

NAG HAMMADI AND MANICHAEAN STUDIES

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XI.III



EMERGING FROM DARKNESS

STUDIES IN THE RECOVERY OF MANICHAEAN SOURCES

EDITED BY

PAUL MIRECKI

AND

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	i
Emerging from Darkness: Manichaean Studies at the End of the 20th Century Paul Mirecki and Jason BeDuhn	
I. Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter	1
Paul Mirecki, Iain Gardner, and Anthony Alcock	
II. The Tebessa Codex: A Manichaean Treatise on Biblical Exegesis and Church Order.....	33
Jason BeDuhn and Geoffrey Harrison	
III. The Turkic Manichaean Literature	89
Larry Clark	
IV. The Reconstruction of the Manichaean <i>Kephalaia</i>	143
Wolf-Peter Funk	
V. The Manichaean Community at Kellis: A Progress Report.....	161
Iain Gardner	
VI. Identifying the Corpus of Manichaean Art among the Turfan Remains	177
Zsuzsanna Gulácsi	
VII. Manichaean Citations from the <i>Prose Refutations</i> of Ephrem	217
John C. Reeves	
VIII. Marginal Notes on Manichaeism from an Outsider.....	289
Hans-Martin Schenke	

CHAPTER THREE

THE TURKIC MANICHAEAN LITERATURE

Larry Clark

From the viewpoint of world Manichaean studies, the Manichaean texts in Turkic language form part of the surviving heritage of the eastern Manichaean church in Iranian, Turkic, Chinese and "Tokharian" languages. In quantity and coverage, the Turkic texts are secondary to those in the Iranian languages of the church, and yet the Turkic corpus reinforces or complements the Iranian in important respects. Together with the texts in Parthian, Middle Persian and Sogdian languages, they constitute the primary documentation on the form and practices of this religion in Turfan and Dunhuang in the Early Middle Ages. Turkic texts also contain valuable data on the history and culture of the Uygurs who fostered the growth and survival of this religion. For Turkologists, the language of these manuscripts presents many still unresolved challenges in the interpretation of scripts, grammatical description and definition of the standard languages used in this period. Moreover, Manichaeanists know that each page, each scrap, each phrase, in whatever language, is precious, for it may contribute some thread to the damaged tapestry of Manichaean literature.

The Turkic Manichaean texts stem from the most part from the German expeditions to Turfan under Albert Grünwedel and Albert von Le Coq, and today are housed in the Turfanforschung section of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. A small number of texts associated with paintings is preserved at the Museum für Indische Kunst. Beside this basic fond, Turkic Manichaeica may be found in the Stein Collection at the British Library in London, the Pelliot collection at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, at the Institute of Oriental studies in St. Petersburg, in the Otani collection at the Ryukoku University Library in Kyoto, at the Museum of History in Beijing and Turfan Museum, and *in situ* in the partially restored halls at Bezeklik and Beshbalik.

From the outset of study, when F.W.K. Müller identified such texts as Manichaean in content, Estrangelo in script and Turkic in language, this field drew the attention of gifted scholars. Albert von Le Coq, Willy Bang, Annemarie von Gabain and Reşid Rahmeti Arat placed the edition and interpretation of Turkic Manichaean literature on a solid foundation that has never been shaken. In more recent times, Peter Zieme brought to light numerous Turkic texts of great importance and provided the secure editions