

NOTE E DISCUSSIONI

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The Chinese Title of the Manichaean Treatise from Dunhuang*

One of the Dunhuang manuscripts Paul Pelliot brought back to Paris in 1908 turned out to be the second part of a short, one-roll Chinese text entitled *Moni guangfo jiaofayi lüe* 摩尼光佛教法儀略 or, following Haloun and Henning's translation (1952), *The Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light*. The first part was no longer in Dunhuang when Pelliot made his selection of the manuscripts because it had already been taken to London by Sir Aurel Stein.¹ I don't know if Pelliot de-

* This paper was originally written in Italian in early 2000 for a volume in memory of a dear friend and colleague, Aldo Gallotta (1941-1997) (see Forte 2003). Around the same time I was invited to participate in the 'International Conference on Dunhuang Studies. Commemorating the Centenary of the Discovery of Dunhuang', held at the University of Hong Kong, 25-26 July 2000. Since my paper for Aldo Gallotta's volume happened to be on a Dunhuang manuscript, I thought it was a suitable subject for the Conference. I prepared, then, an English version of the paper and presented it at the Conference. Although shortly after the Conference I was asked to send the final version of my paper, I have heard no more about the publication of the volume of the Conference proceedings after April 4, 2002. As my repeated messages were not answered, I assumed that the University of Hong Kong had given up the project of publishing the volume. Consequently, on April 14, 2003 I informed Prof. Fung Kam Wing (Feng Jinrong) 馮錦榮 that I would publish the article elsewhere. This is a slightly modified version of Forte (2003). I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Catherine Ludvik for revising the English text.

¹ The whole text consists of 112 lines in the Taishō edition of the Buddhist Canon (T 54 no. 2141A: 1279c-1281a). The first part (articles 1-4) is at the British Library (Stein no. 3969) in London, while the second (articles 5-6) is at the Bibliothèque nationale (Pelliot no. 3884) in Paris. The London manuscript is carefully researched and translated into English in Haloun – Henning (1952) while the Paris manuscript had been translated into French and annotated by Chavannes – Pelliot (1913: 105-16). Pelliot (1925) noted that the two parts were connected with one another. He also made a French translation of the first two articles and the beginning of article 3 of the London manuscript (Pelliot 1990), and Demiéville later (1990) translated articles 3-4 and added a commentary, most particularly on the two first articles translated by Pelliot. Pelliot's unfinished translation and Demiéville's translation with notes were found among the papers left by Henri-Charles Puech and were remitted to Nahal Tajadod by Michel Tardieu in 1986. They were published for the first time in the 'Annexe' of Tajadod (1990: 255-70), a

parted from Dunhuang with the feeling that he had not left behind any Manichaean texts. In any case, among the documents he did not take with him there was one work (whose title is lost) of considerable importance, both for its size (the manuscript measures 6.20×0.275 m) and its content. It can in fact be defined as the most relevant extant work of Chinese Manichaeism. It is a brilliant and detailed presentation of Manichaean cosmogony and soteriology. Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866-1940), one of the best Chinese scholars of modern times, was the first to take notice of the work, which was among the manuscripts eventually brought to the Peking National Library, following Pelliot's visit to Dunhuang. Luo Zhenyu, however, did not understand its nature. He published it with the awareness that it was a non-Buddhist religious text introduced to China from Persia, but, not knowing which religion it belonged to, he gave the work the provisional title of *Bosijiao canjing* 波斯教殘經 («Remnant of a Text of a Persian Religion»);² Today we know that during the Tang dynasty, until 745, the term *Bosijiao* 波斯教 («Persian Religion») referred to Christianity (Forte 1996a: 353-55), something which Luo Zhenyu could not have known in his time. With the title *Bosijiao canjing* he only wished to express his embarrassment, as stated in his introductory note, for his inability to decide which among the three religions introduced from Persia, *i.e.* Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Manichaeism, the treatise belonged to.³

