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The Sea of Fire as a Chinese

Manichaean Metaphor: Source

Materials for Mapping an Unnoticed Image

In this essay I concentrate on what is merely a small part of a larger Manichaean cosmogonical narrative. In order to understand this small part, it is useful first to summarize the turning points of the history of Manichaeism, and then give a brief overview of the Manichaean sources used. In this first part, my presentation will provide general and simplified information in order to make some basic facts accessible to those who are not students of Manichaeism. The most substantial portion of the essay elaborates on a single image – the “Sea of Fire” – and associated concepts by collecting and comparing the available Chinese and non-Chinese Manichaean texts. The aim is to show how the Chinese Manichaean texts at our disposal derive in certain ways from a stock of Western-language forebears, and how certain themes and linguistic forms from the latter texts remained in the Chinese counterparts. Another aim is to show how such themes are related to both Manichaean religious ideas and Chinese concepts.

MANICHAEISM

A Short History of the Religious Movement

Mānī (216–ca. 277 AD), the founder of Manichaeism, was born not far from the capital of the Arsacid Empire (ca. 250 BC–226 AD), Seleucia-Ctesiphon, and was brought up in a Jewish-Christian baptismal community (Elchasaites) to which his father Pattīg brought the young

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Mānī during the time of the last Arsacid ruler, Ardawān (r. 213–224 AD). According to Manichaean sources, he received several private revelations during his years in this community, including two major ones from his heavenly Twin (Gk.: *syzygos*) that gave him the knowledge (Gk.: *gnōsis*) of how the universe came into being and why the human race was created. After finding contradictions between his own revelations and the teachings of the Elchasaite community, Mānī left them and made his first public appearance in 240 AD.

At that point he started his mission. First, in 240–241 AD, he traveled to the farthest part of the empire, northwestern India (Tūrān, Sindh) by sea, where he converted the formerly Buddhist king of Tūrān kingdom, Tūrān-šāh. After his return from India, Mānī continued his mission by converting two brothers of the ruling Sasanian house, Mihr-šāh (Lord of Mesene) and Pērōz, after which in 242 he gained an audience at the main court of Šābuhr I (r. 241–272 AD). Mānī remained in the emperor's retinue and was later authorized to disseminate his teachings in the Persian Empire (245–255 AD).

Between 255 and 260 Mānī was proselytizing in the northeastern part of Iran, then settled in Weh-Ardahšīr on the western bank of the Tigris (near Ctesiphon) in order to organize his church. He sent missionaries to India and the Roman Empire, including Egypt, Parthia and Marw. Missions to Palmyra, Georgia, Armenia, Asia Minor and the Arabian peninsula were also launched. While Šābuhr's successor, king Ōhrmazd I (r. 272–273 AD), still supported Mānī, nonetheless with the enthronement of Bahrām I (r. 274–277 AD) the successful spread of the new religion encountered a substantial obstacle: the Zoroastrian priests, especially Kerdīr the Mowbed, considered the new religion a threat to their own power, and persuaded Bahrām I to imprison Mānī in Bēth Lapaṭ (Gondēšāpūr), where he was chained for twenty-six days, before dying on February 26, 277.¹

Despite the death of its founder, the new religion spread quickly in the Roman Empire. Mār Sīsin, Papos, Mār Zakū and Abzaxyā created several Manichaean communities in Rome, Alexandria and Upper Egypt, with some writings in Greek and Latin, and many scriptures in Coptic (Sub-Akhmimic or Lykopolitan dialect). Roman emperors tried to stop the spread of Manichaeism by legal prohibitions (for example, Diocletian in 302, Valentinian in 372, Justinian in 527). In addition, Manichaeism came under heavy attack by Christian apologists who

¹ For a summary of Mānī's life, see Werner Sundermann, "Mani," in *Encyclopedia Iranica* (<http://www.iranica.com/articles/mani-founder-manicheism>), accessed July 11, 2010.

considered it a dangerous heresy. The most famous opponent was Augustine of Hippo (354–430 AD), who himself had been a Manichaean between 373–382. In several writings exclusively dedicated to the subject (such as *Contra Faustum*, *Contra Felicem*, *Contra Fortunatum*, *Contra epistulam Fundamenti*) and in various other works, Augustine made every effort to delegitimize Manichaeism. Christian theologians and leaders (for example, Leo, the Great in 445) succeeded to the extent that Manichaeism slowly disappeared from the Roman Empire by the 600s.

The mission to the East was based on the third century achievements of Mār Ammō, later on Manichaeans further developed their religious communities. With additional centers in Abaršahr, Marw, Balkh-Āmū Daryā, and with more and more Parthian and Sogdian converts, the spread of Manichaeism entered into a new and more successful phase. With the eastern shift, Manichaeism entered the Transoxanian regions where Manichaean scriptures in Parthian, Sogdian and, later, Uyghur languages were written. In 694 AD Manichaean missionaries reached the court of the Chinese empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (r. 690–705 AD).

The history of Manichaeism in China can be roughly divided into two phases: from 694 to 842 Manichaeism was basically a *religio licita* (between 731–750 allowed only for foreigners). The first known Manichaean missionary arrived at the Chinese court in 694, and the empress welcomed the new teaching.² In 732 in an edict by the emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712–756 AD) Manichaeans were accused of pretending to be Buddhists, and with the exception of “Western barbarians” (*xihu* 西胡), presumably referring to Sogdians, they were prohibited from their practice.³ The Uyghur Bögü Khan officially adopted Manichaeism as a state religion in 762/763. When the rebellion of An Lushan 安祿山 and Shi Chaoyi 史朝義 (755–763 AD) was terminated by the military intervention of the Uyghurs, the dependence of the Chinese court on the Uyghurs forced the Chinese emperors to allow the religion. Several Manichaean temples were built in Luoyang 洛陽 and other prefectures (Jing 荊, Yang 揚, Hong 洪, Yue 越), and scriptures were translated into Chinese.⁴ After their defeat by the Kirghiz in 840, the steppe Uyghurs fled, portions settling in Qoço (Turfan) and continuing to practice their religion for at least 150 years; they produced important pieces of

² *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統記, as printed in Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡邊海旭, eds., *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 (Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1932; hereafter *T.*) 49.2035: 370A, 474C.

³ *Fozu tongji* *T.* 49.2035: 374C, 474C, *Da Song sengshilüe* 大宋僧史略 *T.* 54.2126: 253B.

⁴ *Fozu tongji* *T.* 49.2035: 370A, 378C, 474C, *Da Song sengshilüe* *T.* 54.2126: 253C.

Manichaean art.⁵ When Chinese emperors no longer were dependent on Uyghur help, emperor Wuzong 武宗 (r. 840–846 AD) could launch a massive attack against all foreign religions in China in 843–845, including Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism and Buddhism.⁶

As can be gleaned from a Chinese historical source (*Minshu* 閩書), it was after 845 that Chinese Manichaeans moved from the northern part of the country to the southeast, especially to Fujian and Zhejiang. Under the guidance of a certain *hulu fashi* 呼祿法師 (“*hulu*” probably referring to Uyghur *uluy*, or great dharma-teacher), Chinese Manichaeans seem to have reorganized their apparently extant small communities and survived at least until the sixteenth century.⁷ Besides the written sources that report about their presence in these regions, we also possess concrete bits of evidence: a Manichaean temple with a unique statue of Mānī, archaeological finds of bowls with the inscription *Mingjiao hui* 明教會 (“Community of the Religion of Light”), and several Yuan-Ming-era paintings (presently preserved in Japan) that attest to a Manichaean presence in southeastern China.⁸

Manichaean Texts

Similarly to later Manichaean missionaries, the founder Mānī, who was the author of six works in Syriac and one in Middle Persian, considered translation into local languages as the most important part of the mission. Whenever Manichaeans entered a new region, they translated Mānī’s works and composed in Mānī’s spirit new works in the local languages.

In the West, aside from the apologetic literature of the Church Fathers, we possess original Manichaean works, such as the Greek Cologne Mānī Codex (found in Egypt in 1969 and preserved in Cologne), the Tebessa Codex (found in Algeria in 1918, housed in Paris), and the presently published three great Coptic works (the *Psalm-book*, the *Kephalaia* and the *Homilies*), with some new findings from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis in Upper Egypt).

⁵ Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, *Manichaean Art in Berlin Collections*, Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum, Series Archaeologica et Iconographica 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001).

⁶ *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), j. 217, p. 6133; *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), j. 18, p. 594.

⁷ He Qiaoyuan 何喬遠, comp., *Minshu* 閩書, j. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1994), vol. 1, pp. 171–72.

⁸ For a general history of Manichaeism, see Samuel N. C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China. A Historical Survey*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 63 (2nd edn., Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1992).

From the Christian apologetic literature, I will quote relevant passages from the fourth-century works of Titus of Bostra (*Contra Manichaeos*), St. Ephrem (*Prose Refutations*), Serapion Thmuitanus (*Adversus Manichaeos*), Hegemonius (*Acta Archelai*, 330–348 AD) and Augustine (*De natura boni*). From our point of view, the most important Coptic works are the fourth-century *Psalm-book*, a collection of about 360 psalms for various liturgical occasions, such as the Psalms of the Bema, or addressed to various divinities (for example, Psalms to Jesus), and the fourth-century *Kephalaia*, allegedly expounded by Mānī in response to the questions of his disciples on cosmogony, cosmology and numerous other topics. While the *Psalm-book* was mainly used in a liturgical context, the *Kephalaia* was relatively more doctrinal. The present article also uses excerpts from the Coptic materials excavated from Kellis in modern times.⁹ Unlike the archaeologically excavated psalms and letters of the Kellis material, the codices of the Coptic *Psalm-book*, *Homilies* and *Kephalaia*, which ultimately derive from Medīnet Mādī (Gk.: Narmouthis), were purchased from dealers between 1930–1932 and are presently housed in Dublin and Berlin.¹⁰

Moving eastward, aside from a handful of comments by Syriac and Arabic authors (including Th. bar Kōnī, an-Nadīm, al-Bīrūnī), we have several original Manichaean writings at our disposal: Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian and Uyghur fragments, nearly all deriving from the Turfan region and preserved in Berlin, and three Chinese Manichaean scriptures – the *Compendium*, the *Hymnscroll*, and the *Traité* – all found in Dunhuang, Cave 17.

The Middle Iranian fragments,¹¹ usually given a number preceded by the letter M (for Manichaean), include ecclesiastic history, cosmo-

⁹ The *Psalm-book* is quoted from Charles R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book. Part II, Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1938); the *Kephalaia* from Alexander Böhlig and Hans Jacob Polotsky, eds. and trans., *Kephalaia I, 1. Hälfte (Lieferung 1–10)*, Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin 1 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1940), and Alexander Böhlig, ed., *Kephalaia I, 2. Hälfte (Lieferung 11–12)*, Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin 1 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1966), and Iain Gardner, trans., *The Kephalaia of the Teacher: The Edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995). The Kellis texts are cited according to Iain Gardner (with S. Clackson and M. Franzmann and K.A. Worp), *Kellis Literary Texts. Vol. 1, Dakhleh Oasis Project Monograph 4; Oxbow Monograph 69* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1996). The best available collection of translated texts from the Roman empire is Iain Gardner and S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹⁰ On these codices see James Robinson, “The Fate of the Manichaean Codices of Medinet Madi 1929–1989,” in Gernot Wiessner and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, eds., *Studia Manichaica II. Internationaler Kongress zum Manichäismus 6–10, August 1989, St. Augustin/Bonn* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), pp. 19–62.

¹¹ For a recent summary of Middle Iranian Manichaean texts, see Werner Sundermann,

gonical and cosmological descriptions, prayers and confessions, letters and postscripts, various parables, and beautiful hymns to the church leaders and the divinities of the Manichaean pantheon. The most important Middle Iranian texts for us here are those composed in Parthian by Mānī's followers: the third-to-fourth-century *Angad rōšnān* ("Rich in Light") and *Huyadagmān* ("Fortunate for Us"), which are hymn-cycles on the lamentations of the soul suffering in the bondage of matter (*hylē*) and its desire to return to the Realm of Light.¹² Though Uyghur Manichaean texts also comprise cosmogonical, cosmological and historical texts, various hymns, and prayers, the most typical examples are pieces of an elaborated confessional literature (*X^uāstvānīft*).¹³

For the purposes of this article, at this point we must pay attention to the three Chinese Manichaean texts.¹⁴ The *Compendium* (*Moni guangfo jiaofa yilüe* 摩尼光佛教法儀略) is an introduction to basic concepts written in Chinese by a Manichaean high priest in 731 AD at the behest of Xuanzong (S.3969, P.3884). Our most important source will be the so-called *Hymnscroll* (*Moni jiao xiabu zan* 摩尼教下部讚; referred to in the main body of the present article as *H*, with a following number, for example, "H.19" would indicate the nineteenth column of the *Hymnscroll* manuscript). It was found in Dunhuang and is housed in the British Library (S.2659); it was translated from a Middle Iranian language by a certain Daoming 道明. It is a long manuscript (1044 x 28 cm) consisting of hymns to various divine beings (Jesus, Mānī, the Father of Light, Light Envoys, Five Lights, and others) which were sung by the Manichaean believers at diverse liturgical occasions. The other important Chinese source for this article will be the so-called *Traité* (*Bosi jiao canjing* 波斯教殘經; referred to, below, as *TR*, also followed by column numbers of the manuscript). It too was found in Dunhuang and is housed in Beijing at the National Library China (BD00256); it

"Manichaean Literature in Iranian Language," in Ronald E. Emmerick and Maria Macuch, eds., Ehsan Yarshater, gen. ed., *The Literature of Pre-Islamic Iran: Companion Volume I* (London: Macmillan Press, 2008), pp. 197–265.

¹² The *Huyadagmān* is quoted according to Werner Sundermann, trans., *The Manichaean Hymn-cycles Huyadagmān and Angad Rōšnān in Parthian and Sogdian* (London: SOAS, 1990; hereafter MHA), including Sundermann's emendations; the *Angad rōšnān* is quoted from Mary Boyce, *The Manichaean Hymn-cycles in Parthian*, London Oriental Series 3 (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1954; hereafter MHP).

¹³ A good collection of translated Middle Iranian and Uyghur texts is Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, trans., *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia* (New York: HarperSan Francisco, 1993; hereafter GSR).

¹⁴ For a concise summary of the Chinese Manichaean texts, see Gunner B. Mikkelsen, "More Light on the Chinese Manichaean Texts from Dunhuang and Turfan: A Publication Overview and Some Comments on X. Tremblay's *Sérinde*," *Manichaean Studies Newsletter* 18 (2003), pp. 25–32.

contains general material on Manichaeism followed by a detailed narrative on the works of the so-called Light-Nous, an important figure in the complex Manichaean pantheon. This text (621 x 21.5 cm) was also translated from Middle Iranian, presumably Parthian, and in addition has Middle Persian, Sogdian and Uyghur parallels.¹⁵

Consistency and Inconsistency in the Manichaean Doctrines

The fundamental structure of the mythological and cosmogonical background of Manichaeism remained remarkably consistent from Upper Egypt to southeastern China. The Coptic texts and the Chinese scriptures, as well as the Middle Iranian and Uyghur fragments between them, basically reveal a consistent religious system, as far as the Two Principles, Three Periods and the majority of a highly complex series of emanations constituting the Manichaean cosmogony are concerned. Moreover, they fundamentally also share the same value-system (ethics) and hierarchical church organization, which mirrored these cosmogonical concepts.

The theory of Two Principles refers to two eternally present realms – Light and Darkness; this duality, which also entails a fundamental opposition, never ceases to exist. The concept is usually termed an ontological dualism, which is often considered as the most essential constituent element of the Manichaean doctrine. In fact, an equally important, though less well-known, concept is that of the Three Periods, which divides universal history thus:

First Period: The empires of Light and Darkness, having existed side by side, ultimately saw an attack launched by Darkness against the Realm of Light.

Second Period: As a response, the king of the Realm of Light, the Father of Greatness, defended his kingdom by emanating various divine figures (Mother of Life, Friend of Lights, Light-Nous, to name but a few). After several mythological events, the Light that was swallowed and captured by the forces of the Darkness is retrieved through the creation of the universe which, with help from Manichaean believers (especially the “chosen ones,” or elects), works like a huge purifying machine: it distills the captured light

¹⁵ These three Chinese Manichaean scriptures are abbreviated thus: *TR.* = *Traité*; *H* = *Hymnscroll*; *C* = *Compendium*. The texts are quoted according to their ms. column. Due to technical reasons some character variants are quoted in their standard form. They were also included in *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*; for *Compendium*, see *T.* 54.2141A: 1279C–1281A; *Traité* is at *T.* 54.2141B: 1281A–1286A; and *Hymnscroll* is at *T.* 54.2140: 1270B–1279C. Buddhist texts are quoted according to the *Taishō*. All other primary sources are indicated in the footnotes. Translations of all Chinese texts are those of the author.

particles and transports them back to the Realm of Light. This is also the period of human history, in the last phase of which the maximum quantity of Light has been saved, people are judged, and after a great fire the world collapses.

Third Period: The two realms become separate again forever, this time without the possibility of contacting one another in the future.

The consistency of this structure and these fundamental religious tenets, however, does not mean that there were no differences among regional versions of Manichaeism. Such differences could concern actual religious practices (for instance, monasteries, confessional rituals, and the importance of certain festivals), doctrinal issues like the role of the Third Messenger and Jesus, or the final fate of light particles, and literary metaphors and expressions (as will be seen later in this paper).

The consistency that we do see for centuries, ranging from Persia to China, is nonetheless surprising, especially when one considers the Manichaean missionaries' technique in Eurasia: they did not only translate their words into the language of the empire they aimed to "conquer," but they also sought out religious analogies that could make their rather peculiar system more accessible to potential converts. They used Christian terminology in the West, Zoroastrian in Iran, and Buddhist in the East. It should be stressed that Christianity, and especially the figure of Jesus in a Manichaean interpretation, played a pivotal role in the entire system, even in the Buddhism-inspired Chinese scriptures. Though Manichaeism is frequently termed as *par excellence* a so-called syncretistic religion, it was, in fact, not syncretistic but synthetic in its origin, and exceptionally flexible and adaptive in its mission.¹⁶

In China, for example, Manichaean missionaries appropriated the contemporary Buddhist discourse of the Tang dynasty and applied the unique terminology of popular Buddhist sutras in their translation process.¹⁷ Thus original Manichaean works were rendered not merely into Chinese, but into Buddho-Chinese garb. Chinese Manichaean

¹⁶ For a recent summary of Manichaean missionary technique, see Werner Sundermann, "Manichaeism IV. Missionary Activity and Technique" (<http://www.iranica.com/articles/manichaeism-iv-missionary-activity-and-technique->), accessed July 11, 2010.

