



Title	A Chaghatai Turkic Text on the Life of Mani
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Citation	内陸アジア言語の研究. 1999, 14, p. 65-72
Version Type	VoR
URL	<a href="https://hdl.handle.net/11094/15193">https://hdl.handle.net/11094/15193</a>
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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.<sup>1</sup>

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

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\* 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: *uşbu kitābni mæn Baħr-i Dāniş dep yazdim ‘Abdu’ş-şükr bin ‘Abdu’l-qādir oyli, 1337 racab ayning ikisi*. “I, son of Abdulqadir son of Abdushukr, wrote this book entitled *Baħr-i Dāniş*, 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-qa’da 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 *Baħr-i Dāniş* “Sea of Wisdom” which is a prose Chagatai translation of a Persian work of the same title but composed in verses by Šayḡ Ināyatu’llāh (d. 1677). The translator is Muḥammad Qāşim son of Molla Naẓīr Muḥammed Buḡārī. 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 dā’vā-yi 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 *Baħr-i Dāniş* into modern Uyghur and introduced the contents of the story collection. His translation of *Baħar Daniş* 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 *ḥikāyat* ('story') in dark-red ink, and the story itself is written in black ink. This part, including the other stories entitled *ḥikāyat*, 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 (*Baḥr-i Dāniš* and our *ḥikāyat*) are the same; second, the seal after the colophon of the *Baḥr-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.<sup>2</sup> 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.

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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 ā y a t :
- (15) Tā'rixda aytur kim: Bir kişi da'vā-yi payyambarliq qildi, Mānī-yi naqqāš er[d]i.

504

- (1) anga biy'at qil'yan kōp erdi, aning tavalludi Bābil šahrida erdi.
- (2) ammā naqqāšliq 'ilmida bīnazīr erdi. Bir 'acā'ibāti bu erdikim yigirmā qari
- (3) ḥarīr teng čatar erdi, vaqti pargār birlā imtiḥān qilur erdi,
- (4) hargīz (!) tafāvut qilmaz erdi. Qanūn (?) ḥakim-ya šāgird [erdi]. Tarsā va Mū'yni
- (5) kitābini yaxši bilūr erdi. Šāfūr bin Arda-šīr-ni vaqtida
- (6) da'vā-yi payyambarliq qildi. Va aydi: «Xudāy ta'ālā har vaqtda bir payyambar-ni yibārūr.
- (7) Guštāsb vaqtida Zardušt-ni payyambar qilip yibārdi. Yānā bir vaqtda
- (8) 'Arab arasida ḥazrat-i 'Īsā-ni yibārdi. Māni bu vaqtda payyambar qilip
- (9) sizlārya yibārip-dūr. Sizlārya šarī'at örgātūr-mān. Biling: Nūr [u] zulmat
- (10) qadīm turur. Ḥayvānātni hammasini öltürmək ḥarām turur. Darvīšlārya<sup>3</sup>
- (11) cānvarlārya āzār bermāk ḥarām-dur. Qaš[š]aqliq davlatmandliydin
- (12) yaxši turur». Yānā aydikim: «Daxīra ḥarām-dur, ya'nī bir künlük ta'āmdin ziyāda
- (13) cam' qilmaq, bir xātūndin ziyāda [xātūn almaq] ḥarām turur. Māl mulkdin 'ušr
- (14) vācib turur. 'umning yetidin birindā rūza tutmaq lāzim turur».
- (15) va aytur kim: «Mān ol payyambar-men kim 'Īsā māning kelūrimdin xabar berdi.

505

- (1) men payyambar-lar-ning āxiri-men. Har sözikim 'Īsā aytipdur mān ani šarḥ qilur-men».

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3 yā without dots.