The nature of the text, however, was immediately evident to Chavannes and Pelliot (1911: 500): «Les quelques milliers de textes ainsi entrés à la Bibliothèque nationale de Pékin ne contiennent bien dans l'ensemble que les *sūtra* bouddhiques auxquels force avait été de renoncer. Il y a cependant au moins une exception: un des textes, rédigé à la manière des *sūtra* bouddhiques, est en réalité un ouvrage manichéen».⁴ The two French scholars declared also that the text could not be defined as fragmentary, but rather as incomplete because only the beginning (where the title was certainly given) is missing. The end was, according to them, intact, but unfortunately the title was not given.⁵ They asked them-

book which otherwise has serious shortcomings (see my review, Forte 1992).

² *Guoxue congkan* 國學叢刊 2, 1911; text reproduced in Chavannes – Pelliot (1911: 617-591) and included in T 54 no. 2141B: 1281a-1286a.

³ *Guoxue congkan* 國學叢刊 2, 1911; see Chavannes – Pelliot (1911: 617) and T 54 no. 2141B: 1281a.

⁴ Around the same time, Haneda Tōru (1882-1955), independently from Chavannes and Pelliot, clearly identified as Manichaean the text published by Luo Zhenyu (Haneda Tōru 1912). Chavannes and Pelliot (1913: 100) remarked: «M. Haneda a bien vu le caractère manichéen du texte 'persan' de la bibliothèque de Pékin; son commentaire est fait très soigneusement, mais, exclusivement basé sur le livre de Flügel et les articles de Schlegel, Chavannes et Devéria, il n'apporte rien qui soit aujourd'hui nouveau pour les orientalistes d'Europe».

⁵ «Le manuscrit est en effet incomplet: le début manque. Mais il ne s'agit pas d'un text fragmentaire. ... la lacune initiale ne doit pas être considérable. La fin du rouleau est intacte; par malchance, le titre n'y a pas été répété» (Chavannes – Pelliot 1911: 501).

selves if it was the Chinese translation of the τὰ Ἀδδου συγγράμματα mentioned by Photius in *Bibliotheca*, no. 85, but they did not pursue this point further: «Pour le moment, allant au plus urgent, nous nous bornerons à traduire ce traité avec un commentaire explicatif, sans insister autrement sur son origine ou sa composition» (*ibid.*: 502).

Traité manichéen was then the provisional title they gave to the Dunhuang Chinese text edited by Luo Zhenyu. This title is still the usual way to refer to the text by authors writing in one of the European languages. In English it is called either *Chinese Manichaean Treatise*, *Manichaean Treatise*, or simply *Chinese Treatise* or *Treatise*. For clarity and in homage to Chavannes and Pelliot, when using a non-Chinese title I prefer to call it by the conventional name they first gave to it, *Traité manichéen*.

A punctuated edition of the text was produced in 1923 by Chen Yuan 陳垣 (1880-1971), who called it *Monijiao canjing yi* 摩尼教殘經一 («Remnant One of a Text of Manichaeism») (Chen Yuan 1923: 531-44; 1980-82: I, 375-92) in order to distinguish it from the other untitled Dunhuang manuscript, which he called *Monijiao canjing er* 摩尼教殘經二 («Remnant Two of a Text of Manichaeism») (Chen Yuan 1923: 545-46; 1980-82: I, 392-97). This title *Monijiao canjing yi* was then used by other Chinese scholars. Considering that this title is more appropriate than the one given by Luo Zhenyu and that there is no need to maintain the specification *yi* (一, «one») because the *Monijiao canjing er* has since been identified as the second part of the *Moni guangfo jiaofayi lüe* of London, when using a Chinese title I would prefer to call the *Traité Manichéen* by the conventional name of *Monijiao canjing* 摩尼教殘經 («Remnant of a Text of Manichaeism»).