¹⁷ See e.g. Gunner B. Mikkelsen, "Skilfully Planting the Trees of Light: The Chinese Manichaica, Their Central Asian Counterparts, and Some Observations on the Translation of Manichaeism into Chinese," in Søren Clausen, ed., *Cultural Encounters: China, Japan and the West: Essays Commemorating 25 Years of East-Asian Studies at the University of Aarhus* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1995), pp. 83–108; Gunner Mikkelsen, "Sukhāvātī and the Light-world: Pure Land Elements in the Chinese Manichaean *Eulogy of the Light-world*," in Jason D. BeDuhn, ed., *New Light on Manichaeism: Papers from the Sixth International Congress on Manichaeism* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 201–12.

scriptures, as will be clear from the examples cited, abound with typical Buddhist expressions such as *buddha* (*fo* 佛), hell (*diyu* 地獄), *samsāra* (*lunhui* 輪迴), *nirvāṇa* (*niepan* 涅槃), wish-fulfilling jewel (*ruyi bao* 如意寶), dharma-gate (*famen* 法門), and bliss (*anle* 安樂, Sk.: *sukhā*), which, however, appear in an unmistakably Manichaean context.¹⁸ While sifting through the plethora of sutras in Cave 17 (Mogao), Paul Pelliot was himself misled by the seemingly Buddhist idioms of the so-called Manichaean *Traité*.¹⁹ The linguistic dexterity and the terminological ingenuity of the Manichaean translators is mirrored in the natural use of the Buddhist vocabulary to express a Manichaean message. On the other hand, Buddhists (as with Christians in the West) often attacked Manichaeans because of this appropriation of the Buddhist terminology. In their critiques the heretical nature of Manichaeism was frequently stressed.²⁰

Being one of the most widely and wildly persecuted religions in human history, until the twentieth century Manichaeism was known only from the apologetic literature of Christian Church Fathers or the objective descriptions of Theodorus bar Kōnī or Ibn al-Nadīm. With the discoveries in Turfan and Dunhuang, as well as the Egyptian Medīnet Mādī, scholars have gained a new vista on this extinct religion: for the first time the original voice of Manichaean priests and common believers could be heard. With more finds later on (Cologne Mānī Codex, Tebessa Codex, Kellis, Sogdian letters from Bezeklik), we are now in a position to state with certainty that despite the multiple linguistic and conceptual translations, the fundamental parts of the Manichaean system is consistent in all regions, while certain doctrinal, ritual and literary aspects have a local feature. For the most part, though the texts themselves are cached in various languages, the Manichaean cosmogonical and cosmological system constitutes a relatively coherent unity, which, despite the oft-persecuted religion's fragmentary legacy, can still be reconstructed.

As an explanatory metaphor, one can consider the Manichaean cosmological system as a gigantic three-dimensional puzzle, the different layers of which are the various linguistic traditions and the puzzle pieces being the individual Manichaean concepts. Fundamental con-

¹⁸ See e.g. Mikkelsen, "Skilfully Planting the Trees of Light," pp. 102–3.

¹⁹ Mikkelsen, "Skilfully Planting the Trees of Light," pp. 90–93.

²⁰ *Fozu tongji* Ⅰ. 49.2035: 370A: "demonic teaching, heretical law" (*mojiao xiefa* 魔教邪法). Wang Yangde 王延德, who visited Gaochang between 981–984 AD, remarks that "there are also Manichaean temples (at Gaochang), monks from Persia practice their religion there. This is what the Buddhist sutras call a heretical teaching. 復有摩尼寺，波斯僧各持其法。佛經所謂外道者也。" (*Songshi* 宋史 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977], j. 490, p. 14112).

cepts (such as the Two Principles, Three Periods, Father of Light) appear in almost all transmitted texts, therefore these pieces in the puzzle are present at all levels. Other, more subtle details (such as the names of the five sons of the Living Spirit) are preserved only in certain traditions, therefore these are present only at certain levels (for example, the Sogdian and the Greek lists of these five sons are not complete, therefore there are missing pieces at the Sogdian and the Greek level, but are preserved at the Coptic or Chinese level). Therefore, certain cosmogonical events can be reconstructed on the basis of texts in all the languages of Manichaeism, while others can be gleaned from only two or three sources in certain linguistic traditions.²¹ Thus, as far as the basic ideas are concerned, a Coptic source might indeed be a good analogy for a Chinese sentence from the *Hymnscroll*, even if we cannot always trace the exact path between them. Naturally, the closer the analogy, the more secure the explanation is, thus researchers of Manichaeism attempt to recover the philologically secure antecedents of the respective texts. However, in some cases these are simply not available: the vast bulk of Coptic material cannot be interpreted in the light of a similarly great amount of Greek or Syriac source scriptures, thus more remote analogies are required.

The model introduced above was primarily designed for written documents, since the fundamental sources for reconstructing the Manichaean cosmogonical and cosmological system are texts written in various languages from Coptic to Chinese, while the single large reservoir of a Manichaean pictorial tradition, the Uyghur Manichaean art from Turfan, has not yielded a comprehensive pictorial representation of the Manichaean system comparable to the “picture” that emerges from the written material. This situation has changed in 2010 with the publication of a recently identified Chinese Manichaean painting, preserved in a Japanese private collection.²²

One of these Chinese Manichaean paintings depicts the entire cosmological system in an astonishingly detailed manner, providing the first, almost complete, pictorial representation of the Manichaean cosmology. It thus adds a second, pictorial, layer to the Chinese “textual” level of the puzzle. No comparable finding has ever surfaced from another cultural tradition, thus presently the only “double (pictorial

²¹ This is also true of other aspects of Manichaeism: we know from many sources that Mānī wrote a large number of letters, but it is only an-Nadīm’s *al-Fihrist* which preserved their titles.

²² Yutaka Yoshida 吉田豊, “Shinshutsu Manikyō kaiga no keijijō 新出マニ教絵画の形而上,” *Yamato bunka* 大和文華 121 (2010), pp. 1–34.

and textual) level” of the three-dimensional Manichaean puzzle is the Chinese one. Though this painting attests to the sophisticated knowledge that southeastern Chinese Manichaeans might have possessed at a relatively late period (13–15th c.), curiously, no such coherent and detailed knowledge is present in any of the extant Chinese Manichaean writings. Regardless of the possibility that there might have existed Chinese scriptures which contained such information but were lost, at present the only way to decipher the Chinese painting is to make use of the non-Chinese (for example, Parthian or even Coptic) written material, that is, we can fill in the gaps of the Chinese level of the puzzle with pieces from non-Chinese levels.

The entire Manichaean system basically revolves around one goal: the rescuing of Light particles imprisoned in the world, itself a mixture of Light and Darkness, and delivering them to their original home, the Realm of Light. Since these two principles are opposed in all aspects, it is natural that Light, being entrapped and “chained” by Darkness, is suffering in the world, the *par excellence* metaphor of which is the soul (light) suffering in the body (darkness, matter).²³ The sufferings of Light or the Light-Soul in matter (*hylē*) is a recurrent topic in various Manichaean hymns, as this is the best symbol of the Manichaean attitude to the world and their eternal longing for the return to the pure land of Light. These sufferings are usually vividly described in a metaphorical language, treated below.

From the Coptic *Psalm-book* to the Chinese *Hymnscroll*, Manichaean hymns abound with highly sophisticated images, a characteristic that fits in perfectly with Mānī’s original intentions. With a book published in 1978, Victoria Arnold-Döben became the first, and so far the only, scholar to attempt to map the fundamental images and symbols used by the Manichaeans.²⁴ Arnold-Döben’s seminal work demonstrated that Manichaeans not only possessed a coherent set of religious concepts, but they also expressed these concepts with the help of a surprisingly consistent matrix of images (trees, treasure, jewel, merchants, ships, sea, harbors). This metaphorical richness can be possibly attributed to the fundamentally mythological character of the Manichaean system. “As a full-fledged Gnostic system of thought, Manichaeism represented

²³ I use “metaphor” in its broad, general sense and do not confine it to the realm of literature, though I analyze religious narratives with an apparent literary dimension. On the great variety of metaphors, see e.g. Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr., ed., *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

²⁴ Victoria Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus*, Arbeitsmaterial zur Religionsgeschichte 3 (Köln: E.J. Brill, 1978).

the last significant outburst of mythological thought in the world of antiquity.”²⁵ Based on a mythologically perceived cosmogonical description, Manichaeism possesses the poetic and symbolic imagery of mythologies.²⁶ Though Manichaean metaphors often have a regional flavour (a Christian one in the West and a Buddhist one in the East),²⁷ I greatly rely on Arnold-Döben’s insight that Coptic, Middle Iranian and Chinese Manichaean metaphors share a great amount of elements.²⁸ On the other hand, the fundamental tenet of the present paper is to show some regional differences that emerge from these shared metaphors.

Although it remains a standard work of reference to this day, Arnold-Döben’s book, as one would expect in the case of any work of this kind, has left room for further research: it did not fully exploit the Chinese sources, and, needless to say, it did not cover all the metaphors

²⁵ Sarah Stroumsa and Gedaliahu G. Stroumsa, “Aspects of Anti-Manichaean Polemics in Late Antiquity and under Early Islam,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 81.1 (1988), p. 40.

²⁶ This mythological language abounds with visual metaphors which might be partly traced back to the founder’s fascination with visual imagery. According to the Cologne Mānī Codex, the most reliable biography of Mānī that we possess, the founder based his religious system on explicitly visual revelations; see 2.2–13.2; 18.1–23.1, Ron Cameron and Arthur J. Dewey, trans., *Cologne Mani Codex* (P. Colon. inv. nr. 4780): “Concerning the Origin of His Body”, Early Christian Literature series 3; Texts and Translations, Society of Biblical Literature 15 (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1979), pp. 9–15, 18–23. On other sources and on Mānī’s Twin as his source of authority, see L.J.R. Ort, *Mani: A Religion-Historical Description of His Personality* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967), pp. 77–95. The Cologne codex also lists those of Mānī’s predecessors who shared with him the feature of receiving some kind of visual revelation (Cologne Mānī Codex 48.1–62.1; Cameron and Dewey, *Cologne Mani Codex*, pp. 36–49). Mānī himself stated that he distinguished himself from previous prophets not only by writing down his teachings but also by making a separate work (*Eikōn*) which visually illustrates his doctrines. (See Jes P. Asmussen, “Aržang,” in *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online* [vol. 2], 1987, available at www.iranica.com; Lieu, *Manichaeism*, pp. 175–77; Werner Sundermann, “Was the Ārdhang Mani’s Picture-book?” in Alois Van Tongerloo and Luigi Cirillo, eds., *Il manicheismo – nuove prospettive della ricerca. Quinto Congresso Internazionale di studi sul manicheismo, Napoli, 2–8 settembre 2001 – Atti* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 373–84; Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, “Mani’s ‘Picture-Box’? A Study of a Chagatai Textual Reference and Its Supposed Pictorial Analogy from the British Library (Or. 8212–1619),” in *ibid.*, pp. 149–66; *idem*, *Mani’s Picture-Book: Searching for a Late Antique Mesopotamian Pictorial Roll and Its Mediaeval Transformation in Central and East Asian Art* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming). Scribes and illustrators were sent along with the Manichaean missionaries to ensure a high quality of translations (reunited fragments M216c and M1750/R; GSR: 205–6; Lieu, *Manichaeism*, p. 175). Manichaean art, especially book art, was unparalleled in its time and is still observable even in a fragmentary state; Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Manichaean Art and Calligraphy* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1982); Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, *Manichaean Art in Berlin Collections*; *idem*, *Mediaeval Manichaean Book Art: A Codicological Study of Iranian and Turkic Illuminated Book Fragments from 8th–11th Century East CE* (Leiden: Brill, 2005). The importance of visuality is also noticeable in the literary works.

²⁷ Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache*, p. 5.

²⁸ It should be also stressed that myths and metaphors were probably reality for the Manichaeans, see e.g. *In Epictetum Encheiridion* (27:71,44–72,15) which states that “they [Manichaeans: G.K.] do not use them [their mythological narratives: G.K.] as myths nor do they think that they have any other meaning but believe that all the things which they say are true (i.e. literal)”; quoted in Jason D. BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body in Discipline and Ritual* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), p. 265.

used in Manichaean scriptures. The present paper investigates a heretofore unstudied image, the Sea of Fire (*huohai* 火海). This Chinese image was born from the conceptual matrix which was present in diverse sources, but it seems that it was only in China where it reached a relatively full-fledged form. By collecting materials and parallels relevant to the Sea of Fire, this study perhaps will contribute to further research that may one day constitute an encyclopedic analysis of Manichaean metaphors and images.

THE EXPRESSION “SEA OF FIRE” IN THE CHINESE *MANICHAICA*

From a sinological point of view, the expression Sea of Fire is of special interest, since, as will be made clear, it appears foremost in the Chinese Manichaean corpus. We see the phrase altogether six times in the *Hymnscroll*, four occurrences in the first two hymns addressed to Jesus: “A Hymn in Eulogy of Jesus” (*Zan Yishu wen* 讚夷數文, H.7-44); and “A Hymn in Eulogy of Jesus, Second Canto” (*Zan Yishu wen di'er die* 讚夷數文 第二疊, H.45-82). These two hymns are placed at the head of the collection, thus their importance is undeniable. “Sea of Fire” also features once in the *Traité*, although all previous editions and translations have rendered it mistakenly.²⁹

H.19-26. Now we sincerely implore and supplicate that we should be removed from the poisoned fire-sea of the body of flesh, its soaring waves are boiling and bubbling ceaselessly, the *makaras* surface and submerge to swallow (our) vessel. [H.20] Originally this is the palace of Māra, the country of *rākṣasa*, and also the dense forests, the marsh of reeds and rushes, where all the evil wild beasts jostle intermingled with one another, where the poisonous insects and venomous snakes gather. [H.21] This is also

²⁹ While the manuscript has “*huohai* 火海,” all editions give “great sea (*dahai* 大海);” see Édouard Chavannes and Paul Pelliot, “Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine,” *J.A.* X^e série, 18 (1911), p. 591 [pp. 499-617]; Chen Yuan 陳垣, “Monijiao canjing yi 摩尼教殘經一,” in Chen Yuan 陳垣, *Chen Yuan xueshu lunwenji* 陳垣學術論文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980 [1923]), vol. 1, p. 391; Lin Wushu 林悟殊, *Monijiao ji qi dongjian* 摩尼教及其東漸 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), p. 229; idem, *Mo-ni-chiao chi ch'i tung chien* 摩尼教及其東漸 – *Manichaeism and Its Eastward Expansion*, rev. edn. (Taipei: Shushin Books, 1997), p. 282; Gunner B. Mikkelsen, *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts in Chinese* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), p. 12. All translations render “*dahai*” accordingly as “dans la vaste mer” (Chavannes and Pelliot, “Un traité,” p. 588), or “in das grosse Meer” (Ernst Waldschmidt and Wolfgang Lentz, “Die Stellung Jesu im Manichäismus,” *Abhandlungen der königlichen preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 4 [1926], p. 48; Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer, ed. and trans., *Chinesische Manichaica: Mit textkritischen Anmerkungen und einem Glossar* [Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1987], p. 103). On the background of this error, see Kósa Gábor, “Correction in the Chinese Manichaean *Traité*,” Imre Galambos and Imre Hamar, eds., *Papers from the Budapest Conference on Chinese Manuscripts* (working title, Budapest: ELTE University, forthcoming).

the body of the Demon(ess) of Greed, and also Pēsūs [*Beisusi*] with many forms, the fivefold pit of the land of darkness, and also the lightless courtyards of the five poisons. [H.22]. And also the three merciless, poisoned seedlings, and also the five poisonous springs of ruthlessness.³⁰ ... [H.25] The armour and the weaponry of all demon-kings, the poisonous net of all opposing teachings, which sinks the precious wares and the merchants, which can cloud the light-buddhas of the Sun and and Moon. [H.26] The gates of all hells, the roads of all rebirths, in vain do they agitate against the eternally established nirvāṇa king, in the end they will be burnt and imprisoned in the eternal hell.”³¹

H.29. Beneficent and glorious Jesus buddha, raise (your) great compassion and forgive our sins! Listen to these words of suffering and pain, and deliver us from this poisoned sea of fire!³²

H.32. We wish you would still the huge waves of the sea of fire! Through the curtain of dark clouds and dark mist let the sun of Great Law shine everywhere, that our hearts and soul may be always bright and pure!³³

H.47. Power in the power of the Unsurpassable Honoured of the Lights, King in the wisdom of the unsurpassable sweet dew, who gives cintāmaṇi universally to sentient beings, and leads them out of the deep sea of fire!³⁴

H.85. We should resolutely choose and peacefully concentrate on the gate of true teaching, (we must) diligently seek for nirvāṇa to cross the sea of fire!³⁵

³⁰ While the Five Poisoned Springs can be explained by the Manichaean concepts of the Land of Darkness (e.g. M183/I, M39; Jes P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature: Representative Texts Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writings*, Persian Heritage Series 22 [New York: Delmar, 1975], p. 139), in the case of the Three Poisons it is worth recalling the Buddhist notion of *sandu* 三毒, that is, desire (*tan[yu]* 貪[欲]), Sk.: *rāga*), anger (*zhen[hui]* 瞋[恚], Sk.: *dveṣa*) and ignorance (*yu[chī]* 愚[癡], Sk.: *moha*). This reference is important for the very reason that the “fire of the three poisons” (*san du huo* 三毒火) appears in Buddhist texts; e.g., *Dafangguangfo huayanjing* 大方廣佛華嚴經 (T. 10.293: 826B.26–27) mentions it together with the poison of five desires: ([The bodhisattva] “is not burnt by the fire of the three poisons, is not hurt by the poison of the five desires...” 不為一切三毒火燒，五欲毒不中。

³¹ 我今懇切求哀請，願離肉身毒火海。騰波沸涌無暫停，魔竭出入吞船舫。元是魔宮羅刹國，復是稠林蘆葦澤。諸惡禽獸交橫走，蘊集毒虫及虻蝮。亦是惡業貪魔躄，復是多形卑訴[訶]斯；亦是暗界五重坑，復是无明五毒院；亦是無慈三毒苗，復是无惠五毒泉。... 一切魔王之甲仗，一切犯教之毒網，能沈寶物及商人。能翳日月光明佛。一切地獄之門戶，一切輪迴之道路，徒搖常住涅槃王，竟被焚燒囚永獄。

³² 廣惠莊嚴夷數佛，起大悲捨捨我罪。聽我如斯苦痛言，引我離斯毒火海。

³³ 願息火海大波濤！暗雲暗霧諸繚蓋，降大法日普光輝，令我心性恒明淨。

³⁴ 无上明尊力中力，无上甘露智中王！普施眾生如意寶，接引離斯深火海。

³⁵ 決定安心正法門，勤求涅槃超火海。

H.363. Rescue the light-nature from all perils that it may be able to leave the huge waves of the sea of fire, the whole community wishes that it may be so forever!³⁶

TR.338. Using this net of Light, fish for us and save us from the sea of fire, place us in the jewel-boat!³⁷

The notion of a Sea of Fire was also associated with other Manichaean expressions that, as we will see, were not isolated concepts, but often related by connotation to the Sea of Fire. Thus the Chinese sources quoted above associated the following motifs with it:

1. Body of flesh: H.19 (*roushen* 肉身);
2. Poison: H.19 (*du* 毒); H.29 (毒);
3. The Land of Māra, the Five Pits: H.20 (the palace of Demon/ess, or *Mogong* 魔宮); H.21 (the body of the Demon/ess of Greed, *tanmo ti* 貪魔體); H.21 (the fivefold pit of the Land of Darkness, *anjie wu chong keng* 暗界五重坑); H.21 (the five lightless, poisonous courtyards, *wuming wu du yuan* 无明五毒院); H.26 (gate to hell, *diyu zhi menhu* 地獄之門戶); H.47 (deep, *shen* 深);
4. Monsters, demons, wild beasts: H.19 (*makara, mojie* 魔竭); H.20 (the country of *rākṣasas*, *luocha guo* 羅刹國); H.20 (evil wild beasts, *zhu e qinshou* 諸惡禽獸); H.20 (poisonous insects, *duchong* 毒虫); venomous snakes, *yuanfu* 虵蝮); H.21 (Pēsūs, *beisusi* 卑訴[訶]斯);
5. Tossing waves: H.19 (tossing waves boiling and bubbling, *tengbo feiyong* 騰波沸涌); H.32, H.363 (huge waves, *da botao* 大波濤);
6. Swallowing ships and treasures: H.19 (swallowing ships, *tun chuanfang* 吞船舫); H.25 (sink precious wares and merchants, *chen baowu ji shangren* 沈寶物及商人); TR.338 (jewel-boat, *baochuan* 寶舩);
7. Net: H.25 (poisonous net of opposing teachings, *fanjiao zhi duwang* 犯教之毒網); TR.338 (net of Light, *mingwang* 明網);
8. Rebirth: H.26 (the roads of rebirth, *lunhui zhi daolu* 輪迴之道路);
9. Deliverance: H.19 (leave, *li* 離); H.29 (leading out, *yin wo li* 引我離); H.32 (soothing, *xi* 息); TR.338 (fish for us and save us, *laodu* 撈渡).

From such associations, the Sea of Fire can be seen as fundamentally related to the Realm of Darkness (Land of Māra, monsters) and its primal representative in Manichaeism, the human body (body of flesh). It is also closely related to metaphors such as tossing waves, swallowing up of ships, nets, and with religious notions such as rebirth and the desire to be liberated (deliverance). As will become clear, the fire of the sea undoubtedly derives from the notion of the Land of Darkness, and thus refers to a sort of “hellish” fire.

³⁶ 請救普厄諸明性，得離火海大波濤，合眾究竟願如是！

³⁷ 緣此明網於火海中，撈渡我等，安置寶舩！

In what follows I investigate the above nine motifs one by one, and though I naturally stress the importance of the Chinese parallels, following the general tradition of Manichaeism research, I will also survey the non-Chinese analogies, even if they are to be found as far away in time or space as Greek and Coptic sources.

I will attempt to map the conceptual matrix of the nine motifs that underlies the Chinese (and Parthian) Manichaean expression “Sea of Fire”. Mapping in this case means to draw a chart of associated metaphors and concepts from the Chinese sources, and simultaneously compare this chart with a similar one from the non-Chinese tradition.

I argue that although “Sea of Fire” itself, with the exception of a single Parthian parallel, is not to be found in any other Manichaean text, the majority of the related concepts in the Chinese corpus can be identified in non-Chinese Manichaean writings. As I survey the terms, I clarify the exact meaning of Sea of Fire and demonstrate its partial indebtedness to Buddhist vocabulary. I contend that the imagery pervading the first two hymns of the Chinese *Hymnscroll* shares many elements with the imagery of the Parthian *Angad rōšnān*, and thus I can conclude that these two hymns of the Chinese *Hymnscroll* were most probably translated from a rather similar Parthian hymn.

CONCEPTS RELATED TO THE SEA OF FIRE

In the colophon to the *Hymnscroll* written, supposedly, by the translator Daoming 道明, it is unambiguously stated that the hymns presented in the collection are translations.

H.417–22. From the 3,000 pieces of the original *fan* text, I translated more than twenty. Though the texts, the eulogies, the songs and the prayers were originally composed according to the four regions, the translations by Daoming were based entirely on the *fan* text. 梵本三千之 / 條，所譯二十餘道；又緣經、讚、唄、願，皆依四 / 處製焉，但道明所翻譯者，一依梵本。

The only problem in interpreting the colophon is that “*fan* 梵” originally denoted Sanskrit or another type of Indic language, but Sanskrit must be ruled out, since there is no trace of any Manichaean text in Sanskrit. Probably, the use of *fan* reflects Daoming’s strategy to legitimize the sacred origin of the Manichaean hymns by lending them a past similar to the way in which Buddhist sutras were frequently presented as translations from Sanskrit. We must ask which language does *fan* specifically refer to?

Since W. B. Henning's discovery,³⁸ it is common knowledge among Manichaean scholars that one of the Chinese hymns, *Tan mingjie wen* 歎明界文 (*In Praise of the World of Light*; H. 261–338), has a slightly fragmented but available Parthian original (the first canto of the *Huyadagmān*).³⁹ However, this fact is not conclusive for the question we are pursuing, since this hymn might have had Sogdian or Uyghur versions, presently lost, which might bear even a closer resemblance to the Chinese translation (there are in fact extant Sogdian and Uyghur fragments, though these do not show a greater similarity to the Chinese version than to the Parthian one⁴⁰). Moreover, even if *Tan mingjie wen* had been translated from Parthian, it is not mandatory that all the hymns of the collection were as well, and Daoming could have termed both as “*fan*,” since we cannot expect a Tang-era translator to have used our notions of a linguistically correct terminological distinction between Parthian and Middle Persian.

There is one linguistic clue, however, which suggests that Parthian was the source language of the two Jesus-hymns. The Chinese transcription of Pēsūs appears in H. 21, and although E. Waldschmidt and W. Lentz assumed that it is the transcription of Sanskrit *vihimsā* (“harm,” “harmfulness”),⁴¹ S.N.C. Lieu has correctly identified it with Pēsūs (a demonic figure).⁴² Pēsūs has only Parthian and Sogdian occurrences,⁴³ and as we know that the Chinese Hymnscroll practically does not contain any Sogdian transcription,⁴⁴ it seems safe to assume that Pēsūs was

³⁸ Walter B. Henning, “Annotations to Mr. Tsui’s Translation”, app. to Tsui Chi, ‘Mo Ni Chiao Hsia Pu Tsan: The Lower (Second?) Section of the Manichaean Hymns,’ *BSOAS* XI (1943–46), pp. 216–19.

³⁹ Peter Bryder, *The Chinese Transformation of Manichaeism. A Study of Chinese Manichaean Terminology* (Löberöd: Plus Ultra, 1985), pp. 63–74; idem, “Huyadagmān,” in Li Zengxiang 李增祥, ed., *Geng Shimin xiansheng 70 shouchen jinian wenji* 耿世民先生70寿辰纪念文集 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1999), pp. 252–75.

⁴⁰ Mikkelsen, “Sukhāvati and the Light-world,” p. 207, n. 26.

⁴¹ Waldschmidt–Lentz, “Die Stellung Jesu im Manichäismus,” p. 101, n. 3.

⁴² On this identification, see Samuel N. C. Lieu, “From Parthian into Chinese. The transmission of Manichaean texts in Central Asia,” *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 90.4 (1995), col. 368 [cols. 357–72]. Cf. Mary Boyce, “Sadwēs and Pēsūs,” *BSOAS* 13 (1951), p. 911 [pp. 908–915]: “Pēsūs has evidently been aggrandized like her mate, and appears not only as the mother of mankind but also as Hyle personified.” Also see M741/V/11a: “the sinful, dark Pēsūs” (bzkr pysws t’ryg); M741/V/16b: “all demons of wrath, the sons of that Pēsūs” (h(rw)jn ‘šmg’n z’ dg’n cy hw pysws). On these and other occurrences, see Werner Sundermann, “Die Dämonin Pēsūs,” in Dieter Weber, ed., *Languages of Iran: Past and Present: Iranian Studies in Memoriam David Neil MacKenzie* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), pp. 210–11 [pp. 207–12].

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Yoshida Yutaka 吉田豊, “Kanyaku Manikyō bunken ni okeru kanji onsha saretā chūsei irango ni tsuite 漢訳マニ教文献における漢字音写された中世イラン語について,” *Nairiku Ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 2 (1987), pp. 1–15.

transcribed from a Parthian original. Consequently, it will be useful to search for further Parthian analogies for these two Chinese hymns.⁴⁵

Werner Sundermann expressed a view on Parthian as the source language of Chinese Manichaean scriptures as follows:

I would like to submit one general observation I cannot convincingly explain. Most Chinese Manichaean texts which draw on an Iranian pattern or original go back to or were immediately translated from a Parthian original. The Chinese *Traité manichéen* was, if I am right, translated from a Parthian text. In any case, it comes ultimately from a Parthian version. Two of the three so-called phonetic hymns [in the *Hymnscroll*: G.K.] are Parthian compositions; only one is Middle Persian. The Chinese hymn *In Praise of the World of Light* depends on a text composed in Parthian, the first canto of the *Huyadagmān*. ... The first Chinese hymn *In Praise of the Five Lights* draws on the Parthian *Sermon on the Soul*. Is that by mere coincidence, or did Parthian Manichaean literature play a particular role for the Chinese Manichaean tradition?⁴⁶

Parthian by this time was confined to the ritual sphere; its users, however, were ethnically not Parthians but Sogdians. It is usually acknowledged that Sogdians played a major role in spreading various religions, including Manichaeism, in the areas of the Silk Road. “The Manichaean missionary legations that arrived at Chang’an during the eighth and ninth centuries were mainly teachers and merchants of Sogdian extraction.”⁴⁷ It is also generally assumed that while the Sogdian language was a sort of *lingua franca* on the Silk Road, Sogdian Manichaeans preserved Parthian as a sacred medium.⁴⁸ The *Hymnscroll*, for example, included two Parthian hymns transcribed into Chinese (H.154–58, H.176–83).⁴⁹ As mentioned before,⁵⁰ Xuanzong’s edict in 732 AD, which forbade the Chinese from practicing Manichaeism, made an exception for the Western *hu* 西胡 people, presumably identifiable

⁴⁵ Werner Sundermann, “Iranian Manichaean Texts in Chinese Remake. Translation and Transformation,” in A. Cadonna and L. Lanciotti, eds., *Cina e Iran. Da Alessandro Magno alla Dinastia Tang*, *Orientalia Venetiana* 5 (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1996), pp. 104, 118 [pp. 103–19].

⁴⁶ Sundermann, “Iranian Manichaean Texts,” pp. 117–18.

⁴⁷ Mikkelsen, “Skilfully Planting the Trees of Light,” p. 89.

⁴⁸ Walter B. Henning, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch* (Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften and W. de Gruyter & Co., 1937), p. 14. This may be partly due to the supposed Parthian origin of Mānī, and the missionary activity of Mār Ammō in the 3rd century.

⁴⁹ On the phonetically transcribed hymns, see Bryder, *Chinese Transformation of Manichaeism*, pp. 43–62. Yutaka Yoshida, “Manichaean Aramaic in the Chinese Hymnscroll,” *BSOAS* 46.2 (1983), pp. 326–31.

⁵⁰ Lieu, *Manichaeism*, 228–29.

as Sogdians.⁵¹ This would mean that by the first half of the eighth century there were Sogdian Manichaean communities in China.⁵² According to the trilingual Karabalgasun inscription, the Uyghur khaghan met four Sogdian Manichaeans in Chang'an, and Sogdians remained influential during the Uyghur Manichaean period, that is, the eighth to tenth centuries.⁵³

Returning to the original topic, the closest analogy to our nine associated concepts, and more specifically H.19–26, is the first part of the Parthian *Angad rōšnān*, where the metaphor of being tossed about in the sea is used to describe the sufferings of the light-soul in the material world. In this hymn we also encounter the only exact equivalent of a sea of fire, or fiery sea (*zr(y) 'dwryn*), as well as another important, though not literal, analogy.

Their [demons', enemies'] fury gathered, like a sea of fire / The seething waves rose up that they might engulf me.⁵⁴

It was tossed and troubled as a sea with waves. Pain was heaped on pain, whereby they ravage my soul. / On all sides the anguish reached (me); fire was kindled, and the fog (was full) of smoke. / The wellsprings of Darkness had all been opened. The [giant] fishes transfixed me with fear.⁵⁵

In the following nine sections, I analyze the nine motifs associated with the Sea of Fire, see above. The close reading of the texts, which requires ample quotations, is intended to establish hitherto unnoticed parallels between Chinese and non-Chinese Manichaean texts.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 231–32.

⁵² On the Sogdians' presence in China, see Rong Xinjiang, "The Migrations and Settlements of the Sogdians in the Northern Dynasties, Sui and Tang," trans. B. Doar, *China Archaeology and Art Digest* IV.1. (2000), pp. 117–63.

⁵³ On the Turco-Sogdian milieu, see Étienne de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders: A History* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 199–225.

⁵⁴ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 117). *Angad rōšnān* I,19 (MHP: 116): 'wd 'mwšt hwyn dybhr o cw'gwn zr(y) 'dwryn / 'wd pdr'št wrm h'wyndg o kw 'w mn ngwynd. In locating Middle Iranian texts, I found D. Durkin-Meisterernst's online text-editions (<http://www.bbaw.de/forschung/turfanforschung/dta/mirtext/wmirtext.html>) extremely useful. When I cite the English translation of a non-Chinese text, first I give the name of the translator and the source of the translation, then the identification of the text, its source and the original text. When I cite from a non-English translation (typically German), I give the identification of the text, the source of the translation and the original text, implying that I translated the German text into English.

⁵⁵ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 115). *Angad rōšnān* I,13–15 (MHP: 114): 'wd '(')šyft 'wd pšyft o / cw'gwn zryh pd wrm / 'wd drd 'mwšt o / kw mn gryw wyg'nynd / 'c hrw 'rg o / hw 'njwgyf'ṭ pryf'ṭ / pdyd 'dwr o / 'wd nyzm'n dwdyyn / ['w](d) wyš'd bwd 'hynd o / hrwyn t'r x'nyg / [... m']sy'g'n o / pdgryft hym pd trs.

The Body of Flesh

H.19 expressly links Sea of Fire with the body of flesh (see above), and later on, without making it explicit, unfolds this metaphor.⁵⁶ In the Chinese Manichaean texts the body of flesh is contrasted with the soul (TR.2: *benxing* 本性; TR.71, H.90, H.406: *mingxing* 明性), or light-elements (TR.29: *wu mingxing* 五明性) imprisoned in it,⁵⁷ which are sometimes depicted in the process of being liberated from the body.⁵⁸ The following Chinese citations illustrate the relation of body to the soul.

TR.2. The body of flesh and the original nature [soul]: are they one [the same] or two (different entities)?⁵⁹

TR.188. ... similarly to the light-soul which resides in that dark body...⁶⁰

TR.71-72. Thus the great envoy of Wise Light [the Light-Nous] with skilful means sifts and rescues the light-nature from this body of flesh, so that it can attain liberation.⁶¹

H.393-94. If the day of impermanency [death] arrives, we rid ourselves of this abominable body of flesh, all the buddhas, saints and wise surround us everywhere...⁶²

The Manichaean praxis of “exhausting the body and saving the soul” (C.105-6: *laoshen jiuixing* 勞身救性) refers to the aforementioned liberation – something achieved with the help of ascetic rules. As the Chinese sources attest, the body of flesh has several characteristics: it is poisonous, evil, greedy and lustful (TR.23: *du'e tanyu* 毒惡貪慾), ignorant (H.49: *wuzhi* 无知), and has several additional features:⁶³

⁵⁶ On body of flesh (*roushen*), see e.g. Ma Xiaohe 马小鹤, “Sute wen *t'mp'r* (*roushen*) kao 粟特文 *t'mp'r* (肉身)考,” *Faguo hanxue* 法國漢學 10 (2005), pp. 478-96, on the Manichaean concept of body see e.g. BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body*, pp. 92-125.

⁵⁷ Chinese Manichaean translations used terms containing *xing* 性 (“innate nature”) to render Middle Iranian “soul” (*gryw*), the latter also meaning “self”. In addition to the most commonly used and unmistakably Manichaean *mingxing* 明性 (which clearly reflects the luminous nature of the soul), the Buddhist *benxing* 本性 was also used to convey the same meaning (cf. TR.35-36: *guangming benxing* 光明本性). Though in the latter case the Manichaeans borrowed the Buddhist expression, naturally it does not mean that *benxing* 本性 can be equated with soul in a Buddhist context.

⁵⁸ Cf. *De haeresibus* 46.15: “He came to free the souls, not the bodies” (*venisse ad animas, non ad corpora liberandas*).

⁵⁹ 宥身、本性，是一爲是二耶？

⁶⁰ ... 又如明性處彼暗身 ...

⁶¹ 以是義故，惠明大智 [=使] 以善方便於此宥身銓救明性，令得解脫。○ 智 = 使，cf. Chavannes and Pelliot, “Un traité,” p. 541, n. 3.

⁶² 若至无常之日，脫此可 / 厭肉身，諸佛聖賢，前後圍遶 ...

⁶³ The *Hymnscroll* (H.104-5) claims that people who consume meat suffer from the hungry fire of greed and lust (*tanyin jihuo* 貪姪饑火).

TR.66–68. Thus this body of flesh, which is also called the Old Man, is nothing but bone, sinew, vein, flesh, skin, hatred, fury, lust, anger, ignorance and greed, gluttony, lust. These thirteen together constitute the body, and thus resemble the lightless realm without beginning.⁶⁴

The creator and ruler of the body of flesh is the Demon(ess) of Greed⁶⁵ (H.94: *roushen tanmo zhu* 肉身貪魔主), thus it is not surprising to see the finite body paralleled with an infinite number of demons of a poisonous nature (TR.112–13). As the Demon(ess) has concealed herself in the human body (H.90), at the time of death not only does the soul leave the body, but the Demoness also emerges from her hiding-place. Thus, “When the body of flesh perishes, the Demon(ess) comes out” (肉身破壞，魔即出; H.95). Also, H.23 claims that “all male and female demons emerge from the body of flesh” (一切魔男及魔女，皆從肉身生緣現).

The concept that the body inherently belongs to the Land of Darkness is also attested in various non-Chinese sources, as in the following quotations. It shows us that the Chinese sources are faithfully preserving a general Manichaean association.

