitled *Dīwān luḡāt at-Turk* (*Compendium of the Turkic Languages*). The *Dīwān luḡāt at-Turk* is written in Arabic with copious examples from several Turkic languages and dialects. The verb under discussion is quoted in the following sentence: *yük arttı ašrudı* ("The load was carried over the pass").¹¹

⁶ Depositum der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in der Orientabteilung der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

⁷ Albert von Le Coq, *Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho. III* (APAW.PH 1922.2; Berlin: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1922), 23.

⁸ Willi Bang, "Manichäische Erzähler," *Le Muséon* 44 (1931): 1–36 (13–14). A facsimile of the verso (recto according to Bang) is provided on Taf. I.

⁹ It is fragment B in his edition. See Henning, "The Book of the Giants," 65 [128] (the second page number refers to this article in Henning's *Selected Papers, Volume II*). Note also the essay in this volume by Matthew Goff.

¹⁰ Bang, "Manichäische Erzähler," 15.

¹¹ Sir Gerard Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 265a.

The first editor of the Manichaean Turkic fragment, Albert von Le Coq, read *as(i)r(i)lmatin* and translated it with "unvergleichlicher Weise."¹² Bang left the word un-translated, while other scholars such as Henning and Röhrborn have tried to emend the text by conjecture.¹³ Henning thought of the verb *asil-* (I) ("to increase"), which he erroneously transcribed as *ašil-*. Röhrborn thought it to be a mistake for *asil-* (II) ("to be hung"). The manuscript was made by a rather meticulous scribe. For this reason we should be careful about making conjectures. Of course, by reading *ašr(u)lmatin* ~ *ašr(i)lmatin* ("without being carried over") we would have to explain why the verb is used in this sentence with regard to the sun. The text probably wants to stress that the sun is revolving without any other cosmic force interfering. The following, partly restored matrix verb *täg-zinür ärti* is not to be translated as indicating an inchoative action in the manner of Henning ("was going to start rolling")¹⁴ but as denoting an intra-terminal aspect ("was revolving").¹⁵ This was correctly observed already in Bang's translation.¹⁶ To assume inchoative actionality would lead to the mistaken impression that the sun was stationary before. This should be highlighted because Henning's translation is the one most often quoted.

2. The Gates and the Window Openings

In chapter 72 of the Ethiopic *Book of Enoch* six doors each on the eastern and the western horizon, through which the sun has to pass every day, are mentioned.¹⁷ Henning has already remarked in a footnote to the Manichaean Uyghur text that according to chapters 72 and following of *1 Enoch* "there are 180 doors in the east one of which is opened each morning for the sun to pass through."¹⁸ The number of doors should, however, be reconsidered. In a cosmological text in Old Uyghur, six thresholds each and thirty bazaars and twelve rows are mentioned.¹⁹ The editor compares this information with the Middle Persian hymn M67 ded-

¹² Le Coq, *Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho. III*, 23 (text no. 8, VIII).

¹³ Klaus Röhrborn (*Uigurisches Wörterbuch. Sprachmaterial der vorislamischen türkischen Texte aus Zentralasien. Neubearbeitung I. Verben. Band 1: Ab- - äzüglä-* [Stuttgart: Steiner, 2010], 96, s. v. *ašr(i)l-*) tentatively interprets this word as a mistake for *asil-* (II) ("hängen, aufgehängt sein") (correcting Henning's assumption that the verb should be *asil-* (I) "to increase"). On p. 88 the sentence is understood as follows: *ord[osu] üstün asulmatin tägzinür ärti* ("der Palast [der Sonne] begann zu rollen, ohne oben aufgehängt zu sein [?]").

¹⁴ Henning, "The Book of the Giants," 65 [128].

¹⁵ Marcel Erdal, *A Grammar of Old Turkic* (HOSS 3; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 262.

¹⁶ Bang, "Manichäische Erzähler," 14.

¹⁷ Walter Bruno Henning, "Ein manichäisches Henochbuch," *SPAW.PH* (1934): 27–35 (34). Repr. pages 341–49 (348) *Selected Papers, Volume 1* (Acta Iranica 14; Leiden/Teheran: Brill/Bibliothèque Pahlavi, 1977).

¹⁸ Henning, "The Book of the Giants," 65 [128], n. 2.

¹⁹ Fragment XXI (U258 verso) in Peter Zieme, "A Turkish Text on Manichaean Cosmogony," in *Atti del Terzo Congresso Internazionale di Studi "Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano*