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A Chaghatai Turkic Text on the Life of Mani*

Semih Tezcan & Abdurishid Yakup

The Turkic Manichean texts written in Manichean, Turkic Runic and Uyghur scripts are well known in the academic world through the text editions of A. von Le Coq, W. Bang, A. von Gabain, P. Zieme, and the studies of H.-J. Klimkeit, T. Moriyasu and L. Clark.¹

Recently a Chagatai text on the life of Mani was discovered in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Peoples Republic of China. The book which includes this text is part of a private collection of Chagatai manuscripts belonging to Abdusamad Abduraup from Üchturfan county, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Now it is very difficult to connect with him, since there aren't any modern communication facilities. However we were able to photograph the second part of the manuscript ('Those Who Falsely Claimed to be Prophets') with the generous help of Barat Rajap, a member

* The authors are grateful to Prof. Dr. R. Dankoff (Chicago University) who has improved the English.

1 Mainly see: A. von Le Coq, *Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho*, I-III. *Abhandlungen der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1911-6, 1919-3, 1922-2; W. Bang & A. von Gabain, *Manichaica* (*Türkische Turfantexte II*). *Sitzungsberichte der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1929, pp. 411-430, +3 pls; W. Bang & A. von Gabain, *Der grosse Hymnus auf Mani* (*Türkische Turfantexte III*). *Sitzungsberichte der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1930, pp. 183-211, +2 pls; P. Zieme, *Manichäisch-türkische Texte* (*Berliner Turfantexte V*). Berlin, 1975; H.-J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road. Gnostic Texts from Central Asia*. San Francisco, 1993; T. Moriyasu, *A Study on the History of Uighur Manichaeism. Research on Some Manichean Materials and their Historical Background*. *Osaka Daigaku Bungakubu Kiyō* 31/32, 1991 (in Japanese); L. Clark, *The Turkic Manichean Literature*. In: P. Mirecki & J. Beduhn (eds.), *Emerging from Darkness. Studies in the Recovery of Manichean Sources*, Leiden / New York / Köln, 1997, pp. 89-141.

of the State Committee for National Affairs of P. R. China, Beijing.

On the inner covers and scribble pages there are several notices by owners and readers of the manuscript. An important notice is the following, written on the inner front cover: *ušbu kitābni mān Bahr-i Dāniš dep yazdim 'Abdu'š-šükr bin 'Abdu'l-qādir oŷli, 1337 racab ayning ikisi*. “I, son of Abdulqadir son of Abdushukr, wrote this book entitled *Bahr-i Dāniš*, on the 2nd of Rajab, 1337 (2 April 1919)”. According to the colophon on page 499, however, this text was copied on the 11th of *Zi'l-qāda* 1315 (2 April 1898), twenty one years before the date given on the inner cover. We have no explanation why the dates differ.

On the pages 1-498 entered a literary text entitled *Bahr-i Dāniš* “Sea of Wisdom” which is a prose Chagatai translation of a Persian work of the same title but composed in verses by *Šayh İnāyatullāh* (d. 1677). The translator is *Muhammad Qāsim* son of *Molla Nazır Muhammed Buhārī*. On page 499 is a colophon which includes also Persian verses and gives the mentioned date of the copy but not the name of the copyist. After one blank page (500), there follows: *vaqi'a-i ol camā'a kim yalyandin dāvāyi payyambarliq qildilar* ‘Those Who Falsely Claimed to be Prophets’, 13 stories about false prophets and other matters (pages 501-529), including a text of 52 lines about the life of Mani. The remaining 5 pages contain verses and some notes by different hands. The whole text was written on Russian paper in dark-white colour in beautiful naskh style. The size of the pages is 22.8 x 15.7 cm. and every page contains 15 lines. The whole book was bound with a thick thread and covered by thick brown covers.

Barat Rajap translated the *Bahr-i Dāniš* into modern Uyghur and introduced the contents of the story collection. His translation of *Bahar Daniš* appeared in the journal *Bulaq* No. 1 (1994), pp. 5-133; No. 2 (1994) pp. 5-26; No. 3 (1994) pp. 5-44; No. 4 (1994) pp. 5-39; No. 1 (1995) pp. 5-80, respectively. Till now, the text has not been edited, and even a basic description of the manuscript is lacking. Rajap’s

translation is very rough. Even the title of the text was misread as *Bahar Daniš* and understood as a personal name. In his introduction of the story collection we also found many misunderstandings of the text. Nevertheless, Rajap's notes are valuable as a first presentation of this work.

