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**THE TERMINOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF
CHINESE TEXTS
RELATED TO MANICHAISM**

Ph.D. DISSERTATION

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The basic aims of the present Ph.D. dissertation divide into three major parts:

- I. Philological preparation and translation
- II. Detailed terminological analysis
- III. Comparative religio-historical analysis

In the following pages I summarize the process of work and the general conclusions of the dissertation. Previously, no study has investigated Chinese Manichaeism in a detailed and comprehensive way. Although the present dissertation naturally owes much to former scholarship in the field, its approach, its handling of the material, the depth of the analysis, and the results are – as the author hopes – original and novel.

I. PHILOLOGICAL PREPARATION AND TRANSLATION

The general aim of the dissertation is to investigate the entire group of texts pertaining to Chinese Manichaeism:

1. *Compendium* [S 3969–P 3884; T2141A: 1279c–1281a]
2. *Traité* [BD00256; T2141B: 1281a–1286a]
3. *Hymn-scroll* [S 2659; T2140: 1270b–1279c]
4. The historical documents.

The serious analysis of the contents naturally requires a philologically reliable translation of these texts.

→ As a preparation to the dissertation, all the texts pertaining to Chinese Manichaeism were collected and translated. Presently, besides the original Hungarian is the only language in which the complete set of Chinese Manichaean texts is available.

→ Special attention was paid to collecting the historical sources, to arranging the events in them in a chronological way, and to translating them carefully. This fact is to be stressed because since the seminal work of CHAVANNES–PELLIOT in 1911–13, nobody has collected the historical texts „discovered“ newly after 1913. Thus at the present time it is only in Hungarian that such an exhaustive collection exists.

→ Besides the already known Chinese Manichaean texts mentioned above, the new fragments, found at the Turfan-Sammlung in Berlin, have also been incorporated into the present analysis.

→ While preparing the translations of the texts, I eminently relied on the original manuscripts. This fact is to be stressed because the majority of the former translations were based on the often misleading versions found in the Buddhist Canon (Taishō), and not the the original manuscripts.

→ In the texts cited in the dissertation, I corrected the wrong Chinese characters appearing in the *Taishō*, and replaced the erroneous and misleading punctuation of the *Taishō* edition with an appropriate one.

→ I have collected the Chinese character variants appearing in the manuscripts in a comparative chart in the Appendix.

→ The original *Dunhuang* manuscripts have been attached to the dissertation on a separate CD-ROM.

II. DETAILED TERMINOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The philologically accurate translation of the texts is the first step towards serious analysis. According to my intentions, the analytical method applied in the dissertation has four major characteristics: 1. it is comprehensive 2. detailed 3. systematic 4. comparative. The implications of these terms and other features of the terminological analysis is presented here.

→ The Chinese sources pertaining to the life of Mānī, the main characteristics of the Chinese Manichaean church, and the various characters appearing in the Chinese Manichaean cosmogonical myths have been assembled and translated. While referring them, I give their precise place both in the

manuscripts and the *Taishō*. I have collected the various designations of these concepts and figures. I have also added their major epithets, attributes, functions and contextual features. In the case of cosmogonical figures, their typical designations in non-Chinese languages were also added.

→ As a next step, I analysed the distribution of these major epithets, attributes, functions and contextual features in the Chinese texts, their similarities and differences. Illustrative analogies were drawn from different non-Chinese sources.

→ The dissertation aims at comprehensiveness as it covers all Chinese sources pertaining to Chinese Manichaeism. While previous investigations focused on the three *Dunhuang* manuscripts (*Compendium*, *Traité*, *Hymn-scroll*), the present dissertation aims at using the historical sources to a relatively larger extent. The present dissertation also takes the recently found Chinese Manichean fragments into account.

→ Thematically, the dissertation divides into two major parts: in the first one the figure of Mānī, the history and structure of the Chinese Manichaean community, and its main ritual events are surveyed, while the second part – following the Manichaean cosmogonical order – the figures of the Manichaean pantheon are examined. Previously, neither the first, nor the second topic was elaborated in a comprehensive way.