In 1928 the text was included in vol. 54 of the Taishō edition of the Buddhist Canon (T 54 no. 2141B: 1281a-1286a). Since the editors based themselves on Luo Zhenyu's edition of 1911, they gave it the same provisional title used by Luo Zhenyu, *Bosijiao canjing*, thus disregarding the more pertinent title given by Chen Yuan in 1923. They also added a punctuation that, it is to be noted, is different from that of Chen Yuan's edition which is generally better. Due to its inclusion in the very widespread and easily accessible Taishō Canon, the vague – and now decidedly misleading – title provisionally given by Luo Zhenyu often obscured the more correct definition by Chen Yuan and unfortunately became standard among Chinese and some European scholars.⁶

Since the real title of the work is unknown, it is unavoidable that different conventional titles should be given to it, considering also that few suggestions have been made so far as to its real Chinese title, namely those advanced by Chen Yuan in 1923, Lin Wushu in 1983 and Peter Bryder in 1985 (see below). I leave aside here the issue of the original text (or texts) at the basis of the Chinese treatise, pointing out only that it was not necessarily a translation from a

⁶ See for example Bryder (1985: 36 ff.).

foreign language and that, in the case that it were so, it was not necessarily the translation from a single work. It might have been in fact an original work composed for the specific purpose of presenting the doctrine to the Chinese audience (above all, the emperor and his court officials who had to decide whether or not the work and its doctrine should be circulated). And it might also be an anthology of passages translated from various works. While the search for such possible original text or texts must be pursued, I would like to limit my attention here to the question of its Chinese title, presenting the opinions of Chen, Lin and Bryder and adding some considerations of my own.

Before presenting their opinions, however, let me introduce some remarks on a Manichaean Chinese text, of which we know only the title, the *Erzong jing* 二宗經 («The Scripture of the Two Principles»).

The Chinese sources clearly show that this scripture was a fundamental text of Chinese Manichaeism. It is the earliest known title of a Manichaean text in Chinese, which, we are informed by the thirteenth century Buddhist author Zhipan 志磐, was officially presented to the Chinese court in 694 by a (or some) Persian *fuduodan* 拂多誕 (Chinese transcription of the term [a]ftādān, meaning *episcopus*).⁷ Another source allows us to deduce that the name of the Persian *fuduodan* was Miwumosi 密烏沒斯 (which was restituted to Mihr-Ormuzd by Pelliot), and tells us that the Buddhist monks were jealous of the *fuduodan* but Empress Wu (r. 690-705) took pleasure in listening to the words of Mihr-Ormuzd and permitted him to explain his scripture (or scriptures).⁸ Although this source is rather late (early 17th century),⁹ it deserves to be given serious consideration because it appears soundly based on reliable ancient sources independent of Zhipan.¹⁰ As to the scripture(s) brought by Mihr-Ormuzd, although the source does not specify its name, it must have been the *Erzong jing* 二宗經 mentioned by Zhipan.

The scripture was so important that Manichaeism itself was defined by Zhipan as «the false religion of the *Erzong jing*» (二宗經偽教). In the early 11th century the *Erzong jing* was incorporated into the Taoist Canon, but it

⁷ *Fozu tongji*, juan 39, p. 370a1-2. Since *fuduodan* is a title, and not a proper name, we do not know if there was only one or more of them.

⁸ The evidence was first presented by Chen Yuan (1923: 234; 1980-82: I, 367). English translation in Chen Yuan (1928: 66). See particularly Pelliot (1923: 203-4). Pelliot remarked that the name Mihr-Ormuzd is «passablement surprenant; Mihr est le soleil, ‘planète’ du dimanche; Ormuzd est Jupiter, ‘planète’ du jeudi. Or on a déjà constaté dans le manichéisme extrême-oriental l’existence de personnages appelés du nom d’une planète ...; mais c’est la première fois qu’on rencontre un nom formé à la fois de ceux de deux planètes» (*ibid.*: 203, n. 6).

⁹ The source in question is the *Min shu* by He Qiaoyuan. The preface by Ye Xianggao is dated 1619.