The text on the life of Mani which is the subject of this paper begins at the end of the 14th line of page 503, and ends at the 5th line of page 507. This story begins with the word *hikāyat* ('story') in dark-red ink, and the story itself is written in black ink. This part, including the other stories entitled *hikāyat*, was apparently copied by the same copyist as the rest of the manuscript. This can be supported by the following two facts: first, the style of the letters and the pen in both parts (*Bahr-i Dāniš* and our *hikāyat*) are the same; second, the seal after the colophon of the *Bahr-i Dāniš* on page 499 and the seal at the upper right side of the first page (p. 501) and on the last three pages must belong to the same person.

In this text Mani is described as the last of the prophets as well as a painter. The names of some historical persons and places, such as Shapur son of Ardashir, Bahram I, and Babylonia, and the main contents generally accord with Arabic and Persian sources.² But certain details, such as the description of the box and the place where it is stored [see text p. 505], and the description of the death of Mani, differ from these sources in some respects.

2 Mainly see: A. Henrichs & L. Koenen, Ein griechisches Mani-Codex. *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 5, 1970, pp. 97-216; W. Sunderman, Zur frühen missionarischen Wirksamkeit Manis. *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 24, 1971, pp. 102-205, 371-376; M. Boyce, *A Reader in Manichean Middle Persian and Parthian*, Leiden, 1975, pp. 43-48; *Bayanu 'l-Adyan*, ed. A. Iqbal, Teheran 1312, p. 17. Quotation by G. Haloun & W. B. Henning, The Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light. *Asia Major* (n.s.) 3, 1952, pp. 184-212.

Text

503

(14) H i k a y a t :

(15) Tā'rifda aytur kim: Bir kişi da'vā-yi payγambarlıq qildi, Mānī-yi naqqāš er[d]i.

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(1) anga biy'at qılγan köp erdi, aning tavalludi Bābil şahrida erdi.

(2) ammā naqqāşlıq 'ilmida bīnāzır erdi. Bir 'acā'ibāti bu erdikim yigirmä qari

(3) ḥarīr teng čatar erdi, vaqtı pargār birlä imtiḥān qilur erdi,

(4) hargız (!) tafāvut qilmaz erdi. Qanūn (?) ḥakim-ya šāgird [erdi]. Tarsā va Müyni

(5) kitābini yaxşı bilür erdi. Šāfūr bin Arda-Şır-ni vaqtida

(6) da'vā-yi payγambarlıq qildi. Va aydi: «Xudāy, ta'ālā har vaqtدا bir payγambar- ni yibärür.

(7) Guštāb vaqtida Zardušt-ni payγambar qilip yibärdi. Yänä bir vaqtدا

(8) 'Arab arasida ḥažrat-i 'Isā-ni yibärdi. Māni bu vaqtدا payγambar qilip

(9) sizlärya yibärip-dür. Sizlärya şarı'at örgätür-män. Biling: Nūr [u] ʐulmat

(10) qadim turur. Ḥayvānātni hammasını öltürmäk ḥarām turur. Darvíşlarya³

(11) cānvarlarya ăzār bermäk ḥarām-dur. Qaş[ş]aqlıy davlatmandlıydiñ

(12) yaxşı turur». Yänä aydikim: «Daxīra ḥarām-dur, ya'nī bir kūnlük tā'āmdin ziyāda

(13) cam' qilmaq, bir xātūndin ziyāda [xātūn almaq] ḥarām turur. Mäl mulkdiñ 'uśr

(14) vācib turur. 'Umrning yetidin birindä rūza tutmaq läzim turur».

(15) va aytur kim: «Mān ol payγambar-men kim 'Isā māning kelürimdin xabar berdi.

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(1) men payγambar-lar-ning ăxırı-men. Har sözikim 'Isā aytipdur mān ani şarḥ qilur-men».

3 yā without dots.