Because (Mānī) claims that God created the universe from these two (principles), the man’s body deriving from the Evil, but his soul from the Good.⁶⁶

And if this body which clothes us possesses the same nature as Darkness, as they [the Manichaeans: G.K.] assert, and this soul which is in us possesses the same nature as Light...⁶⁷

The allotment of light is the soul in men, while that of darkness is their body and their material construction.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ 如此肉身，亦名故人，即是骨、筋、脈、肉、皮、怨、嗔、婬、怒、癡及貪、饑、婬，如是十三共成一身，以像无始无明境界。

⁶⁵ As *tanmo* 貪魔 is evidently identical with *Āz* (see Jes P. Asmussen, “*Āz*,” in *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online* [vol. 2.], 1987, available at www.iranica.com), I use Demoness to express her female character, though the Chinese word does not imply this aspect.

⁶⁶ Titus Bostrensis: *Contra Manichaeos* 17. Nils-Arne Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof in Defence of God. A Study of Titus of Bostra’s Contra Manichaeos – The Work’s Sources, Aims and Relation to Its Contemporary Theology* (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2004), p. 435: ἐξ ἀμφοῖν μὲν γὰρ τοῦτοις φησὶ θεὸν δημιουργήσασθαι τὸδε τὸ πᾶν, τοῦ δὲ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι μὲν τὸ σῶμα τῆς κακίας, εἶναι δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ.

⁶⁷ *Prose Refutations of Ephrem* 80.42–48; trans. J.C. Reeves, “Manichaean Citations from the *Prose Refutations of Ephrem*,” in Paul Mirecki and Jason BeDuhn, eds., *Emerging from Darkness. Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources* [Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1997], p. 253 [pp. 217–88].

⁶⁸ Trans. M. Vermes; Vermes, trans., and Samuel N.C. Lieu, intro. and comm., *Hegemonius: Acta Archelai. (The Acts of Archelaus)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), p. 45. *Acta Archelai* VII.1–2 (Charles Henry Beeson, ed., *Hegemonius, Acta Archelai* [GCS 16] [Leipzig: J.C. Hein-

“The body is inherently sinful, derived from the evil nature”
... the soul, as they say, “derived from a chaste root.”⁶⁹

They say: the root of all body is Darkness...⁷⁰

The body which belongs to Evil from its nature.⁷¹

The Manichaeans say: “We wear the body of Satan, but the soul belongs to God. ... Because the soul is good, and the body is evil.”⁷²

They say that their bodies derive from the clan of Darkness.⁷³

(The Manichaeans) claim that “the body is evil, and the soul is from good.”⁷⁴

“...the demonic Āz who built this body...”⁷⁵

Yielding to the desires of the body (especially gluttony, the most conspicuous one) is to be avoided by the elect, the Manichaean priests or “chosen ones”, since these desires originate from Darkness. The strict ascetic rules observed by the Manichaean elect are in fact part of a struggle against the human body and its desires, and ultimately a struggle against Darkness, their originator.

TR. 168. Its [one of the “dark trees”] colour is to be passionately fond of the hundred flavours of drink and food, thus benefitting their body of flesh.⁷⁶

richs, 1906] p. 9): και τοῦ μὲν φωτός εἶναι μέρος τὴν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ψυχὴν, τοῦ δὲ σκοτούς τὸ σῶμα και τὸ τῆς ὕλης δημιουργημα [Et lucis quidem esse partem animam quae in hominibus est, tenebrarum autem corpus et quae ex materia est conditio].

⁶⁹ *Prose Refutations of Ephrem* 86.7–13; trans. Reeves, “Manichaean Citations,” p. 251.

⁷⁰ *Hymni contra haereses* 17.3 (Edmund Beck, *Ephräms Polemik gegen Mani und die Manichäer – im Rahmen der zeitgenössischen griechischen Polemik und der des Augustinus* [Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO, 1978], p. 35).

⁷¹ *Prose Refutations of Ephrem* 147.19. (Beck, *Ephräms Polemik*, p. 45).

⁷² Serapion Thmuitanus: *Adversus Manichaeos* 12 (Alfred Adam, ed., *Texte zum Manichäismus*, Kleine Texte für Vorlesungen und Übungen 175 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter et Co., 1954; 2nd edn.], p. 59): φασὶ γὰρ Μανιχαῖοι: τὸ σῶμα ἐφορέσαμεν τοῦ Σατανᾶ, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ. [...] ἀγαθὴ οὖν ἡ ψυχὴ, πονηρὸν δὲ τὸ σῶμα.

⁷³ *De natura boni* 45: ...et carnes suas de gente tenebrarum esse dicunt.

⁷⁴ Severianus of Gabala: *In Centurionem* 15 (Michel Aubineau, *Un traité inédit de Christologie de Sévérien de Gabala in Centurionem et Contra Manichaeos et Apollinaristas. Exploitation par Sévère d'Antioche (519) et le synode du Latran (649)*, Cahiers d'Orientalisme V [Genève: Patrick Cramer, 1983], p. 122): τῶν τὴν σάρκα πονηρῶν ὀριζομένων, τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν ἐκ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ. Also see M 9 II (Mary Boyce, *A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian. Texts with Notes*, Acta Iranica 3. sér., II, 9; Textes and mémoires [Téhéran-Liège: Bibliothèque Pahlavi; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975]; hereafter, RMMP: ae), pp. 89–90; *De haeresibus* 46.19.

⁷⁵ M801a 42/18–43/1 (Henning, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch*, p. 38, line 665–66): ὄϋωδ'ἔ'z kyy mwnw ἰmb'ἰ pty's'c... See also Werner Sundermann, *Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und Parabeltexte der Manichäer mit einigen Bemerkungen zu Motiven der Parabeltexte von Friedmar Geissler*, Berliner Turfantexte IV (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1973), pp. 26–31.

⁷⁶ 色是貪嗜百味飲食·資益穴身。

TR.305–6. The third [characteristic of the elect: G.K.] is that whenever he walks or stays, sits or lies, he does not favor his body of flesh by seeking all kinds of fine and comfortable robes, bedding, drink and food, soups and potions, elephants and horses, and carriages to glorify his body.⁷⁷

“Body of flesh” (Chin.: *roushen* 肉身; Parth.: *tnb’r*; Sogd.: *tmb’r*, *tanb’r*;⁷⁸ and Uygh.: *ät’öz*),⁷⁹ is explicitly called “infernal” (*myt’mp’r*) in a Sogdian letter.⁸⁰ In the Manichaean system, the body is thus associated with Darkness and its attributes. Furthermore, similarly to the Chinese sources, other Manichaean texts also link this carnal body to the motif of ocean or fire, as evidenced by the following excerpts.

And this body, that is upon you; consider (it) thus. It has been entirely made and created by tricks and deceit. Deep within it, many are the powers, the ideas, the intentions, the thoughts which are (all) bubbling and stirring. Thus is (its) mien, like the ocean Samudra (in) which the disturbances are many.⁸¹

The fire that dwells in the body, its affairs are drinking / and eating, but the soul thirsts always for the Word of God.⁸²

... together with the fire and [the lu]st [that] dwell in men and

⁷⁷ 三者若行，若住，若坐，若臥，不寵肉身，求諸細滑衣服臥具，飲食湯藥，象馬車乘，以榮其身。

⁷⁸ E.g. M131/1/79 (Henning, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch*, p. 45); M801a/43/1 (ibid., p. 38); cf. Mikkelsen, “Skilfully Planting the Trees of Light”, p. 102.

⁷⁹ Chavannes and Pelliot, “Un traité,” p. 508, n. 2. See e.g. T II D 173c (Albert von Le Coq, *Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho. III* [Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1922], p. 12).

⁸⁰ 81TB65:2/30. Yoshida Yutaka 吉田豊, “Sute wen kaoshi 粟特文考釋,” in Liu Hongliang 柳洪亮, ed., *Tulufan xinchu Monijiao wenxian yanjiu* 吐鲁番新出摩尼教文献研究. *Studies in the New Manichaean Texts Recovered from Turfan* (Xinjiang Tulufan diqu wenwuju, 2000), pp. 3–199, p. 90. The same expression appears as *myh tmb’r* in M372 R I 3 (Yoshida, “Sute wen kaoshi,” p. 104).

⁸¹ Trans. A. Van Tongerloo (“Light, More Light,” in Aloïs Van Tongerloo and Soren Giversen, eds., *Manichaica Selecta. Studies Presented to Prof. J. Ries on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, Manichaean Studies 1 [Lovanii: International Association of Manichaean Studies and Center of the History of Religions, BCMS Louvain, 1991]), p. 377 [pp. 371–78]. TM 298 (Le Coq, *Türkische Manichaica*, p. 9; Tongerloo, “Light, More Light,” p. 377; see also Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, “Jesus’ Entry into Parinirvana: Manichaean Identity in Buddhist Central Asia,” *Numen* 33.2 (1986), p. 226 [pp. 225–40]; Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, “The Fair Form, the Hideous Form and the Transformed Form: On the Form Principle in Manichaeism,” in Manfred Heuser and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Studies in Manichaean Literature and Art*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 46 (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 1998), p. 163 [pp. 142–72]): *ymä bu ätöz / kim sizni üzä turur inča körünj / qolulanj tolup barča t(ä)vän / körün armağan azyurmaqan / itmiş y(a)ratmış ol içtin sīnar öküş / ärürlär küclüglär könj(1)är biliglär / saqīnčlar kim çoqrayurlar qamšayurlar / ančola mänj(i)zligge ärürlär qaltī / uluy taluy s(a)mutrī kim bulyaq [älgük] / öküş ol*. This parallel has already been mentioned by Waldschmidt–Lentz (“Die Stellung Jesu im Manichäismus,” p. 11).

⁸² *Psalm-Book* 40,29–30: τς[ε]τς ετογηηε εππσωμα πζρωβ πτας ε ογωμα / ε[ι]σ[ω]. τψγχη εως εσαβε μπσεξε μππογτε πνεγ ημ. On the fire of eating and drinking see *Psalm-Book* 55,28.

women, inflaming [them] inward to one another.⁸³

And [she [Āz: G.K.] placed] greed and lust in [the middle [of the body: G.K.]], imitatin[g the Call and the] Answer [and raging fire was the same as the Column of Glory].⁸⁴

And who jailed you [god of Light: G.K.] in this dark prison, this incarceration, this place of no refuge, which constitutes this body of flesh? ... And who made you a servant of his shameless, dark, unquenchable, vile fire?⁸⁵

We can thus conclude that both the Chinese and the non-Chinese sources basically associate the human body with Darkness, and also link the human body to the motif of fire and/or ocean.

Poison

In two cases, the *Hymnscroll* (H.19, H.29) designates the Sea of Fire as poisonous (*du*). In the Chinese sources its poisonous nature is closely linked again with the Land of Darkness: the Demoness of Greed and the demons possess a poisonous heart and nature (TR.21, TR.29: *du xin* 毒心; TR.113: *du xing* 毒性), and poisonous, evil thoughts (TR.68: *du'e siwei* 毒惡思惟); demons derive from the poisonous race (H.191: *hei'an du lei* 黑暗毒類), and burn with a chaotic, poisonous flame (H.193: *zadu yan* 雜毒焰). In the human body they plant poisonous trees of death (TR.35: *wu du si shu* 五毒死樹; H.69: *wu du shu* 五毒樹), which produce poisonous fruits (TR.36: *du guo* 毒菓). During the process of salvation, the Envoy of Light binds the poisonous snakes and wild beasts (TR.53–54: *zhong dushe ji zhu e'shou* 眾毒蛇及諸惡獸) and fells the poisonous trees (of death) (TR.55: *zhanfa dushu* 斬伐毒樹; TR.157–158: *faqe wu zhong du'e sishu* 伐卻五種毒惡死樹), overturns the dark earth of the poisonous, evil, dark greed and lust (TR.152: *fan du'e tanyu andi* 翻毒惡貪慾暗地).

The already quoted description of Māra's palace abounds with the term “poison”, as does that of the two dark nights⁸⁶:

⁸³ *Kephalaia* 26,15–17: τσετε μῆ [τῆρῆδο]/ἠη [ετ]ογῆρῆ ρῆ ἠεραγῆτ μῆ ἠεραμμε εελωβῆυ ἠ[μαγ] / ερογῆ ἀνογερῆγ.

⁸⁴ M240/R/5–6 (Werner Sundermann, *Der Sermon vom Licht-Nous. Eine Lehrschrift des östlichen Manichäismus. Edition der parthischen und soghdischen Version* [Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1992], pp. 62–63): 'wd](')'z 'wd 'wrjwg (p)[d *m̄dy'n nš'st] / [pd xrwštg u] (pdw')xtg (n)[yš'n... (Using an analogy from another fragment, the last part [“and raging fire was the same as the Column of Glory”] was inserted by Sundermann.)

⁸⁵ Trans. H.-J. Klimkeit (GSR: 149–150, slightly modified). M131/I/73–79, 91–95 (Henning, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch*, pp. 44–45): ky bynd 'tyh kyy / prkš'tōrt prymnd / prm t're bndktyc / prw nwp'tfr 'wn cykt / pr pw'nw't ° kyy 'ty / xwty 'yey x' y'tny / tmb'r (...) 'rtf kyy / kwn' 'sp'syh / wynny rwr't tnyq / 'tr xwrndyy wynny / pw 'mb'r nwbšzyny...

⁸⁶ In the *al-Fihrist* (Gustav Flügel, *Mani, seine Lehre und seine Schriften. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Manichäismus. Aus dem Fihrist des Abū'l-faradsch Muḥammad ben Ishāq al-*

H.20. Originally this is the palace of Māra, the country of *rākṣasa*, and also the dense forests, the marsh of reeds and rushes, where all the evil wild beasts jostle intermingled with one another, where the poisonous insects and venomous snakes gather. H.21. This is also the body of the Demon(ess) of Greed, and also Pēsūs with many forms, the fivefold pit of the land of darkness, and also the lightless courtyards of the five poisons. H.22. And also the three merciless, poisoned seedlings, and also the five poisonous springs of ruthlessness. ... H.24. The dark mother of all the demon-kings, the source of all evil deeds, and also the heart of the fierce and poisonous *yakṣas*,⁸⁷ and also the reflection in the thoughts of the Demon(ess) of Greed. H.25. The armour and the weaponry of all demon-kings, the poisonous net of all opposing teachings, which sinks the precious wares and the merchants, which can cloud the light-buddhas of the Sun and the Moon.⁸⁸

TR.213-17. Moreover, next there are the two types of dark nights. As for the first night, it is the Demon(ess) of Greed, her twelve hours are bone, sinew, veins, flesh and skin, and also hatred, fury, lust, anger, ignorance, greed, hungry fire, these ones are the impure poisons, thus they resemble the Land of Darkness that is without beginning and without light, the first dark night. The second dark night is the wild, poisonous desire which is flaming and blazing; the twelve hours are the twelve dark and poisoned thoughts. This dark night resembles the sign of the primeval rise of the demons.⁸⁹

Warrāk, *bekannt unter dem Namen Ibn Abi ʿġāʿūb an-Nadīm* [Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag/Leipzig, 1862/1969], p. 86; Bayard Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm. A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, Records of Civilization; Sources and Studies 83 [New York: Columbia Press, 1970] 2, p. 777) one of the elements of the Land of Darkness is poison (*as-samm*), though the majority of the sources (*De moribus Manichaeorum* 9,14; *Liber Scholiorum* [A. V. Williams Jackson and Abraham Johannan, "Theodore bar Khoni on Mānī's Teachings, Translated from the Syriac with Notes," in A.V. Williams Jackson, *Researches in Manichaeism. With Special Reference to the Turfan Fragments* (2nd edn., New York: AMS Press INC, 1932/1965)], pp. 223-24 [pp. 219-54]; *De haeresibus* 46.7; *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* 31,34; *Kephalaia* 48,6-9) do not list it among the five dark elements (Georges Vajda, "Le témoignage d'al-Māturīdī sur la doctrine des Manichéens, des Dayṣānites et des Marcionites," *Arabica* 13 [1966], p. 16 [pp. 1-38, 113-28]). On poison, see also A.V. Williams Jackson, "The Manichaeon Cosmological Fragment M. 98-99 in Turfan Pahlavi," in Jackson, *Researches in Manichaeism*, p. 68 [pp. 22-73].

⁸⁷ *Yakṣa* (*yecha* 夜叉) was probably already included in the Parthian original (cf. M7 II V ii 22: e.g. *yxš'n* [Waldschmidt-Lentz, "Die Stellung Jesu im Manichäismus," p. 10]; also see M1202; Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst, *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts. Vol. III.1. Dictionary of Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian* [Turnhout: Brepols, 2004], p. 375).

⁸⁸ 元是魔宮羅刹國，復是稠林蘆葦澤。諸惡禽獸交橫走，蘊集毒虫及虻蝮。亦是惡業貪魔躄，復是多形卑訶[=訶]斯；亦是暗界五重坑，復是无明五毒院；亦是无慈三毒苗，復是无惠五毒泉。... 一切魔王之暗母，一切惡業之根源，又是猛毒夜叉心，復是貪魔意中念。一切魔王之甲仗，一切犯教之毒網，能沈寶物及商人，能翳日月光明佛。

⁸⁹ 其次復有兩種暗夜。第一夜者，即是貪魔；其十二時者，即是骨、筋、脈、穴、皮等，及以怨

Several non-Chinese sources also testify that poison is a typical characteristic of the Land of Darkness, the *samsāra* and more specifically the human body:

And that Āz and Ahriman, darkness and gloom, evil-smelling hot wind and the poison of death, the wrathful burning and the poison of the demons.⁹⁰

In [the existence] of a mad, savage, poisonous animal, ceaselessly like this, being submerged in the dust of forgetfulness of rebirths.⁹¹

...as I have been born in this terrible, phantasmic house, this castle of death, this poisonous form, the body made of bone...⁹²

In connection with the Sea of Fire, H.22 mentions the Five Poisonous Springs (*wu du quan* 五毒泉), which can be explained by the notion of Five Dark Pits, a primeval attribute of the Land of Darkness. The motif of (poisonous) springs of Darkness also makes an appearance in non-Chinese texts:

The wellsprings of Darkness had all been opened. The [giant] fishes transfixed me with fear.⁹³

Poisonous springs gush from him, and from him are breathed out [smoky] fogs...⁹⁴

He has flung much poison and wickedness from that deep ...⁹⁵

This lying body of death is a nameless poison. The Old Man is a nameless poison. Just like the flood which damages the tender sowing, just like the fire.⁹⁶

憎、嗔恚、姪慾、忿怒、愚癡、貪欲、飢火，如是等輩，不淨諸毒，以像暗界无始无明第一暗夜。第二夜者，即是猛毒慾熾焰；十二時者，即是十二暗毒思惟。如是暗夜，以像諸魔初興記驗。

⁹⁰ Trans. H.-J. Klimkeit (GSR: 230). M7980/I/V/ii/8–14 (RMMP: y, pp. 67–68): 'wd h'n 'z w 'hrmn / 'wd t'r 'wd t'm / 'wd hws'g 'y / dwjgn 'wd zhr 'y / mrg 'wd swcyšn / 'y xyšmyn °° 'wd / zhr 'y dyw'n...