¹⁰ Pelliot (1923: 203, n. 6) remarked that the elements of the evidence given by He Qiaoyuan «témoignent d’une tradition fort précise et certainement maintenue par des textes écrits», although he had some doubts that Manichaeism had entered China under Gaozong (*ibid.*: 203, n. 5).

was condemned in the Song Code around 1200.¹¹

Chavannes and Pelliot (1913: 133-34) considered the *Sanji jing* 三際經 («Scripture of the Three Times») to be an equally fundamental text of Chinese Manichaeism, which was also incorporated, according to them, into the Taoist Canon in the early 11th century. The *Scripture of the Three Times*, which they clearly distinguished from the *Scripture of the Two Principles*, they considered as translated around the late 8th century by the Nestorian monk Jingjing 景淨 (Adam). Pelliot's position on the two supposed texts had not changed in 1923 when he defined them as «les deux ouvrages manichéens qui ont été le plus répandus en Chine au Moyen Age» (Pelliot 1923: 194, see also 206, n. 2).

At the time when I was writing my two articles on Chinese Manichaeism (Forte 1973), I came across an interesting passage (unknown to Chavannes and Pelliot) among Hong Gua's 洪适 (1117-1184) writings, which clearly indicated that the *Erzong sanji jing* 二宗三際經 was one work and not two. I wrote to Demiéville about this on December 10, 1973, suggesting that the extant *Traité manichéen* might be the *Erzong [sanji] jing* of the Chinese literary sources. I never since found the time to finish the article on Hong Gua's passage I had in mind, but in 1986, I very briefly expressed my opinion on the subject and wrote that the original title of the *Traité manichéen* might be *Erzong sanji jing* (Forte 1986a: 69a; 1986b: 69a). I will deal with the question below. Here, it is important to stress that, rather than thinking of two distinct texts (*Erzong jing* and *Sanji jing*), we should think about a single text called the *Erzong sanji jing* 二宗三際經 («Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times»). If the sources sometimes say only *Erzong jing*, as in the case of Zhipan («the false religion of the *Erzong jing*») mentioned above, it is because the title is abbreviated. The title *Sanji jing* itself never appears independently in the sources within a Manichaean context. We find it, instead, within a Nestorian context, and it seems to me evident that it refers to a Nestorian work, and not to a Manichaean one.¹² The complete title of the work presented in 694 must then have been *Erzong sanji jing*, shortened to *Erzong jing* by Zhipan or by the author of his source.

Quite independently, Lin Wushu 林悟殊 also realized that the *Erzong jing* and the *Sanji jing* were not two separate works. In 1985 he devoted an article to the question, where he based himself especially on the above mentioned passage by Hong Gua in order to prove the non-existence of a Manichaean work named *Sanji jing* independent from the *Erzong sanji jing* (Lin Wushu 1987: 159-67). But he exaggerated when stating (*ibid.*: 162-63) that Chinese and Japanese scholars have all correctly read the title *Erzong sanji* 二宗三際 as re-

¹¹ See Chavannes – Pelliot (1913: texts XLIV, XLVI, XLIX and their commentary).

¹² Instead, as we have seen, Chavannes and Pelliot (1913: 133-34) considered it a Manichaean text and its mention in a Christian context was consequently judged as «inattendue et sûrement injustifiée».

ferring to one single work, while Western scholars from Chavannes and Pelliot on were wrong in splitting the title into two.¹³ For example, it is not true that Chen Yuan understood it correctly in 1923. If Lin Wushu had this impression, it is only because he referred to the 1980 edition of Chen Yuan's works where the original underlining of all the titles and proper names was abolished. A look at the original edition of 1923 would clearly show to Lin that Chen Yuan also, like Chavannes and Pelliot, thought there were two works, as is demonstrated by his separated underlining of *Erzong* and *Sanji* (Chen Yuan 1923: 226).¹⁴ As we shall see below, Chen Yuan's suggestion that the title of the *Traité manichéen* was *Erzong jing* is based on the conviction that the *Sanji jing* was a separate work. In fact, it must not have escaped his attention that the *Traité manichéen* included references only to the Two Principles and none whatsoever to the Three Times.