- (2) vaqtikim Šäfür aning aḥvälidin āgāh boldi, mulkidin ixrāc qilip aydi:
- (3) «Agar sen bu vilāyatya kelsäng albatta öltürür-men». Äxir Hind va Kašmir vilāyatıya
- (4) barip da‘vat qildi. Va Turkistān xalqi aning sözini qabūl qıldilar. Hind vilāyatida
- (5) butlar tüzätdi, taşvîr birlə xalq-ni gumrâh qildi. Čin vilāyatining yolida taylar
- (6) köp erdi, ol taylarda yürür erdi aşlā bir yerdä qarär tutmadı. Alqışşa
- (7) bir yārnı öziya makān qilip bir yilliq azuqa cam‘ qilip erdikim heč kimni
- (8) xabari yoq erdi. Andin keyin⁴ xalqya xabar berdikim: «Män āsmānya barur-men.
- (9) Xudāy, ta‘ālā māni ṭalab qilip-dur. Bir yil āsmānda turur-men falān kündä falān

- (10) γār-ni ešikiya cam‘ bolup bir aṭ keltürün. Män āsmāndin tüşüp
- (11) sizlärya āyīn-i şarī‘atni örgätür-men» dep xalqdin piňhānī yārnı
- (12) ičiyya kirip bir yilda bir qūtī-yi ‘azīm kāyazdin tüzätdi muşaffā va aq-
- (13) -liyda toxm-ni pardasiya oxşar. Ol qūtida ‘acīb va γarīb şūratlar
- (14) naqş qildi, bir yilni ičidä tamām tapdi. Bir yıldın song tamām xalq yārnı
- (15) ešikiya cam‘ boldilar. Mānī va‘da qilγan künidä qūtını qoliya alip

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- (1) γārdin čiqip aydi: «Män xudā-yi āsmāndin sizlärya hukmlar bayān
- (2) qilur-men. Bu nemärsä kim qolumda bardur, xudā-yi āsmānning yibärgän
- (3) kitābīdur». Xalq körüp ta‘accub qalip ḥayrān bolup sözini qabūl qıldilar.
- (4) ol kitābni Arjang-i Mānī at qoysılar. Ol qūtī Čin pādšāhlari-ni
- (5) xazīna-sida hanüz ham bar turur. Vaqtikim ol vilāyat-ni musaxxar qıldı vaṭanını
- (6) ārzü qilip ‘Acam vilāyatıya keldi. Gumān qildikim Turkistān vilāyatida har maqşadi

4 With only one yā.

- (7) *ħāşil boldi*, ‘Acamda ham bolur. Ammā ketkān vaqtda Arda-şır pādşāh erdi,
- (8) *vafat qilip erdi*. Andin song Hurmuz pādşāh bolup erdi, andin keyin⁵
- (9) *Bahrām bolup erdi*. Vaqtikim Mānī ‘Acam vilāyatıya kelip da‘vat qildi, Bahrām
- (10) *ani ṭalab qilip sordikim*: «Sening niyyating qaysi turur va i‘tiqādīng
- (11) *nä-dür?*» Mānī *mađhabini bayān qilip* aydi: «Ādamīzād-ni rūhi badanida *maħbūs*
- (12) *turur*. Vaqtiki *nafas munqaṭi*⁶ boldi, *mury-i rūh nafas-din parvāz qilur*, ol *nūr*
- (13) *bu zindāndin xalāş bolur*. Bahrām aydi: «Anday bolsa marg zinda-liķdin
- (14) *yaxşı ekān?*» Mānī aydi: «Marg ādamīzād-ni *hayāt-i*⁶ abadīya tegürür, bu *hayāt-i*
- (15) *fānī havā* va *havas* va *nafs* [u] *şahvat birlä baylanğan turur*. Bahrām aydi:

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- (1) «*Sanga ölüm tirigliksin yaxşı ekān*». Aydi: «Öz sözüngä ‘amal qilip rūhingga
- (2) *badanıngdin xalāş qilurmiz*. Özüng babam birlän ‘ahd qilip erding kim: ‘Agar
- (3) *men bu vilāyatıya kelsäm siyāsat qılıyıl*»». Äxir buyurdi, terisini soyup
- (4) *saman tiqip köp vaqt-lar darvāzaya asip qoysılar*. Nişābürda
- (5) *ol darvāzani Darvāza-i Mānī derlär*.