⁹¹ Trans. Larry V. Clark, "The Manichean Turkic *Pothi-Book*," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 9 (1982), p. 181/lines 26–27 [pp. 145–218]. T III D 260 (Clark, *ibid.*, p. 168/lines 26–27): [mun]qal qal aqulu yilqita. Tutčii üsüksüz monteg [...] tuqumuy a[žun-] / -uy unitmaqlıy. tooz topraqqa patlıp. Cf. W. Bang and A. von Gabain, *Türkische Turfan-Texte. III. Der grosse Hymnus auf Mani* (Berlin: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften, W. de Gruyter & Co., 1930), pp. 186–87.

⁹² Trans. H.-J. Klimkeit (GSR: 149). M395/34–38 (Henning, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch*, p. 43): ... cw prymō sym xwtšy mrcyny ptrwp j'rnyy ydōw 'stk'njl tmb'r 'jitym.

⁹³ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 115). *Angad rōšnān* I,15 (MHP: 114): [ˈw](d) wyš'd bwd 'hynd o hrwyn t'r x'nyg / [.....m]sy'g'n o pdgryft hym pd trs.

⁹⁴ Trans. Mary Boyce, "Some Parthian Abecedarian Hymns," *BSOAS* 14 (1952), pp. 435–50 (hereafter cited as SPAH), p. 442. M507/R/5 (SPAH, p. 441; RMMP: am, p. 97): jhryn x'ns'r 'zdm[y](n)d 'c hw oo 'wd dmynd[d] 'c hw nyzm[n] dwdyn.

⁹⁵ Trans. Boyce (SPAH, p. 442). M507/V/15 (SPAH, p. 441; RMMP: am, p. 97): pwr '(š)yxt jhr 'wd b[z](g)yft oo '(c hw) jfr'n / 'br

⁹⁶ M284b/R/ii/10–19. (Christiane Reck, ed., *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag. Manichäische Festtags-*

...the poison stinging scorpions, ... with their floods of death.⁹⁷

At this point it is also worth citing some non-Chinese analogies for the paradoxical compound of fiery springs and fountains. In these excerpts fire and water appear together as attributes of the Land of Darkness.

Lo, the Darkness I have subdued, lo, the fire of the fountains [I have / extinguished] it...⁹⁸

For I have removed myself from the bitter / ... and come to port before the sea became stormy. / The ... salt sea, I was not washed [in it / ever, nor did I [receive the] slavery of / the fire of insatiety before my eyes (?)⁹⁹

They knew not the Church, they fell into the fire, they did not / understand. Let no man [add toil to us: G.K.]. / The desire [is] the Flood; the eye of malice / is the fire.¹⁰⁰

He [Living Spirit: G.K.] closed the fountains of / fire that they might not again send up darkness, he / quenched the furnaces of fire...¹⁰¹

Water and springs in the Realm of Light are naturally precisely the opposite of the descriptions above: they are fragrant and marvelous, as they contain the water of life.

H.290. The hundred creeks, the rivers and the sea, the water springs, the water of life in their depth is fragrant and wondrous, if (someone) enters them, he does not drift, nor does he drown, there are no tides which would cause any harm.¹⁰²

hymnen. Edition der mittelpersischen und parthischen Sonntag-, Montags- und Bemahymnen [Turnhout: Brepols, 2004], pp. 113–14): jhr 'st / 'n' myg 'ym / nys'w drwn oo / jhr 'st 'n' myg / 'ym kfwn mrdwhm / oo h'mgwng cw' gwn / hynw'r ky n'syd / 'w nswg kyšf'n / h'mgwng cw' gwn / 'dwr.

⁹⁷ Trans. I. Gardner. P. Kell. Copt. 2/37–38 (Gardner, *Kellis Literary Texts*, p. 64): []ϩε ληογ'ορε π̄βακμετογρε / []μ ϩ̄π̄ ηεγκατακλγςμος η̄τε πμογ.

⁹⁸ *Psalm-Book* 55,6–7: εις] πκεκε ᾱιθ̄β̄ιαϩ εις τςετε π̄η̄ραλμ[ε ᾱιωμ/με] μ̄μας ...

⁹⁹ *Psalm-Book* 99,12–16: χε ε ᾱιςεϩτ π̄η[. . . . / . . . ε]τσαμ̄ε ᾱιμανε εμπατε π̄αμ β̄ι ϩ[αμ̄ε / . . .] . σ̄ π̄θαλασσα ετμαλ̄ε μ̄π̄ιχι ρωκμ[ε η̄ρητς / αη]η̄ρε ογ̄τε τςετε η̄τμ̄π̄τατςι μ̄π̄ιχι τςε/μ̄η]τ̄βαογ̄αν ϩ̄ᾱῑετ.

¹⁰⁰ *Psalm-Book* 171,18–21: μ̄πογς̄ε̄ογ̄ων τεκκλ̄ηςια λγρ̄ε̄ῑε ατςετε εμ̄π[ογ/μ̄με . μ̄π̄ορτ . / πκατακλγςμος τεπ̄ογ̄μ̄ια τςετε π̄βελ π̄τμ̄π̄/τ̄βαν̄η̄ῑερε.

¹⁰¹ *Psalm-Book* 212,19–21: ᾱς̄τωμ̄ η̄ραλμ̄ε π̄'τςετε : χε πογ̄ς̄ωτ ᾱτ̄π̄ιναγ̄ κ̄εκε ᾱρ̄ρη̄ῑ : ᾱ[ς̄/ωμ̄μ̄ π̄καμ̄[η̄ος π̄'τ]ςετε...

¹⁰² 百川河海及泉源，命水湛然皆香妙，若入不漂及不溺，亦無暴水來損耗。

The Land of Māra and the Five Pits

In the Chinese scriptures, the motif of the sea (of fire) is linked to the Land of Darkness and – in the Chinese, Buddhism-inspired terminology – Māra (*Mo* 魔), its lord:¹⁰³ the *Hymnscroll* mentions Māra's palace, Māra's body, the gate of hell, and the five lightless, poisonous courtyards (again, see number 3 of the motifs listed above). The association between the sea and the Land of Darkness also appears in non-Chinese sources:

[The First Man, who is in the Darkness] His ship is his four sons who are swathed over his body. The sea is the la[nd of darkness ... / ...] his net is [...] and his powers.¹⁰⁴

[The sea is] [the] error of the universe, the law o[f sin]...¹⁰⁵
...and the deadly pool of hell¹⁰⁶

The sea motif in these texts is always connected to the Land of Darkness, just like the motif of depth (*shen*) and the fivefold pit (*wuchong keng*). It is to be noted that the first significant events of the Manichaean cosmogony (the attack of Darkness, the descent and suffering of the First Man, and his being led up from the pit of darkness by the Mother of Life and the Living Spirit) serve both as an archetype of and, at the same time, an explanation for the suffering and deliverance of the soul/light (actually the sons/weapons of the First Man).

TR.8–10. You must know that before this universe came into being, the two envoys of Light, the Pure Wind and the Benign Mother entered the dark pit of the Lightless Land, in order to pull out the valiant, ever-victorious (Primeval Thought, who wore) the armor of great wisdom, the five kinds of light-body; they took him and ascended, they led him out from the five pits.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Generally see Paul van Lindt, *The Names of Manichaean Mythological Figures: A Comparative Study on Terminology in the Coptic Sources*, Studies in Oriental Religions 26 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), pp. 198–210; Hanns-Peter Schmidt, “Vom awestlichen Dämon Azi zur manichäischen Äz, der Mutter aller Dämonen,” in Ronald E. Emmerick, Werner Sundermann, and Peter Zieme, eds., *Studia Manichaica. IV. Internationaler Kongress zum Manichäismus, Berlin, 14.–18. Juli 1997* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), pp. 517–27; Werner Sundermann, “The Zoroastrian and the Manichaean Demon Äz,” in Siamak Adhami, ed., *Paitimāna. Essays in Iranian, Indo-European, and Indian Studies in Honor of Hanns-Peter Schmidt* (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publisher, Inc., 2003) 2, pp. 328–38; Rui Chuanming 芮传明, “Monijiao Hylè, Äz, Tan Mo kao 摩尼教 Hylè · Äz · 贪魔考,” *Shilin* 史林 (2006.5), pp. 88–99.

¹⁰⁴ *Kephalaia* 28,12–15: περϑαλι νε περϑταλϑ [π]υηρε ετδαλε δ/ζμι περϑωμα θαλασσα νε πκα[ρ] ηπκεκε ... / ... περϑυηε π[ε] ... / μι περϑαμ.

¹⁰⁵ *Kephalaia* 28,30–31: [τ]πλαηη μπκοςμος πνομος πτ[ε] ιηαβε ...

¹⁰⁶ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 97). *Huyadagmān* Va,7b (MHP: 96): 'wt n(r)[h] 'hrywwr. An interesting “personal experience” of Māni is described in the Cologne Māni Codex (77,4–79,12), where in a vision Māni sees Sita drowning in the water of darkness.

¹⁰⁷ 汝等當知·即此世界未立以前·淨風、善母二光明使入於暗坑无明境界·拔擢驍健·常

TR.145-47. Relying on this column, the seeds of truth can get out from the five kinds of lightless, dark pits. This resembles the function of the five-five sons of the Primeval Thought and the Pure Wind as supporting columns for the five light bodies in the macrosocsm.¹⁰⁸

The fivefold pit (H.21, TR.145-46) or the five pits (TR.10: *wu keng* 五坑) appear both in the *Hymnscroll* and the *Traité*. These five pits are evidently the same as the five worlds/pits of the Land of Darkness referred to in other sources (Syriac: *‘ālmā*; Parth.: *‘hrywr*; Copt.: (ⲡⲉⲩⲟⲘ) ⲡⲒⲐⲐⲐⲐⲟⲘ, ⲧⲁⲙⲉⲓⲁ; Gk: κόσμοι, ἄντρα; Lat.: *antra*).¹⁰⁹ In his *Enchiridion Epicteti*, Simplicius designates the Darkness as “five-formed” (πενταμόρφος).¹¹⁰ The following quotations attest to the presence of this notion in diverse non-Chinese sources.

The quarrelsome Prince of Darkness has subdued those five pits of destruction, through great ... (?) terror and wrath.¹¹¹

But the Kingdom of Darkness consists of five store-/houses...¹¹²

...the five abysses of the Dark.¹¹³

... in the five trees that are in the five [worlds of] the land of darkness.¹¹⁴

(The Living Spirit) “in order to create that great structure, the New Paradise, over it, he filled the five ditches of death and levelled (them).¹¹⁵

勝□□□□大智甲五分明身，策持昇進，令出五坑。

¹⁰⁸ 真實種子，依因此柱得出五重无明暗坑。猶如大界先意、淨風各有五子，与五明身作依止柱。

¹⁰⁹ Jackson, “The Manichaean Cosmological Fragment,” pp. 48-49. n. 35. Cf. *De moribus Manichaeorum* 9,14; *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* 28,1; *In Enchiridion Epicteti* 71.

¹¹⁰ *In Enchiridion Epicteti* 71,21 (Samuel N. C. Lieu, “Manichaeism in Early Byzantium: Some Observations,” in Luigi Cirillo and Alois Van Tongerloo, eds., *Atti del terzo congresso internazionale di studi “Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico”, Arcavata di Rende – Amantea, 31 agosto – 5 settembre 1993*, Manichaean Studies 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), pp. 226-27 [pp. 217-34]). The Five Pits are closely associated with the five dark elements, which are the opposites of the five light elements (*De moribus Manichaeorum* 9,14; *Liber Scholiorum* [Jackson and Johannan, “Theodore bar Khoni,” pp. 223-24]; *De haeresibus* 46.7; *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* 31,34; *Kephalaia* 48,6-9; *Kephalaia* 68,17).

¹¹¹ Trans. M. Boyce (SPAH, p. 442). M507/V/14 (SPAH, p. 441, RMMP: am, p. 97): ‘styh’g ‘xšynd r’ryg oo nydxt ‘w hwyn / pnj ‘hrywr oo pd wzrg ‘m’n trs ‘wd dybhr.

¹¹² *Psalm-Book* 9,17-18: ⲧⲙⲏⲧⲣⲣⲟ ⲉⲱⲥ ⲙⲡⲕⲉⲕⲉ ⲉⲥⲱⲟⲟⲛ ⲉⲡⲉⲩⲟⲘ ⲡⲉⲧⲁ/ⲙⲓⲟⲛ...

¹¹³ *Psalm-Book* 10,9: ⲡⲉⲩⲟⲘ ⲡⲏⲟⲘⲛ ⲙⲡⲕⲉⲕⲉ...

¹¹⁴ *Kephalaia* 48,15-16: ⲉⲙ ⲡⲉⲩⲟⲘ ⲡⲱⲛⲏ ⲉⲧⲉⲛ ⲡⲉⲩⲟⲘ [ⲡⲒⲐⲐⲐⲐⲟⲘ ⲡⲉⲧⲉ] / ⲡⲒⲁⲉ ⲙⲡⲕⲉⲕⲉ.

¹¹⁵ GSR: 226. M98/I/V/5-8 (RMMP: y, p. 61; cf. Jackson, “The Manichaean Cosmological Fragment,” p. 32): ‘wd r’z ‘y / wzrg, whyšt ‘y nwg ‘br ‘pwrydn / r’y o h’n pnz knd’r ‘y mrg hngnd / ‘wd h’mgyn qyrd.

These Five Pits belong to the original state of the Land of Darkness, and are not to be confused with the Three Ditches, which were created during the cosmogonical process, although the qualities stored in them are quite similar to the ones treated here (water, darkness, fire). The reason for this is that Three Ditches store the elements of Darkness removed from the world by the Three Vessels. In the following I quote non-Chinese sources to illustrate the motif of three dark ditches.

And the waste and the accretion of the Three Vessels, they of [water and of] darkness [and] of fire, which had been discharged upon (the earth), he gathered them and [and deposited them in the] sea that is within the walls and the vessels; because of this sea waters are salty. For they have received salt and bitterness from the washing out and cleansing of the three vessels.¹¹⁶

And all around the same earth, he made four walls and three ditches. And he imprisoned the demons in those three inner ditches.¹¹⁷

The first is the ditch of water, the second is that of darkness, and the third is fiery...¹¹⁸

Those three poisonous dark ditches and the conflagrations...¹¹⁹

The qualities deposited in the Three Ditches are good analogies, because they exhibit the unmixed forms of the dark principle. On the other hand, the hymns on the sufferings of the soul cannot be connected with the notion of Three Ditches, as light is not present there in any form. It should be also emphasized that during the cosmogonical process the Living Spirit, in order to create the eight earths,¹²⁰ seems to abolish the Five Pits, though this cosmogonical event was probably unknown to the Chinese Manichaean community. But even if it had been well-known, this presumably would not have prevented them from using the metaphor of dark pits and sea to express the sufferings of the soul tormented by the Darkness.

¹¹⁶ *Kephalaia* 113,35–114,3: πσαριμε δε μη πορωριμε ἰππυαμτ ἰμμηχιορε παπ/[μαγ παπ]κεκε [μη] πατσετε εταγωριγωγ αρωγ αψαγρσογ / ... θαλασσα ετψοοπ ριρογη ἰσβτερε / μη ἰμμηχιορε ετβε πεῖ ἰμογιερε ἰθαλασσα μαλρ / επειδη αγχι ογμλαρ μη ογσιγε ριτμ πιωε αβαλ ἰπκα/θαρισμοε ἰππυαμτ ἰμμηχιοορε. Later on in the text there is another reference to it (*Kephalaia* 114,7–114,9): “And t[ha]t waste, the sediment of the washing out of the wheel, he cast it down and mixed it with the sea water”.

¹¹⁷ GSR: 226. M 99/I/R/13–17 (RMMP: y, p. 62): ’wd ’br hm zmyq / pyr’ mwn ch’r prysp ’wd / sh p’rgyn kyrd. ’wd pd h’n / ’y ’ndrwn p’rgyn dyw’n ’ndr / przyd.

¹¹⁸ M312/V/13–14 (Werner Sundermann, *Ein manichäisch-soghdisches Parabelbuch; mit einem Anhang von Friedmar Geissler* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1985), p. 32. n.138): nxwyn ’byn p’rgyn o [bdyg] t’ryg o hrdyg ’dwryn.

¹¹⁹ Trans. D.N. MacKenzie. M535/V/8–9 (D. N. MacKenzie, “Mani’s Šābuhragān I.,” *BSOAS* 42 (1979), p. 514 [pp. 500–34]): [h’]n sh p’(r)gyn ’y [zh]ryn t’ryn / [’]w[d] swcysn...

¹²⁰ M98/I/V/7–8 (GSR: 226): “... he [Mihryazd = Living Spirit] filled the five ditches of death and leveled them” (h’n pnz knd’r ’y mrg hngnd / ’wd h’mgyn qyrd).

The pits are furthermore logically associated with depth, mentioned in H.47 as “deep pit” (H.49: *sui keng* 邃坑) or “bottomless pit” (H.104: *wudi keng* 无底坑) in the Chinese sources, and its analogies (abyss, falling) can be found also in non-Chinese ones, as below:

I shall deliver (thee) from all the waves of the sea, and from its deep wherein thou hast gone through these drownings.¹²¹

Thou wast held back within the abyss, where all is turmoil; thou wast made captive in every place. / Thou wast suspended amid all rebirths. Thou hast suffered ravage amid all cities.¹²²

Nor is there [limit] for the Darkness in depth.¹²³

And all who enter there fall head first into the deep abyss. And there they begin to boil in merciless oppression. ... [s]o also the boiling souls [are suffering(?)] pain [an]d will never die.¹²⁴

In one direction on the border of this bright and holy land there was a land of darkness deep and vast in extent, where abode fiery bodies, destructive races.¹²⁵

Thou shall [not] fall (?) within... [where all] (is) full of fire, distress and stabs.¹²⁶

They will fall into the deep and be devoured in death. They will clothe themselves in darkness, distress, and fire.¹²⁷

The bottomless nature of the Land of Darkness is evidently, though not explicitly, related with the Manichaeic concept of its “position”: it is infinite in the south, which actually also means the downwards direction.¹²⁸

¹²¹ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 147). *Angad rōšnān* VI,45 (MHP, p. 146; MHA, p. 17): [ʷt] zryy jfr'n o kw pd hwyn nx'b šwd 'yy / [kr'](n) '(z)'(d) 'c hw o 'wd ('c) hrwyn wrm'n.

