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Abstracts

**Manichaean Cosmology According to a Classical Persian Text:
Shahristani's *al-Milal wa'l-Nihal***

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Abul-Fath Muhammad ibn-i `bd al-Karim Shahristani, born in Shahristan, near the old city Nisa, on the road of Nishabuhr to Khwarazm in 479 AH/1101 AD and died there in 548 AH / 1170 AD, is the composer of *al-Milal wa'l-Nihal* (*The Book of Religions and Sects*) in Arabic which has a short chapter on Manichaeism. The work was translated into Persian by two writers, Afdal ibn-I Sadr-I Turke-ye Esfahani in 9th AH / 15th AD and by Mustafa Khaliqdad Hashemi in 1020-21 AH/ 1622-23 AD. The following themes based on the Manichaean cosmogony narrated by this classical Persian book are discussed and analysed in this paper: 1) The comparison between the essences and acts of light and darkness consist of Essence, Self, Act, Place, Bodies and Characters; 2) the comparison between the Realms of Light and Darkness; 3) Light is the producer of Malaekat (Angels), alihat (Deities) and Awliya' (Authorities), and Darkness is the producer of Shayatin (Devils), Arakina (Archons), and Afarit (Demons, Giants); 4) the contradictions among Manichaeans on the mixing of light and darkness, and the release of light from darkness; mixing of light and darkness by chance not voluntarily; 5) sending an angel (the Primal Man) with five elements to the Realm of Darkness; 6) the command of the King of Light to one of the angels (the Living Spirit) to save the Primal Man; 7) the release of light particles through Milk Way and their rise into the Moon, the Sun and New Paradise; 8) the report of Abu Sa`id Manavi, a Manichaean dignitary, on the period of 12000 years of the mixing of light and darkness.