- (2) vaqtıkim Şafur aning aḥvālidin āgāh boldi, mulkidin ixrāc qilip aydi:
- (3) «Agar sen bu vilāyatya kelsāng albatta öltür-men». Āxir Hind va Kaşmir vilāyatiya
- (4) barip da'vat qildi. Va Turkistān xalqi aning sözini qabūl qildilar. Hind vilāyatida
- (5) butlar tüzät-di, taşvır birlä xalq-ni gumrāh qildi. Ćin vilāyatining yolida taylar
- (6) köp erdi, ol taylarda yürür erdi aşlā bir yerdä qarār tutmadi. Alqışsa
- (7) bir yārni öziya makān qilip bir yilliq azuqa cam' qilip erdikim heç kimni
- (8) xabari yoq erdi. Andin keyin<sup>4</sup> xalqya xabar berdikim: «Mān āsmānya barur-men.
- (9) Xudāy ta'ālā māni talab qilip-dur. Bir yil āsmānda turur-men falān kündä falān
- (10) yār-ni eşikeya cam' bolup bir aṭ keltürüng. Mān āsmāndin tüşüp
- (11) sizlārya āyīn-i şarī'atni örgätür-men» dep xalqdin pinhānī yārni
- (12) içiye kirip bir yilda bir qūti-yi 'azīm kāyazdin tüzät-di muşaffā va aq-
- (13) -liyda toxm-ni pardasiya oxşar. Ol qūtida 'acīb va yarıb şuratlar
- (14) naqş qildi, bir yilni içidä tamām tapdi. Bir yildin song tamām xalq yārni
- (15) eşikeya cam' boldilar. Mānī va'da qilyan künidä qūtni qoliya alip

506

- (1) yārdin çiqip aydi: «Mān xudā-yi āsmāndin sizlārya ḥukmlar bayān
- (2) qilur-men. Bu nemārsā kim qolumda bardur, xudā-yi āsmānning yibārgān
- (3) kitābīdur». Xalq körüp ta'accub qalip ḥayrān bolup sözini qabūl qildilar.
- (4) ol kitābni Arjang-i Mānī at qoydilar. Ol qūti Ćin pādşahlari-ni
- (5) xazīna-sida hanūz ham bar turur. Vaqtıkim ol vilāyat-ni musaxxar qildi vaṭanini
- (6) ārzū qilip 'Acam vilāyatiya keldi. Gumān qildikim Turkistān vilāyatida har maqşadi

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4 With only one yā.

- (7) hāşil boldi, 'Acamda ham bolur. Ammā ketkän vaqtda Arda-şır pādşāh erdi,  
 (8) vafāt qilip erdi. Andin song Hurmuz pādşāh bolup erdi, andin keyin<sup>5</sup>  
 (9) Bahrām bolup erdi. Vaqtıkim Mānī 'Acam vilāyatiya kelip da'vat qildi, Bahrām  
 (10) ani talab qilip sordikim: «Sening niyyating qaysi turur va i'tiqāding  
 (11) nā-dür?» Mānī maḡhabini bayān qilip aydi: «Ādamizād-ni rūhi badanida  
 maḡbūs  
 (12) turur. Vaqtiki nafas munqaṭi' boldi, mury-i rūḡ nafas-din parvāz qilur, ol nūr  
 (13) bu zindāndin xalāş bolur». Bahrām aydi: «Anday bolsa marg zinda-likdin  
 (14) yaxşı ekän?» Mānī aydi: «Marg ādamizād-ni ḡayāt-i<sup>6</sup> abadīya tegürür, bu  
 ḡayāt-i  
 (15) fānī havā va havas va nafs [u] şahvat birlä bağlanyan turur». Bahrām aydi:

507

- (1) «Sanga ölüm tiriglikdin yaxşı ekän». Aydi: «Öz sözüngä 'amal qilip rūḡingni  
 (2) badaningdin xalāş qilurميز. Özüng babam birlän 'ahd qilip erding kim: 'Agar  
 (3) men bu vilāyatya kelsām siyāsat qil'ıl'». Āxir buyurdi, terisini soyup  
 (4) saman tiqip köp vaqt-lar darvāzaya asip qoydilar. Nişābūrda  
 (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. ḡayāb-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 Gushtasb 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.<sup>7</sup> [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.

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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.