¹²² Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 167). *Angad rōšnān* VIIa,13–14 (MHP: 166): 'wṭ nhxt 'yy 'w] jfr o cy hrwyn 'šwb / 'wṭ kyrd 'yy [wrd]g o pd hrwyn wy'g'n / 'wṭ 'gws(t'yy) o pd hrwyn 'jwn / w (bwd 'y)y w(y)gndg o p(d) hr(w)yn šhryst'n.

¹²³ *Al-Fihrist* (Flügel, *Mani*, p. 63,6–7; Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadim*, p. 788).

¹²⁴ T II D 52 reunited with T I TM 378 4–7, 11–12 (MHA, pp. 31–32): rty wyspy ky ZY wδ'y-δ cyntp'r / tys'nt ptkwn 'wpt'nt / ZKwy n'ykwk z-wβ'k c'δrp'r ZY wr / βr'γ'z-'nt 'yšty pr pw z-'mc tr'n(kw) (...) [m'y](δ) ZY m[s pt'w](nt) xw rw'nt / 'yšy-'n(tc) ZKw'βz[y' Z]Y kōl'c]w L' myr'nt.

¹²⁵ Trans. R. Stohert, “Against the Epistle of Manichaeus Called Fundamental,” in Ph. Schaff, ed., *St. Augustin. The Writings Against the Manicheans and Against the Donatists: Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (1887; rpt. Whitefish, Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), p. 136 [pp. 129–50]. *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* 15,19: Iuxta unam vero partem ac latus illustris illius ac sanctae terrae erat tenebrarum terra profunda et immensa magnitudine, in qua habitabant ignea corpora, genera scilicet pestifera.

¹²⁶ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 99). *Huyadagmān* VIb,21 (MHP, p. 98; MHA, p. 15): [...ny] (k)[f]h'ndr o p(d)[.](nd)[....](.)[.] / [cy hm]g pwr 'dwr o tn(g) ['w](d) wxs'g.

¹²⁷ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 165). *Angad rōšnān* VIIa,2 (MHP: 164): qfynd pd jfr'n o x'z'd (b)[w]ynd pd m'n / 'wṭ p[dm]wcynd 'w t'r o 'w (tnn)g w 'dwr.

¹²⁸ Byard Bennett, “*Iuxta unum latus terra tenebrarum*: The Division of Primordial Space in Anti-Manichaeic Writers’ Description of the Manichaeic Cosmogony,” in Paul Mirecki

Though the sea itself is a metaphor of the Land of Darkness, the creatures in it do not have an aquatic, but a fiery nature, which is the manifestation of the greed and lust (*tanyu* 貪慾; Middle Persian and Parthian *Āz*, Parthian *āwarzōg*) inherent in them. This is a rather important motif, as it will ultimately serve as an explanation for the fiery nature of the sea itself. The following citations exemplify the fiery character of the demonic creatures.

Thou hast put to shame the demons and devils of fire..¹²⁹

I am in the midst of my enemies, the beasts surrounding me; / the burden which I bear is of the powers and principalities. / They burned (?) in their wrath, they rose against me ... they / burnt (?) me in their fire...¹³⁰

They became lions in the day through their devouring fire.¹³¹

They [beasts, enemies: G.K.] burn in their fire...¹³²

Thou shall [not] fall (?) within... [where all] (is) full of fire, distress and stabs.¹³³

The fifth [property of the King of Darkness: G.K.] is his burning, which burns like an iron as if poured out from fire.¹³⁴

And they escaped from hell which is ever aflame.¹³⁵

The hideous form ... and the (ugly) form; he scorches, he destroys...¹³⁶

and Jason BeDuhn, eds., *The Light and the Darkness. Studies in Manichaeism and Its World* (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2001), p. 74 [pp. 68–78].

¹²⁹ *Psalm-Book* 64,28: ακ†ψηπε π̄̄δαιμων μ̄̄π̄̄ῑ̄ε̄̄ π̄̄τ̄̄σε̄̄τε̄̄.

¹³⁰ *Psalm-Book* 54,13–15, 17–18: †ε̄̄π̄̄τ̄̄μ̄̄ν̄̄τε̄̄ π̄̄ᾱ̄ᾱ̄ᾱ̄ε̄̄ ε̄̄ρε̄̄ π̄̄θ̄̄ν̄̄ρῑ̄ον̄̄ κ̄̄ω̄̄τε̄̄ ᾱ̄ρᾱ̄ῑ̄ / τε̄̄τ̄̄νω̄̄ ε̄̄†β̄̄ῑ̄ ε̄̄δ̄̄ρᾱ̄ς̄̄ τ̄̄ᾱ̄νᾱ̄ρ̄̄χ̄̄η̄̄γ̄̄ τε̄̄ μ̄̄π̄̄ε̄̄ζ̄̄ο̄̄γ̄̄σιᾱ̄ / ᾱ̄γ̄̄μ̄̄ο̄̄γ̄̄ῑ̄ ε̄̄π̄̄τε̄̄γ̄̄β̄̄λ̄̄κε̄̄ ᾱ̄γ̄̄τω̄̄ων̄̄ ᾱ̄ε̄̄ρ̄̄η̄̄ῑ̄ ᾱ̄κ̄̄ω̄̄ῑ̄ (...) ᾱ̄γ̄̄ρ̄̄|ᾱ̄|χ̄̄|† ε̄̄π̄̄|†|ο̄̄γ̄̄σε̄̄τε̄̄...

¹³¹ *Psalm-Book* 156,11: ᾱ̄γ̄̄|ρ̄̄μ̄̄ο̄̄γ̄̄ῑ̄ ε̄̄π̄̄ε̄̄ζ̄̄ο̄̄γ̄̄ῑ̄ ε̄̄π̄̄τ̄̄σε̄̄τε̄̄ π̄̄ρε̄̄φ̄̄ο̄̄γ̄̄ω̄̄μ̄̄. The lion as a symbol of darkness (or hylē) – most probably of Biblical origin – also makes an appearance in the Coptic sources (e.g. *Psalm-Book* 69,20–21; 107,24–25; cf. Lindt, *The Names of Manichaean Mythological Figures*, p. 203). Moreover according to the Manichaean and general Near Eastern astrological tradition, the lion can be paralleled with fire. For another explanation see Martin Schwartz, “From Healer to Hylē: Levantine Iconography as Manichean Mythology,” *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 1 (2006), pp. 145–47.

¹³² Trans. I. Gardner. P. Kell. Copt. 2/C1: 47–48 (Gardner, *Kellis Literary Texts*, p. 66): ε̄̄ο̄̄γ̄̄ρ̄̄ε̄̄ ε̄̄π̄̄ τε̄̄γ̄̄σε̄̄τε̄̄...

¹³³ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 99). *Huyadagmān* VIb,21 (MHP, p. 98; MHA, p. 15): [...ny] (k)[f]’h ’ndr o p(d).[.] (nd)[....](c).[.] / [cy hm]g pwr ’dwr o tn(g)[’w](d) wxs”g.

¹³⁴ *Kephalaia* 31,6–7: π̄̄μ̄̄ᾱ̄ε̄̄†ο̄̄γ̄̄ πε̄̄ πε̄̄φ̄̄ρω̄̄ε̄̄ ε̄̄τρ̄̄ω̄̄ε̄̄ π̄̄τ̄̄ε̄̄ νο̄̄γ̄̄/π̄̄ε̄̄ψ̄̄ π̄̄β̄̄ᾱ̄η̄̄πε̄̄ ε̄̄γ̄̄η̄̄ᾱ̄ο̄̄γ̄̄ᾱ̄τ̄̄ε̄̄φ̄̄ ᾱ̄β̄̄ᾱ̄ ε̄̄π̄̄ τ̄̄σε̄̄τε̄̄.

¹³⁵ Trans. L.V. Clark (“The Manichean Turkic *Pothi-Book*,” p. 186/175). D 260,5 V 5 (ibid., 172/line 175): ya[l]mayu turur tamu-t[un] o[zt]ilar.

¹³⁶ Trans. M. Boyce (SPAH, p. 442). M507 R 1–2 (SPAH, p. 441; RMMP: am, p. 96): dyw (d)w[r](c)yh[r] [...] ’w(d) cyhrg oo ... h’wyd wyg’(n)[yd]...

And [she [Āz: G.K.] placed] greed and lust in [the middle [of the body: G.K.], imitatin[g the Call and the] Answer[and raging fire was the same as the Column of Glory].¹³⁷

The Dark Tree is [Greed]. And its trunk is the Great Fire.¹³⁸

The first hunter [of Darkness: G.K.] is the King of they who belong to the darkness, who hunted after the living soul with his net at the beginning of the worlds. His net is his fire and his lust...¹³⁹

And from all sides it is clothed in fierce anger. And fully installed are (there) the blaze and the flame and the merciless fire. And those who are dwelling there are merciless demons.¹⁴⁰

In the eulogy portion of the *Traité*, the Great Saint figures as a skilful and wise captain on the vast sea (TR.325: *juhāi qiaozhi chuanshi* 巨海巧智船師), and just after this appellation he is named as the merciful helping hand for those who suffer in the pit of fire (TR.325: *huokeng ci-bei jiushou* 火坑慈悲救手). The pit is associated with fire not only in the *Traité* (TR.325), but also in the *Hymnscroll*. These instances, however, refer to the mixture of the two principles and the state of the mixed universe that the suffering light-soul wishes to leave.

H.35. We only wish that Jesus would send down his mercy to free us from the bonds of demons. Presently we reside in the pit of fire; lead us quickly and give us peace in the pure land!¹⁴¹

Monsters, Demons, Beasts

The Land of Darkness and the subaquatic world associated with it abound in various types of monsters and beasts: *makaras* and *rākṣasas*, venomous insects and snakes, and so forth (number 4, above). These monsters also appear as the representatives of Darkness and enemies of the soul in other contexts.

H.49–50. All dependants of the ignorant body of flesh, together with those who are in the gloomy pits, the demonic nature that obstructs inside and outside, always harming our pure body. H.50. All the evil beasts beyond all comparison, all the unclassifiable

¹³⁷ M240/R/5–6 (Sundermann, *Der Sermon vom Licht-Nous*, pp. 62–63): 'wd](°)z 'wd 'wrjwg (p)[d *m̄dy'n nš'st] / [pd *xrwštg u] (pdw')xtg (n)[yš'n...

¹³⁸ M312/R/3–4 (ibid., pp. 74–75): d'lwg t'ryg / [°z](°) '(w)š tn 'dwr wzrg.

¹³⁹ *Kephalaia* 29,18–21: πυαρπ πβερνβ πε προ / π̄ναλκεκε πεταϕβωρβ ατψγχη ετανε γε πεϕυνε / ε̄π̄ ταρχη π̄ικοςμος ... πεϕυνε πε τεϕε/τε μ̄π̄ τεϕεν̄θγ̄μα.

¹⁴⁰ T II K 178 R 3–8 (MHA, p. 26): [rt](y) cnn wyspn'cw kyr'n / [n]γwst'kw prw tryw yp'kw oo rty / pwrny pt[š](p)rt'kw xcy xw swc'kh / ZY prδ'w ZY pw z'rcn'wkw ''tr oo oo / rty 'skw'yn'y-ty ky ZY wr skw'n(t) / pw z-'rc'nw(ktw δy)wt xnt.

¹⁴¹ 唯願夷數降慈悲·解我離諸魔鬼縛·現今處在火坑中·速引令安清淨地。

poisonous snakes, ...¹⁴²

H.65. We are the light-sheep of the Great Saint, who shed tears, cry and complain: the wolves and the other wild beasts abruptly snatched us from the good light-flock.¹⁴³

TR.43-48. The five light-bodies were fettered and suffered like this, they forgot their original nature, as if they were mad or drunken. They were in a state similar to this: if there was a man who wove a basket from snakes with their heads all inside, spitting venom everywhere. He took another man whom he hung inside with his head downward. This man would be covered by venom, and as he was upside down, his mind would be confused, he would not even have time to think of his parents, relatives and his former happiness. Now the five light-natures, fettered by the demons in the body of flesh, suffering day and night, were just like this.¹⁴⁴

TR.52-55. When the Envoy of Light appears in the world, he teaches and converts the sentient beings, thus freeing them from suffering. First he sends down the wonderful sound of Law through the gates of ears; next he enters the old habitation and with the great, wonderful spell he fastens all the poisonous snakes and wild beasts so that they could not move. Next he takes the axe of wisdom and fells the poisonous trees, removes their trunks and stumps and also the soiled grass. He purifies and adorns the palace, placing there the throne of Law, and takes the seat.¹⁴⁵

In the Coptic *Kephalaia* there are several references to marine monsters: one of them consists of fire and lust [I14,3-I15,4], the other is the sea-giant (I36,23-26). Similarly, other non-Chinese sources refer to monsters which are associated with water or fire.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² 无知肉身諸眷屬，併是幽邃坑中子。內外壅塞諸魔性，常時害我清淨軀。一切惡獸无能比，一切毒蛇何能類。

¹⁴³ 我是大聖明羔子，垂淚含啼訴[訢]冤屈。卒被豺狼諸猛獸，劫我離善光明牧。

¹⁴⁴ 其五明身，既被如是苦切禁縛，廢忘本心，如狂，如醉。猶如有人以眾毒蛇編之為籠，頭皆在內，吐毒縱橫；復取一人倒懸於內，其人爾時為毒所逼，及以倒懸，心意迷錯，無暇思惟父母親戚及本歡樂。今五明性在穴身中為魔囚縛，晝夜受苦，亦復如是。

¹⁴⁵ 若有明使出興於世，教化眾生，令脫諸苦。先從耳門，降妙法音；後入故宅，持大神呪，禁眾毒蛇及諸惡獸，不令自在；復齋智斧，斬伐毒樹，除去株机，并餘穢草。並令清淨，嚴飾宮殿，敷置法座而乃坐之。

¹⁴⁶ The description of the world-sea (sm'wtry, Sk.: *samudra*) which appears among the Sogdian parables seems to symbolize the opposite of the image treated here, nevertheless the figures of beasts, monsters and demons are still present in it (Sundermann, *Ein manichäisch-soghdisches Parabelbuch*, p. 21). It is to be noted, however, that this is basically a Buddhist motif, not a Manichaean one (Werner Sundermann, "Eine buddhistische Allegorie in manichäischer Überlieferung," in R.E. Emmerick and D. Weber, eds., *Corolla Iranica. Papers in Honour of Prof. Dr. David Neil MacKenzie on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday on April 8th, 1991* [Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1991], pp. 198-206).

world with the Buddhist symbol of Mount Sumeru (also appearing in Manichaean texts). Mount Sumeru is surrounded by an island (meaning continents) on which various mythological scenes are depicted. The whole island seems to float on a dark sea. At four points of the sea, one can discern the heads of three monsters, twelve heads altogether. The most conspicuous feature of these sea monsters is the fire which comes out of their mouths. This new piece of evidence unexpectedly corroborated my previous interpretation.

The *mojie* (*makara*) mentioned in H. 19 is worth analyzing independently, as it appears directly after the poisoned sea of the carnal body. The text, moreover, links it with the motif of sinking ships.

H. 19. Now we sincerely implore and supplicate that we should be removed from the poisoned fire-sea of the body of flesh, / its tossing waves are boiling and bubbling ceaselessly, the *makaras* surface and submerge to swallow (our) vessel.¹⁵⁵

Mojie 魔竭 is, as seen above, a Chinese transcription of the Sanskrit *makara*, which denotes an aquatic monster that often threatens maritime merchants. Aside from eight examples in the whole Buddhist Canon, this word is basically always written with another *mo* character (摩). The scribe of the *Hymnscroll* might have had two reasons to use “魔”: first, to avoid association with Mānī (Moni 摩尼), whose standard name, though not Mangni 忙你 (as used in the *Hymnscroll*), contains this character; secondly, 魔, signifying anything demonic (Māra), is obviously much more suitable for the negative meaning of the *makara* figure. In his *Yiqie jing yinyi* 一切經音義, compiled in 810, Huilin 慧琳 defines the *makara* as follows: “*Mojie* [*makara*] is a Sanskrit word; it denotes a huge fish in the sea which swallows all aquatic creatures and swallows the boats and the ships.”¹⁵⁶ According to a Buddhist legend, well-known in the Tang era, and retold, for example, in the famous *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 compiled by Dao Shi 道世 in 668, the triple repetition of Buddha’s name once saved a ship of merchants from the *makara*.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ 我今懇切求哀請，願離肉身毒火海。騰波沸涌無暫停，魔竭出入吞船舫。

¹⁵⁶ T. 54.2128: 577A.24: 摩竭者，梵語也。海中大魚吞啗一切諸水族類及吞船舶者。It is interesting to see that the motif of a *makara* destroying a ship laden with treasure was already present in the *Mahābhārata* (J. Ph. Vogel, “Errors in Sanskrit Dictionaries,” *BSOAS* 20.1/3 [1957], pp. 563–64 [pp. 561–67]).

¹⁵⁷ Though it most probably had no role in the choice of the word, it is still interesting to note that one of the chief characteristics of *makara* is its hybrid nature (crocodile, elephant, rhinoceros, dolphin, sometimes other animals) (Gail H. Sutherland. *The Development of the yakṣa in Hinduism and Buddhism* [Albany: SUNY Press, 1991], p. 35; Filippo Salviati, “The “Fishdragon”: The Makara Motif in Chinese Art and Architectural Decoration,” *Environmental Design: Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre* 1–2 [1997–99], pp. 238–51), which is a salient feature of the Land of Darkness, and its king (e.g. *Kephalaia*

The *Sūtra of Great Compassion* says: “Buddha said to Ānanda: ‘... Once an influential merchant travelled with other merchants, and a *makara* wanted to swallow their ship. They called “*Namo Buddhāya*” thrice and were all saved from the peril.’”¹⁵⁸

In the Manichaean *Hymnscroll* (H.19), the supplication for the removal of *makaras* who want to swallow the ship probably evoked this story and the similar “rescue-narratives”, especially those associated with Guanyin, which were extremely popular in Tang times.¹⁵⁹

Tossing Waves

The negative associations connected with the image of the sea derive from the fact that according to the Manichaean imagination the sea produces huge and perilous waves (see list, number 5), partly caused by the monsters below, partly by the storms, thus travellers can never feel safe: they have no solid ground under their feet, so they are like wanderers whose safe home lies in another world (H.249, H.251, H.260: *liulang* 流浪).

H.249. We also tell you, beneficent light-brothers: select the wonderful (light-)bodies consciously and thoughtfully, you should be brave and wise captains of the ships, who carry over these wave-tossed other-worldly sons.¹⁶⁰

H.251. Our noble race has been tossed by the waves for so many years, quickly return them to their original home, to the place of happiness!¹⁶¹

H.260. As for the wave-tossed, otherworldly, one-morning guests [the elect], invite and gratify them, the adorned monasteries should be always pure, you should industriously handle the clothes and the food, thus escaping the sea in pairs.¹⁶²

30,34–31,2; Klimkeit, “The Fair Form,” p. 157). To mention yet another coincidence, in India *makara* equates with the constellation Capricorn, which in the Manichaean system belongs to the dark element/world of Darkness (*Kephalaia* 167,29–31), thus – with the Scorpion-snake – it is the darkest even among the dark elements.