→ The first part of the dissertation („Mānī and the Manichaeian Community”) covers the following topics:

1. Mānī's names
2. Mānī's life
3. Mānī's epithets (Buddha, the Buddha of Light, Light Envoy, (Dharma)-King, Healing King; other characteristics)
4. The history of Manichaeism before and after its entrance into China
5. Manichaeian scriptures and visual arts
6. Designations used for Manichaeism and Manichaeians
7. The hierarchy of the Manichaeian church (auditores and electi, the five grades, other ranks)
8. The Manichaeian monasteries
9. The role of women in the Manichaeian church
10. Instructions for clothing
11. Prescriptions for eating
12. General rules and prohibitions
13. Rituals
14. The Manichaeian festivals
15. Begging and alms-giving
16. Repentance and confession
17. Marriage and sexuality

18. Death and burial
19. Gathering at night.

→ The second part of the dissertation („Manichaeian Cosmogony”) covers the role of the following concepts and mythological figures:

1. The Two Principles and the Three Epochs
2. The Realm of Light
3. The Father of Greatness
4. The Four Faces
5. The Three Eternal Ones
6. The Twelve Aeons
7. The Realm of Darkness
8. The First Man
9. The Five Sons of the First Man
10. The Light-Spirit
11. The Living Mother
12. The Friend of Lights
13. The Great Builder
14. The Call and the Answer
15. The Living Spirit
16. The Five Sons of the Living Spirit
17. The Universe
18. The Third Ambassador
19. The Column of Glory
20. The Virgin of Light

21. Jesus

22. The Light-Nous

23. The Sun and the Moon

24. The King of Justice

→ The texts (*Compendium*, *Traité*, *Hymn-scroll*, historical sources) were analysed in a systematic way. The specific features within the individual texts were taken into consideration as much as possible; on the other hand, the relationship of these texts with the other texts were also emphasized.

→ The investigation stresses the specific distribution of the concepts and figures in the different texts. It is furthermore emphasized when a particular designations of a mythological figure appears only in one single text, or if a unique name is used in two or more works.

→ In the case of certain concepts and mythological figures (The Two Principles, The Realm of Light, The Father of Greatness, Treasure-trees, the inhabitants of the Realm of Darkness, The Five Sons of the First Man), because of the composite and sophisticated nature of their Chinese designations, the important units of their names were analyzed in comparative charts. When it was necessary, comparative charts were drawn for summarizing the names of certain figures appearing in different languages (the Five Light

Elements, the Twelve Aeons, the Five Sons of the Living Spirit etc).

→ The present dissertation lays special emphasis on the specific similarities and differences of the major epithets, attributes, functions and contextual features appearing in the texts, and their overlap with other Chinese and non-Chinese texts.

→ While previous investigations focused on Manichaean cosmogony, the present work also pays special attention to the survey of Mānī's life, the religious prescriptions, the festivals, and the daily routine of the Manichaean believers.

→ While previous researches basically aimed at identifying the figures of Chinese Manichaeism, and the names of these figures were their prominent subject, the present investigation – besides refining the previous results – carries out a systematic and comparative analysis of their epithets, attributes, functions and contextual features.

→ In my analysis, the particular features of the four types of sources were especially examined. One can safely assert that the *Traité* and the *Hymn-scroll* basically focuses on the Manichaean cosmogony, while the major topics of the *Compendium* and the historical sources are aspects outside cosmogony. The latter type of the texts, however, avoids the

presentation of the Manichaean cosmogony because of dissimilar reasons.

→ The sources differ not only in their subject, but in their target audience as well: the *Compendium* was written for the emperor, the *Traité* for the electi, while the *Hymn-scroll* was used mainly by the auditors, as can be seen from the elaboration of their themes.

→ As the overlap among the different sources is relatively low, it is safe to assume that these texts were not prepared under a unified guidance. Nevertheless, it can be presumed that in certain cases word-lists containing Manichaean terminology were perhaps used during the translation process.