Translation

[503] (14) Story: (15) It is related in history that a certain man claimed to be a prophet. It was the painter Mani. [504] (1) He was acclaimed by many people. He was born in Babylon, and was without rival in painting. (2-4) One of his miracles is that he would cut out (?) twenty ells of silk cloth equally, so that when one measured them with a rod they were absolutely the same. (4-6) He was a student of the philosopher Qanun (?), and he also knew well the books of the Christians and the Magians. He

5 With only one *yā*.

6 Ms. *hayāb-i*.

claimed to be a prophet at the time of Shapur son of Ardashir.

(6-8) Mani said: "God sends a prophet in every age. At the time of Gushtash he sent Zoroaster. At another time he sent Jesus to the Arabs (!). (8-9) Now, in this age, He has made me a prophet and has sent me to you. I will teach you the sacred law. (9-12) You should know that Light and Darkness are primordial. It is unlawful to kill any kind of animal. It is unlawful to harm the poor and to harm animals. Poverty is better than wealth."

(12-14) He also said: "Provisioning is unlawful – i.e., storing up food for more than one day. Having more than one wife is unlawful. Giving a tithe from one's wealth is required. Fasting one seventh of one's life is required."

(15) And he said: "I am that prophet whose coming was predicted by Jesus. I am the last of the prophets. [505] (1) Every word that Jesus uttered, I will explicate."

(2) When Shapur was informed about Mani's activities, he expelled him from his kingdom and said, (3) "If you ever return to this country, I will certainly put you to death." (3-5) Later he went to Kashmir and India and propagated his religion. The people of Turkistan accepted his claims. In India he made idols and led the people astray with his paintings.

(5-6) On the way to China there are many mountains: he wandered in those mountains and never stayed long in one place. (7-9) Finally he took up residence in a cave and collected provisions for one year without telling anybody. Then he announced to the people: "I am going to Heaven, where God has summoned me. (9-11) I will remain in Heaven for one year. On such-and-such a day, gather in front of such-and-such a cave and bring a horse. I will come down from Heaven and teach you the regulations of the sacred law." (11-14) Then he secretly entered the cave. During one year he made a big box out of paper, clear and white like an egg shell. He painted marvelous and curious pictures on that box, completing it in one year. (14-15) At the end of the year, all the people gathered in front of the cave, and on the specified day

Mani emerged with the box in his hands.⁷ [506] (1-3) He said: “I declare to you the commands of the God of Heaven. The thing in my hands is a book, revealed by the God of Heaven.” (3-5) The people were amazed when they saw this and accepted his claim. They called that book the *Arzhang* of Mani. That box is still preserved in the treasury of the Chinese emperors.

(5-7) When Mani had subjugated that land, he longed for the land of his birth, and so he returned to Iran. Because all of his wishes had been fulfilled in Turkistan, he thought that it would be the same in Iran. (7-9) Now Ardashir, who was king when he left, had died. He was succeeded by Hormuzd, and after him by Bahram. (9-11) When Mani returned to Iran and propagated his religion, Bahram summoned him and asked, “What is your intention and what is your faith?” (11-13) Mani explained his doctrine and said, “A man’s spirit is imprisoned inside his body. When his breath is cut off, the bird of his spirit flies out from the breath, and that light is freed from its prison.” (13-15) Bahram said, “If that is so, then is death better than life?” Mani replied, “Death conveys a man to eternal life. This transitory life is bound up with desire and sensuality.” Bahram said, [507] (1) “So for you, death is better than life.”

(1-3) He went on, “We will act according to your own doctrine and free your spirit from your body. You made an agreement with my (grand-)father that if you returned to Iran you would be put to death.” (3-5) And so he ordered that Mani be skinned alive, stuffed with straw, and hung on the city gate. In Nishapur that gate is called Mani’s Gate.

7 It is interesting that we can find a Manichaean high priest (Mani’s successor? or Mani himself?) holding a box in his hands in the miniature published by Moriyasu. Cf. T. Moriyasu, A Manichaean Runic Manuscript with Miniature (Kao. 0107) Housed in the British Library. *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages* 12, 1997, pls. III & IV.