¹⁵⁸ T. 53.2122: 433C.29–434A.03; 又大慈經云: 佛告阿難: ... 去有大商主, 將諸商人爲摩竭大魚欲來吞舟。由三稱南無佛名, 並皆免難。 See e.g. *Dabei jing* 大悲經 T. 12.380: 957c; *Dazhi du lun* 大智度論 T. 25.1509: 109A; *Fanyi mingyi ji* 翻譯名義集 T. 54.2131: 1091B.

¹⁵⁹ On the various monster figures in Chinese Manichaica and the Guanyin chapter of the *Lotus-sūtra*, see Kósa Gábor, “Buddhist Monsters in the Chinese Manichaean *Hymnscroll*,” in I. Beller-Hahn and Zs. Rajkai, eds., *Frontiers and Boundaries of China* (forthcoming).

¹⁶⁰ 復告善業明兄弟, 用心思惟詮妙身, 各作勇健智舵主, 渡此流浪他鄉子。

¹⁶¹ 貴族流浪已多年, 速送本鄉安樂處。

¹⁶² 流浪他鄉一朝客, 既能延請令歡喜。庄嚴寺舍恒清淨, 勤辦衣糧雙出海。

Ships and Treasure

As is evident from V. Arnold-Döben's analysis, the motif of ships carrying treasure and being menaced by waves and monsters is widespread in Manichaeism.¹⁷² This motif is also connected with the Sea of Fire in the Chinese sources as monsters swallow ships and sink treasure and merchants (as above). These elements are also described in other parts of the Chinese Manichaica.

TR.325. [The Great Saint] is also a skilful and wise captain on the vast sea....¹⁷³

H.77. Increase our memory in every hour, remove the demon-mouthing which are able to swallow, if you remove the demon-mouthing which are able to swallow, we will forever be remote from the ... of the evil-doing Demon(ess) of Greed.¹⁷⁴

H.250. These are the precious treasures of the Light-honoured One, all of you should use the ship of your body to get them out from the sea, diligently heal the tormented ones with wounds and boils, for long have they been sad and waiting for rescue and custody.¹⁷⁵

H.252. The upright sons of Light with perfect forms, quickly pull out [the light-elements] from the storehouse of greed and desire, search for precious treasure in the deep sea of suffering, and hasten to offer [them] to the Pure King of Nirvāṇa.¹⁷⁶

The motif of merchants' seeking or carrying treasure on the sea which is full of enemies is based on the archetypal image of the First Man after the attack of Darkness.¹⁷⁷ This primeval event repeats itself in the middle period of the cosmogony until it ceases to happen in the final era.

I know not where the Son of Evil saw / it, he took thieves and sent them to it (?), the thieves poured upon the ship, they drew it out into the middle of the / sea, they wounded its helmsmen, they

ὄλην καλεῖ." (See André Villey, *Alexandre de Lycopolis: Contre la doctrine de Mani*, Sources Gnostiques et Manichéennes 2 [Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1985], pp. 58, 128–33.)

¹⁷² Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus*, pp. 63–70. On the symbolism of ships and captains see also Sundermann 1995; Rui Chuanming 芮传明, "Monijiao 'chuan' yu 'chuanzhu' kaoshi 摩尼教船与船主考释," *Ou-Ya xuekan* 欧亚学刊 1.12 (1999), pp. 223–42; Klimkeit, *Manichaean Art and Calligraphy*, pp. 14–15.

¹⁷³ 亦是巨海巧智 / 船師...

¹⁷⁴ 一切時中增記念，令離能吞諸魔口；令離能吞諸魔口，永隔惡業貪魔口。

¹⁷⁵ 此是明尊珍貴寶，咸用身船般出海，勤鑿被刻苦瘡疣，久已悲哀希救護。

¹⁷⁶ 端正光明具相子，早拔離於貪欲藏； / 幽深苦海尋珍寶，奔奉涅槃清淨王。

¹⁷⁷ Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus*, p. 64.

Nets

The symbol of the net in the Chinese Manichaean texts is usually applied as an instrument of Darkness: that of opposing (“heretical” from the Manichaean point of view) teachings which can trap the pure elect (TR.301-3, H.189, H.229) or the light-nature (H.90).

TR.301-3. His first [characteristic] is that he is good at removing the impurity from the heart, not letting greed and lust [reign], he can make his own light-nature attain constant freedom. He can think of women as empty and false concepts, he is not detained and hindered by beauty and charm. Like a bird which flies high, he cannot perish in a bird-net.¹⁸⁵

H.90. The skilful craftsman who created the body of flesh is the mendacious and evil demon-king, the result was this cave-dwelling, with a net he caught the light-nature and also hid himself [within].¹⁸⁶

H.189. And also always take care of the pure and wonderful community, remove hatred and fury, the soiled and impure teachings, advance courage and do not let them droop, remove the poison of the Demon-King’s inimical net!¹⁸⁷

H.229. Earthly desires should not awake greed, nobody should be caught by the net of the demon-tribe! Let us praise the Light-Nous, he is the dharma-king, he can collect us from the trap of death!¹⁸⁸

Similarly, in non-Chinese texts nets symbolize traps which seduce the pure chosen ones, especially with the temptations of sensual pleasures and the body, at the same time threatening them with rebirth.

The joy of earthly things, the pleasure of the [sensual] forms and the things of the world are like sweet food in which poison is mixed. It [the food] holds the soul in its [the demons’] net.¹⁸⁹

Let us quickly break the nets of the body ...¹⁹⁰

непоуг/аве же нечѣвоу а в а л п ѣ ч л о з а р о т ѣ .

¹⁸⁵ 一者善拔穢 / 心，不令貪慾，使已明性常得自在；能於女人作虛假想，不為諸色之所留難，如鳥高非，不 / 殉羅網。Fei 非 evidently stands for *fei* 飛 here (cf. Léonard Arousseau, “Éd. Chavannes & P. Pelliot, Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine, JA 1911, II: 499-617. (Rev.),” BEFEO 12 (1912), p. 61 [pp. 53-63]). The bird-net metaphor is also used in the *Psalm-Book* (204, 19-21; 70, 10-13; 89, 25-27).

¹⁸⁶ 當造肉身由巧匠，即是虛妄惡魔王，成就如斯窟宅已，網捕明性自潛藏。

¹⁸⁷ 又復常鑿淨妙眾，令離怨嗔濁穢法；勤加勇猛无閑暇，令離魔王犯網毒。

¹⁸⁸ 世界諸欲勿生貪，莫被魔家網所着。堪譽惠明是法王，能收我等離死錯。

¹⁸⁹ Trans. H.-J. Klimkeit (GSR: 56). M77/R/1-3 (RMMP: bh, p. 116): lwg (n)ʼz ʼwd ʼskym ʼwr-jwg ʼwd šhr / ʼyrʼn ʼʼ mʼnhʼg ʼhynd ʼw wxš wxrdyg kw / jhr ʼmyxt nhynjyd gryw (ʼc) hwyn cyng.

¹⁹⁰ *Psalm-Book* 165,9: μαρππωε εἰπὸς ἄλλ μ πῖυνηγ ἰπσωμ[α

May we be ones who untie the net and the snare of birth and death.¹⁹¹

Tied up in death, the net of demons, where my soul is caught...¹⁹²

On the other hand, the net, which is a light-net in *TR*.338, can also play a positive role, as it can save the sufferer from the waves of the Sea of Fire. This double function of the net is remarkably illustrated by the fifth *kephalaion*, which circumstantially relates that both the representatives of the Realm of Light and those of the Land of Darkness make use of nets (ϣηνε) to pursue their goals.¹⁹³

HUNTER OF LIGHT • HIS NET		HUNTER OF DARKNESS • HIS NET	
1 First Man	... and his powers	1 King of Darkness	his fire& lust
2 Third Ambassador	his light [glorious] image	2 Evil counsel	(its powers)
3 Jesus the Splendour	light wisdom	3 Lust	—
4 The great counsel	Living Spirit	4 Darkness, sin & death	erroneous teaching

The light-net (*ming wang* 明網), mentioned in col. 338 of the *Traité*, is consequently not unique in the Manichaean tradition, as both the depiction of the light-form (ϣηνωη [ηογαῖ]ηνε), and the light-wisdom (σοφια ηογαῖ[ηνε]) as nets are convenient, though remote, analogies of the Chinese expression.¹⁹⁴

Rebirth

The Sea of Fire is also associated with *samsāra*, which is the wheel, or roads, of rebirths (see above).¹⁹⁵ A Chinese line and a Manichaean Uyghur analogy both eminently attest that the Sea of Fire, the sea of sufferings, that is *samsāra*, is the exact opposite of *nirvāṇa* in Manichaeism as well:

¹⁹¹ Trans. L.V. Clark (“The Manichean Turkic *Pothi-Book*,” p. 189/line 347). D 260,26/R/1–2 (ibid., p. 176/lines 346–347): tuymaq / ölmeklig toruγ tuzaqıγ šešteč[i] bolalım.

¹⁹² Transl. according to Prods Oktor Skjaervø’s suggestion (“A Triplet of Manichean Middle Iranian Studies,” *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 18 (2003[2008]), p. 152 [pp. 147–66]). M5860/I/8–10 (Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, p. 128, lines 612–14): dyw’n d’mg / mrr ’(my)’stg / qw(m) gy’n gryftg... I thank Prof. Yoshida for this reference.

¹⁹³ *Kephalaia* 28,7–30,7; also 58,9–10.

¹⁹⁴ Fishing in a positive sense (more precisely: abandoning a metaphorical fishing for a literal one) is referred to in the *Psalm-Book* (187,15–17), which also evokes the Biblical context: “The traitor persuaded them to be fishermen as they were at first and to lay down their nets with which they caught men unto life.”

¹⁹⁵ Disagreeing with Giovanni Casadio, “The Manichaean Metempsychosis: Typology and Historical Roots,” in Gernot Wiessner and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, eds., *Studia Manichaica. Internationaler Kongress zum Manichäismus. Bonn, 1989. aug. 6–10* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), p. 111. n.25 [pp. 105–30].

H.85. ... [We must] diligently seek for nirvāṇa to cross the sea of fire.¹⁹⁶

You led them across the sea of suffering, / You brought them near to good nirvāṇa.¹⁹⁷

As fire is often associated with the principle of darkness, which is in turn closely connected to the world of rebirths,¹⁹⁸ it is not surprising that a Parthian fragment correlates fire and rebirth:

And at the coming of Āz three ways of death are revealed, the hidden fire and the visible fire (both leading) to transmigration, and (good) smell and flowers to paradise.¹⁹⁹

Rebirth is a frequent theme in the Chinese Manichaean texts (TR.51-52, H.62, H.95, H.99, H.118, H.99, H.226, H.247, H.272), in certain cases one can also find it associated with sea and water. In the Buddhist expression *shengsi* [*da*]*hai* 生死[大]海, also used by the Manichaeans, *dahai* 大海 [ocean] is the Chinese equivalent of Sanskrit *sāgara* (“ocean”): it expresses a great and endless number (of lives), and is not necessarily related to the ocean itself.²⁰⁰ A similar case is the Chinese equivalent of Parthian *gryw jywndg* (Living Self), *xingming hai* 性命海 which has no marine association (H.12, H.73, H.224, H.331).²⁰¹ Despite these facts, in the case of another frequently used, analogous Buddhist expression (“the flow of birth and death, *shengsi liu* 生死流), the aquatic nature cannot be denied. Both the “sea of birth and death” (TR.48, H.52, Ch 174 V: *shengsi hai* 生死海), and “the flow of birth and death” (H.74: *shengsi liu* 生死流) appear in the Chinese Manichaean texts.²⁰²

¹⁹⁶ 勤求涅槃超火海。

¹⁹⁷ Trans. L. V. Clark (“The Manichean Turkic *Pothi-Book*,” p. 182). U 87 V 1-2 (Jens Wilkens, “Musings on the Manichaean ‘pothi’ Book,” *Nairiku Ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 23 [2008], p. 215 [pp. 209-31]): “[ām]gāklig taloytn kəcürtünüz / ā[d]g[ü] nirvankah yakın elttinüz.” A similar, though less Buddhicized fragment contrasts rebirth (‘jwn), the sufferings of hell with the Paradise of Light (M7 II R i 25-30; GSR: 48).

¹⁹⁸ *Kephalaia* (21,28-31) for example calls it one of the members of the Evil Tree.

¹⁹⁹ Trans. W. Sundermann (“The Zoroastrian and the Manichaean Demon Āz,” pp. 335-36). M5750/V/i/4-12 (ibid., pp. 335): ’wd pd ’mdyšnyh ‘y ’z šh r’h ‘y mrg pyd’g bwd oo ’dwr ‘y (n)hwftg w ’dwr ‘yg ’šq’rg ’w wrdyšn oo w bwy ’wd ‘sprhmg’n ’w whyšt.

²⁰⁰ Hubert Durt, “Daikai,” in Paul Demiéville, ed., *Hōbōgin: Dictionnaire encyclopédique du bouddhisme d’après les sources chinoises et japonaises. Septième volume: Daijō – Daishi* (Paris and Kyōto, 1994), p. 817 [pp. 817-33].

²⁰¹ See Waldschmidt-Lentz, “Die Stellung Jesu im Manichäismus,” p. 74; Bryder, *The Chinese Transformation of Manichaeism*, p. 69; cf. Victor M. Mair, review of Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*, and Bryder, *The Chinese Transformation of Manichaeism* (TP 73 [1987], p. 320 [pp. 313-24]).

²⁰² Among others, the following elements might have contributed to the formation of these related notions: the image of the continuous undulation of the sea resembles the notion of impermanence (in Chinese: death), and the fact that both in terms of men and fish, the change of substance results in the change between life and death.

TR.48–49. Next the Pure Wind made two light-ships which carry over the good sons from the sea of birth and death to their original realm, thus making light-nature happy forever.²⁰³

H.52. The finite and the infinite, the body and the soul, how long have they been submerged and wounded in the sea of birth and death?²⁰⁴

H.74. [Your] jewels are perfect, the leaves of mercy, sweet-dew and ever-fresh, they never wither, those who eat from it can cut the flow of birth and death forever, your fragrance fills the world.²⁰⁵

H.406–8. This-and-this person has left his body of flesh, his deeds were not perfect, thus we are afraid that he will sink in the sea of sufferings. We only wish that the two great luminaries, the fivefold law-body, the pure teacher-elect with the power of great compassion would rescue that soul, and make him leave the cycle of rebirths, the solidified bodies, and all the hells, the boiling cauldrons and the blaze of furnaces.²⁰⁶

Ch 174 V. To avoid the sea of birth and death of *saṃsāra*...²⁰⁷

Though the expression “Sea of Fire” itself does not appear in Buddhist texts, some conceptual analogies (if the fire of Darkness is the ultimate cause of sufferings) do: the “sea of afflictions” or “flow of afflictions” (*fannao* [da]hai 煩惱[大]海, *fannao liu* 煩惱流), or the “sea of sufferings”, the “flow of sufferings” (*kuhai* 苦海, *kuliu* 苦流) are repeatedly used. In Buddhist sources both notions are often supplemented by the expression of “birth and death”, that is rebirth (*shengsi fannao hai* 生死煩惱海, *shengsi kuhai* 生死苦海). These occurrences are important for the very reason that some of them are also used in Manichaean texts (H.93: 煩惱海; H.252, H.406: 苦海).

Despite the fact that the Syriac (*tašpīkā napšātā*), the Greek (μεταγγισμός)²⁰⁸ and the Coptic (μεταγγισμος)²⁰⁹ expressions refer to

²⁰³ 又復淨風造二明船，於生死海運渡善子，達於本界，令光明性究竟安樂。

²⁰⁴ 有礙無礙諸身性，久已傷沈生死海。

²⁰⁵ 眾寶具足慈悲葉，甘露常鮮不彫果，食者永絕生死流，香氣芬芳周世界！

²⁰⁶ 某乙明性去離肉身，業行不圓，恐沈苦海，唯願二大光明，五分法身，清淨師僧，大慈悲力救拔彼性，令離輪迴，剛強之軀及諸地獄，鑊湯爐炭。

²⁰⁷ 得免輪迴生死海... Gunner B. Mikkelsen, “The Fragments of Chinese Manichaean Texts from the Turfan Region,” in Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst, Simone-Christiane Raschmann, Jens Wilkens, Marianne Yaldiz, and Peter Zieme, eds., *Turfan Revisited: The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004), p. 217 [pp. 213–20].

²⁰⁸ E.g. *Panarion* 66,55; K. Holl, ed., *Epiphanius (Ancoratus und Panarion), III. Panarion contra omnes haereses*, 65–80. *De Fide*. (GCS 37.) (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1933): “He [Mānī] professes that souls flow from one body to another” [μεταγγισμούς δὲ ψυχῶν διηγείται ἀπὸ σωμάτων εἰς σώματα].

²⁰⁹ See Sarah Clackson, Erica Hunter, Samuel N. C. Lieu, and Mark Vermes, eds., *Diction-*

“pouring over”, “transfusion” (the soul from one body to another, from one vessel to another),²¹⁰ one finds in the texts themselves hardly any reference to aquatic concepts behind the expressions.²¹¹ On the other hand, in connection with the Parthian words *z'dmwrđ* (Sogd.: *z'δmwrd*) and *'jwn*, which are equivalent to Chinese *shengsi* 生死, the notion of waves and depth does appear.²¹²

Who will lead me beyond rebirths and free me from (them) all – /
and from all the waves in which there is no rest?²¹³

Thou wast held back within the abyss, where all is turmoil; thou
wast made captive (?) in every place. / Thou wast suspended amid
all rebirths. Thou hast suffered ravage amid all cities.²¹⁴

Although the rolling sea might be an image of the difficulties of earthly life and the sufferings of the soul in the body,²¹⁵ still it equally or even more prominently evokes the notion of the cycle of rebirths which is ultimately the root of sufferings for the light-elements.²¹⁶ This association, as the sources suggest, is an Eastern Manichaean (Parthian, Chinese) development, in all probability inspired by the Buddhist terminology.

Deliverance

For the Chinese Manichaeans, as seen from *H.406–8*, rebirth was nearly equal with eternal hell.²¹⁷ However, it should also be added that this utmost fear of rebirth derives not only from anxious care for the particular individual, but for the light-nature, that is, the Living Soul, which is thus forced to proceed to new bodily forms,²¹⁸ and is thus exposed to various kinds of suffering. The wish to terminate the

ary of Manichaean Texts. Vol. 1. Texts from the Roman Empire: Texts in Syriac, Greek, Coptic and Latin (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), p. 75.

²¹⁰ A. V. Williams Jackson, “The Doctrine of Metempsychosis in Manichaeism,” *JAOS* 45 (1925), p. 256 [pp. 246–68].