→ The variability of the names of the Manichaean pantheon was also examined. Generally speaking, the highest degree of variability can be found in the *Hymn-scroll*. It is also to be noticed that the figures with the greatest variability (the Realm of Light, the Father of Greatness, the Four Faces, the Realm of Darkness, the demons, the Five Sons of the First Man, Jesus) are at the same time the most prominent members of the pantheon.

→ Four types of metaphors appearing in the texts can be distinguished: 1. simple, individual metaphors 2. metaphorical actions 3. composite metaphors 4. longer narratives comprising metaphors and metaphorical actions. I emphasized

the different roles metaphors and similes play in the texts, and the pervasive presence of the so-called pseudo-Buddhist metaphors.

→ The dissertation stresses the visuality, the poetic plasticity, and the complex, consequent and systematic usage of metaphors in the *Traité* and the *Hymn-scroll*.

→ Considering the distribution and the frequency of the terminology and the aims of the texts, it can be safely asserted that these four types of texts – despite the historically speaking „accidental nature“ of their discovery – still excellently represent Chinese Manichaeism as a whole.

→ Owing to spatial restrictions, I only refer to the Buddhist and Daoist terminology used in the Chinese Manichaean texts, especially those which underwent a special Manichaean re-interpretative process. Later on, I intend to continue my researches with the analysis of these special terms.

III. COMPARATIVE RELIGIO-HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

→ Previous analyses almost always searched for analogies of non-Chinese terms in the Chinese texts, while the present investigation handles the Chinese sources as an autonomous, independent group of texts, and seeks non-Chinese analogies for the Chinese terminology.

→ I have given the non-Chinese designations of the Chinese cosmogonical figures. When these names are not frequent, I also indicated the exact place of their occurrence.

→ The analysis of the specific epithets, attributes, functions and contextual features in the Chinese sources were complemented with citations from non-Chinese Manichaean sources. Most of the characteristics were illustrated with examples from various sources.

→ Besides analyzing the Chinese texts in a comprehensive and detailed way, the present work intends to use analogies from Latin, Greek, Coptic, Syriac, Arabic, Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, and Uyghur Manichaean sources as much as possible. Special attention was paid to the comparison of Chinese terminology with that found in the Coptic Manichaean texts, as both set of texts are continuous and relatively intact. The methodological validity for such a comparison can be justified by the special missionary technique used by the Manichaeans. Besides the traditionally known sources, the relatively recently edited texts were also employed (e.g. *Tebessa-codex*, *Cologne Mānī Codex*, the second part of the *Kephalaia*).

→ Besides the primary sources, I attempted to survey the secondary literature pertaining to the general history and characteristics of Manichaeism as much as possible.

→ The ultimate goal of finding analogies was to substantiate the claim that this eastern branch of Manichaeism preserved the doctrines and terminology of the „original“ Manichaeism accurately. In order to picture this kind of continuity, beside using the sources which could have influenced Chinese Manichaeism directly (Parthian, Sogdian, Uyghur), I also employed „distant“ sources like Greek, Latin or Coptic ones.

→ In the dissertation, I examined the „terminological flexibility and variability“ of the cosmogonical figures. It was surprising to find that the terminological variability proved to be significantly similar in both temporally and geographically distant contexts (e.g. Coptic-Chinese), though the names themselves sometimes differed considerably. This attests to the fact that the Chinese Manichaean texts preserved the inner terminological proportions of the Manichaean system in an accurate and innovative way.

→ It is to be stressed that the strong metaphorical character of both the Chinese and the non-Chinese Manichaean texts is probably closely related to the role of visuality in the whole history of Manichaeism since the revelations of its founder.

→ In sum, one can assert that Chinese Manichaeism – which in the past was considered exceedingly distorted – is in fact both reliable and innovative, being conservative in preserving its core doctrines, but also adaptive to local religious traditions.

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