²¹¹ See Casadio, “The Manichaean Metempsychosis”.

²¹² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 110.

²¹³ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP, p. 83). *Huyadagmān* IVa,5 (MHP, p. 82): *kym 'jwn 'zw'y'ḥ o 'wṭ 'c hrwyn '[b](d)'c' / 'wṭ 'c hrwyn wrm o kw 'ngwn ny 'st.*

²¹⁴ Trans. M. Boyce (MHP: 167). *Angad rōšnān* VIIa,13–14 (MHP: 166): *'wṭ nhxt 'yy '[w] jfr o cy hrwyn 'šwb / 'wṭ kyrd 'yy [wrd]g o pd hrwyn wy'g'n / 'wṭ 'gws(t'yy) o pd hrwyn 'jwn / w (bwd 'y)y w(y)gndg o p(d) hr(w)yn šhryst'n.*

²¹⁵ Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus*, pp. 63, 68; Klimkeit, “The Fair Form,” p. 163.

²¹⁶ Also cf. Klimkeit, *Manichaean Art and Calligraphy*, p. 14.

²¹⁷ Cf. *Kephalaia* 234,24–236,6; 249,31–251,25, also see *al-Fihrist* (Flügel, *Mani*, p. 71,9–12; Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadim*, p. 796); T II D 173b,2 (GSR: 326–27).

²¹⁸ Cf. BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body*, p. 223.

torment of light explains why it must be freed from all forms as soon as possible.

T II T 1319–Ch. 258a. He always rescues the light-nature, he removes them from all births and deaths: from the fields and the sand deserts, from the rivers and the seas, from the springs and sources, from the grass and the trees, and the seedlings and fruits, from the Four Courtyards and the Three Ditches, he pulls all of them out from land and water.²¹⁹

[You save the So]ul, the Living / from the cycle of rebirths, / from the mountains and the [valleys / the ?] and the deserts, / from the r[ivers and] springs, from the t[rees and] flowers, the walls and tombs, / from the earths of dry and wet.²²⁰

The rough sea with tossing waves as the metaphor of rebirth is also a fitting image to represent the liberation of the individual or the suffering Living Soul from it (see the Chinese terms, above, in the list of nine motifs).

TR.48–49. Next the Pure Wind made two light-ships which carry over the good sons from the sea of birth and death to their original realm, thus making light-nature happy forever.

H.250. These are the precious treasures of the Light-honoured One, all of you should use the ship of your body to get them out from the sea, diligently heal the tormented ones with wounds and boils, for long have they been waiting for rescue and custody.

H.252. The upright sons of Light with perfect forms, quickly pull out (the light-elements) from the storehouse of greed and desire, search for precious treasures in the deep sea of suffering, and hasten to offer (them) to the Pure King of Nirvāṇa.

H.260. The wave-tossed, otherwordly, one-morning guests [the elects], invite and gratify them, the adorned monasteries should be always pure, you should industriously handle the clothes and the food, thus escaping the sea in pairs.

As mentioned above, the archetypal image of this deliverance is the leading up of the First Man from the Land of Darkness, while other

²¹⁹ 常救諸明性 / 離諸生死 / 於諸山谷中 / 原野及砂磧 / 江海及泉源 / 卉木兼苗實 / 四院及三災 / 水陸皆抽出。(Mikkelsen, “The Fragments of Chinese Manichaean Texts”, p. 216).

²²⁰ M8287 – So 102000/1(5) (Sundermann, “Iranian Manichaean Texts”, p. 106: [tw bwjyh gy]’n’n / jywndg’n ’c z’dmwrđ oo / [’c] kwf’n ’wṭ [dr’n oo] / [’c ? u] ṣwr’n oo / [’]c rw[d’n’ wd] x’ns’r’n oo / ’c d[’lwg’n u] ’rwr’n oo / ’c prysp’n [’]wd wdr’n oo / ’c hwškbyd ’wṭ xwstbyd [oo]. In addition there is also a less precise Sogdian parallel (So 14411; Sundermann, “Iranian Manichaean Texts,” p. 107).

similar descriptions, as exemplified by the following non-Chinese descriptions, also reflect the marine imagery.

He [the Living Spirit: G.K.] brought the First Man up from the contest, the way a pearl is [brought] up from the sea.²²¹

Who shall free me from every ... (from) blazing fire and the distress of [destruction].²²²

Lo, the fight I have finished, lo my ship I have brought to the shore, / no storm has overwhelmed it, no wave has seized it.²²³

I passed above the sea... / the traps of death...²²⁴

Deliverance from the Sea of Fire and thus from the cycle of rebirth appears in hymns addressed to Jesus (H.26, H.52, H.74), of which we also have some non-Chinese fragments.

Lord Jesus, save my soul from this birth-death [rebirth], save my soul from this birth-death [rebirth]!²²⁵

Jesus—Maiden of Light, Mār Mani, Jesus—Maiden of Light, Mār Mani, have [mercy] upon me, oh merciful Bringer of Light! Redeem my soul from this cycle of rebirth, redeem my soul from [this] cycle of rebirth...²²⁶

In several cases, rescue from the sea can be connected to Jesus, which in the Western sources at least can be explained by the Biblical references to his stilling the storm and the sea (Matthew 8,23–27, Mark 4,35–41, Luke 8,22–25).

In the midst of the sea, Jesus, guide me. / Do not abandon us that the waves may not seize us. / When I utter thy name over the sea, it stills its waves.²²⁷

²²¹ *Kephalaia* 85,24–25: αϕῆ πψαρπ πρωμε αϑρηῆ αβαλ μπαρων τρε π/[ο]γ'μαργαριτнс εγ[ῆτῆ] αϑρηῆ αβαλ πθαλασσα.

²²² Trans. M. Boyce (MHP, p. 133). *Angad rōšnān* IIIb,12 (MHP, p. 132): kym 'bd'cynddy o 'c hrw [... ..] / wxšyndg 'dwr o 'wd h(w) tning (')[bn's].

²²³ *Psalm-Book* 63,13–14: εις παρων αἰχακῆ αβαλ εις παχαῖ αἰῆτῆ ἀγκρο / ἡπε βασμε περσε αραϕ ἡπε ραῖμε τωρῆ ἡμαϕ.

²²⁴ *Psalm-Book* 69,23–24: αἰρπσανтπε ἡтθαλασσα ... / ἡπαψϕ ἡπμογ ...

²²⁵ M311/V/12–16 (Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, p. 142): yyšw / xwd'y' bwj' mn rw'n 'c 'ymy z'dmwrđ' / bwj mn rw'n 'c 'ym / z'dmwrđ.

²²⁶ M38/V/7–13 (RMMP: dz, p. 196): yyšw'knygrwšn(') / m'rw m'ny' yyšw'knygrwšn / m'rw m'n(y') tw pd mn qr <'xšd> / '(x)šd'g rwšn'gr' bwj'h / mn 'rw'n' cymyy z'dmwrđ' / bwj'h mn 'rw'n' 'cy(m)[y] / z'd[m](w)rd... Cf. Majella Franzmann, *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2003), p. 44.

²²⁷ *Psalm-Book* 151,8–10: ειρῆтманте ἡπιαμ ἡῆ αριρῆμε ἡμαῖ / μπωκρατοτκ αβαλ πῆων xe ne ηριμεγε τωρῆ ἡμαη / ειψατεογο πεκρεη αηπιαμ ψαϕερκο πεϑριμ[ε]γε.

Thou madest the cross a ship for thyself, thou wast the sailor on it.²²⁸

... the cross was a ship, the souls were passengers.²²⁹

In Manichaeism the suffering of Jesus is transposed to the suffering of the universal Living Soul, the Cross of Light, also called Jesus *patibilis* (*Contra Faustum* XX,2), which is precisely why rescue from these continuous sufferings might be connected to his other aspect, Jesus the Splendor. The first two hymns of the *Hymnscroll*, addressed to Jesus (*Zan Yīshu wen*; H.07–H.44, H.45–H.82) are to a large extent based on the chains of concepts discussed here (darkness, demons, monsters, body, suffering, desire, rebirth, and sea of fire). In addition to the hymns already analyzed, the following ones also contain references to this imagery: H.33, H.37, H.38, H.39, H.40, H.49, H.50, H.52, H.52, H.62, H.63. Similarly, the first, sixth, and seventh parts of the *Angad rōšnān* also include the same set of images. Though this Parthian hymn-cycle does not contain any overt reference to the figure of Jesus, W. Lentz hypothesized that he is the ultimate addressee of the *Angad rōšnān*.²³⁰

A Summary of the Results

The chart below summarizes the majority of the associations cited in this article. A lack of associations (see the small circles) means that in the data available to me I could not find an explicit example: this, however, does not necessarily mean that no such reference exists or will one day be found.

The chart reveals that the majority of the Chinese images and associations can also be found in the Parthian Manichaean scriptures, which reinforces the argument for a strong relationship and interdependence. Interestingly, there are several Coptic parallels, which might indicate that some of these images go back to early periods of Manichaean religious history. Although the expression “Sea of Fire” appears only in the Chinese and the Parthian writings, the chart also shows that the majority of the associations (body, Darkness, waves, pits, poison) appear in connection with either fire or sea in other sources as well, thus it is the matrix of associations *per se* that becomes important.

²²⁸ *Psalm-Book* 123,33: α]κῤῥῖσταγῤῥοσ νεκ ἦξαι ακῤῥῖεεϥ ἀραϥ.

²²⁹ *Psalm-Book* 123,35: απσταγῤῥοσ ῤῥαι αμψγγχαγϥ ῤῥογῤῥ.

²³⁰ Wolfgang Lentz, “Fünfzig Jahre Arbeit an den iranischen Handschriften der deutschen Turfan-sammlung,” *ZDMG* 106 (1956), p. 18–20 [pp. 1–22].

THE CHINESE MANICHAEAN SEA OF FIRE

	CHINESE	PARTHIAN	SOGDIAN	COPTIC	OTHERS
1. Body–Darkness (Āz)	+	+	+	+	+
2. Body–Darkness–Poison	+	+	+	o	o
3. Darkness–Poisonous springs	+	+	o	+	o
4. Darkness–Pits–Depth	+	+	o	+	+
5. Darkness–Pits–Sea	+	+	+	o	o
6. Fire–Body	+	+	+	+	o
7. Fire–Demons	+	+	+	+	+
8. Fire–Sea, fountains	+	+	o	+	o
9. Sea–Monsters/ demons–Darkness	+	+	o	+	+
10. Sea–Waves	+	+	o	+	o
11. Sea–Monsters–precious ship	+	+	o	+	o
12. Sea–demonic net	+	+	o	o	+
13. Sea–saving net	+	o	o	+	o
14. Sea–rebirth	+	+	o	o	o
15. Sea/fire–Deliverance	+	+	o	+	o
16. Fire–Pit	+	+	+	o	o

(“Others” include Uyghur, Latin, Greek, Arabic and Syriac sources; “Darkness” designates the Land of Darkness and the principle of Darkness.)

All the presently available evidence supports W. Sundermann’s conclusion that both the *Traité* and the hymns of the *Hymnscroll* were translated from a Parthian original.²³¹ The Chinese transcription of Pēsūs in *H.21*, as presented earlier, suggests that Pēsūs was transcribed from a Parthian original. Combining this fact with the shared imagery of the Chinese *Zan Yishu wen* and the Parthian *Angad rōšnān*, it seems clear that the first two hymns of the *Hymnscroll* were also translated from a Parthian original, most probably akin to the *Angad rōšnān*. In addition to the common imagery, the Parthian and the Chinese hymns also share their basic setting: after death the believer faces a desolate condition, threatened by the forces of Darkness, and only by the mercy of a Saviour can he escape these intimidations. The following motifs in the *Zan Yishu wen* attest that these two Chinese hymns ultimately refer to the condition experienced by the believer after his/her death: Jesus as the Righteous Judge (*H.48*), confession and forgiving sins (*H.11*, *H.27–29*, *H.44*, *H.46*, *H.48*, *H.54*, *H.64*), symbolic gifts of paradise (*H.30*), eliminating rebirth (*H.33*, *H.40*, *H.52*, *H.55*, *H.62*, *H.74*), leading to Paradise (*H.35*, *H.40–1*, *H.52*).

²³¹ Sundermann, “Iranian Manichaean Texts,” pp. 104, 118.

Despite the fact that the exact equivalent of the Chinese expression appears only in the *Angad rōšnān*, and thus historically speaking the Chinese hymn might go directly back to a Parthian original, the motifs discussed above form a general conceptual matrix of images: the Land of Darkness is an unfathomably deep, poisonous, aquatic pit (a sea, an ocean), while the creatures in it (demons, monsters, beasts) are fiery in nature (because of their greed and lust), thus together they form the Sea of Fire which is the place of suffering and rebirth for the Light, the Living Soul, and consequently also for the individual soul. Nevertheless, it was only in the Chinese sources that, probably under Buddhist influence, the image of a Sea of Fire emerged explicitly from this set of related concepts.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study I have explored the religious connotations of the paradoxical term Sea of Fire, both in Chinese and non-Chinese sources. It should be stressed that the Chinese occurrence of the compound is most probably traceable to the original Parthian one, as it does appear once in the *Angad rōšnān*. However, in this essay I have tried to sketch the religious notions and associations surrounding it, and not the exact historical roots of the particular lexic compound. The comparative textual analysis here basically aimed at clarifying the exact meaning of the compound and demonstrating the presence of its associated notions in the entire corpus of Manichaeism, from the Coptic sources to the Middle Iranian and Chinese ones. The starting point was always one of the associated Chinese notions, for which I searched for non-Chinese analogies.

Firstly, it should be stressed that the metaphorical use of sea (*hai* 海) must be distinguished from its neutral meaning, used in listing natural phenomena, as well as from its use to refer to “a huge amount” and “inexhaustibility”, both of which appear in the *Traité* itself. In the present study it is always the first, metaphorical usage that is the object of analysis.

The motif of *huohai* 火海 is clearly related to the Land of Darkness. Some Chinese and non-Chinese sources depict the Land of Darkness as aquatic, and at the same time refer to the fiery nature of the creatures within. The aquatic land of Darkness is frequently linked with the figures of monsters, beasts and demons. More specifically, the unique orthography of the word *makara* (*mojie* 魔竭) and the complex motives for its use were investigated. Another motif, that of deep, dark pits, is

also related to this general image. An exact equivalent of the Chinese Sea of Fire has been found in the Parthian *Angad rōšnān* (I, 19). After the analysis of the Chinese and non-Chinese sources, I concluded that the meaning of the compound Sea of Fire is not the self-evident “flaming sea” but a sea populated by the monsters of Darkness, emitting the inner fire of negative forces (for example, lust, passions). This interpretation was unexpectedly reinforced by the discovery of the presently available single complete Manichaean painting which portrays monsters in the sea with fire emanating from their mouth.

The body of flesh, linked with the Sea of Fire in both Chinese and non-Chinese sources, inherently belongs to the Land of Darkness, and is thus characterized by negative attributes, especially those connected with desire. Precisely for this reason the body of flesh is often associated with fire or stormy sea. Both the Chinese and the non-Chinese sources describe the image of the sea as stormy and billowy, which among other things refers to the chaotic movements of the sea, also a fundamental characteristic of the Land of Darkness, and the monsters in it. Chinese sources also correlate *huohai* 火海 with poisons or poisonous nature, a typical feature of the Land of Darkness. Similarly, the motif of dark, poisonous springs is a widespread image in Manichaean usage. The symbol of nets usually has negative associations which link it with the Land of Darkness, nevertheless, the only positive example (“light-net”) in the Chinese scriptures has parallels in the Coptic sources.

Both the Chinese and the non-Chinese texts contain references to the motif of seamen who travel amidst tossing waves and menacing creatures to collect treasure. This treasure is the soul, which derived from the Realm of Light but is now entrapped in the human body devised as a prison by the forces of Darkness. The incarnation and the subsequent sufferings of the soul in the body has its archetypal predecessor in the descent of the First Man into the pits of Darkness and his imprisonment full of sufferings. Leading up the First Man from the Land of Darkness with help from the Realm of Light (Mother of Life, Living Spirit) can be paralleled with bringing the soul-pearls from the depths of the inimical sea to the surface with help from the Light-Envoys and elects. The motifs of treasure/pearls (soul) suffering in the sea (body, Land of Darkness) and the tossing waves (cycle of rebirth) and being saved by the seamen (the elects, light-deities) are also found in the Chinese texts.

In the Chinese sources the notion of rebirth is clearly related to *huohai*, especially to its repeatedly emerging waves, while similar de-

scriptions can be identified in the Parthian Manichaean corpus. It can be surmised that – despite the fact that *huohai* itself does not actually appear in Buddhist texts – Buddhist analogies of the expression (*fannao dahai* 煩惱大海, *shengsi hai*, *shengsi liu*, *kuhai*, some of them also used in Manichaean texts) might have contributed to the formation of this association, as no such link can be found in Western Manichaean texts.

The rescue of the First Man from the abyss is the general archetype of light-soul/treasure being rescued from or carried over the deep and stormy sea. This deliverance from the Sea of Fire is sometimes linked with the figure of Jesus. The first two hymns of the *Hymnscroll* (*Zan Yishu wen*) are fundamentally based on this imagery. This shared imagery in turn offers some reinforcement to the hypothesis advanced by W. Lentz that the *Angad rōšnān* was addressed to Jesus. In addition to the *Zan Yishu wen*, the conceptual matrix connected with the image of fiery sea does make an appearance in several Manichaean texts, most prominently in the *Angad rōšnān* [I, VI, VII]. This correlates remarkably well with the conclusion reached by the Chinese transcription of Pēsūs, and substantiates the claim that the *Zan Yishu wen* was also translated from a Parthian original, thus corroborating W. Sundermann’s hypothesis that Parthian was the dominant source language of Chinese Manichaean texts.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

C	<i>Compendium (Moni guangfo jiaofa yilüe</i> 摩尼光佛教法儀略)
GSR	Klimkeit, trans., <i>Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia</i>
H	<i>Hymnscroll (Moni jiao xiabu zan</i> 摩尼教下部讚)
M	Manichaean; indicating Middle Iranian fragments (usually followed by a number)
MHA	Sundermann, trans., <i>The Manichaean Hymn-cycles Huyadagmān and Angad Rōšnān in Parthian and Sogdian</i>
MHP	Boyce, <i>The Manichaean Hymn-cycles in Parthian</i>
RMMP	Boyce, <i>A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian</i>
SPAH	Boyce, “Some Parthian Abecedarian Hymns”
T	Turfan; indicating mss. housed in Berlin Turfan collection (obtained in four German missions to Turfan, 1902–1914 (indicated as I, II, III or IV))
T.	<i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō</i> 大正新修大藏經
TR	<i>Traité (Bosi jiao canjing</i> 波斯教殘經)