Samuel Lieu in 1985 also realized that the *Erzong jing* and the *Sanji jing* were not two separate works, probably through the above mentioned passage by Hong Gua that he summarized (Lieu 1985: 227; 1992: 269). However, he never discussed this issue.

Let us turn, then, to the opinions about the nature of the *Scripture of the Two Principle [and Three Times]*.

There is the old hypothesis advanced in 1923 by Chen Yuan in his well-known essay on the introduction of Manichaeism into China (Chen Yuan 1923: 206).¹⁵ Since this part of the essay was published also in English in 1928, I quote from the English:

I do not know, at present, of any existing copy of the *Scripture of the Two Principles*, although I am strongly inclined to regard the mutilated book in the Peking Library as identical with the Scripture in question. Unfortunately, however, both the introductory and the concluding portions of this book are missing. It contains, nevertheless, a very minute exposition of the doctrine of Light and Darkness, and the expression 'Two Principles' occurs twice in the text (Chen Yuan 1928: 63).¹⁶

In 1983, sixty years after Chen Yuan's publication of his study, Lin Wushu

¹³ Among the Western works containing the mistake, Lin Wushu (1987: 159, 166, n. 4) also mentions my article of 1973, p. 225. To be exact, I only quoted there a passage from Chavannes and Pelliot. It is also true, however, that the fact that I did not comment on the opinion of the two French sinologists on this point might be interpreted as if I accepted their view.

¹⁴ The very fact that Chen Yuan put forth his hypothesis demonstrates his conviction that the *Sanji jing* was a separate work. He knew well that only references to the 'Two Principles' were made in the *Traité manichéen* and that no references to the 'Three Times' were to be found there. Drake (1940: 686) bases himself exactly on this point of Chen Yuan in interpreting the text as referring to two different works.

¹⁵ Identical in Chen Yuan (1980-82: I, 333). Chen Yuan's suggestion was remarked by Drake (1940: 647).

¹⁶ The «mutilated book in the Peking Library» obviously refers to the *Traité manichéen*. The expression *erzong* 二宗 is found in T 54 no. 2141B: 1283c14 and 1285a19.

devoted a whole section of an article to the title of the *Traité manichéen* and criticised Chen Yuan's above hypothesis, observing that the fact that there are two occurrences of the expression 'Two Principles' in the text is not a good reason for thinking that the text itself is the *Scripture of the Two Principles*. The Two Principles in fact are the central doctrine of Manichaeism, and hence it is natural that they should be mentioned in any Manichaean text (Lin Wushu 1987: 192-95). According to Lin Wushu, since the *Scripture of the Two Principles* brought from Persia was fundamental for the diffusion of Manichaeism in China, it cannot have been a Manichaean text whatsoever, but must have been a representative work of the Manichaean doctrine. The outstanding position of the text is shown by Chinese literary sources on Manichaeism. Besides, the quotation from the *Shimen zhengtong* 釋門正統 («The Correct Lineage of Buddhism») in *Fozu tongji* 39 «not only puts the *Scripture of the Two Principles* ahead of the other scriptures, but also reveals some concrete contents of this scripture. Such contents do not appear in the present» text from Dunhuang, that is, the *Traité manichéen* (Lin Wushu 1987: 193). Lin Wushu thinks that the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* was none other than the *Šabuhragān* because it did not belong to the canonical Seven Works and because it was a very important representative work introducing to the king of Persia the essentials of Manichaean doctrines, so that he would allow the spread of the doctrine in his kingdom. This was precisely the case in China – Lin Wushu remarks – where the *Scripture of the Two Principle and Three Times* was presented to the Chinese court in 694 for acquiring the right to circulate Manichaean doctrines in China. Since the extant fragments of the *Šabuhragān* are not found in the *Traité manichéen*, Lin insists that this is a further reason still for not accepting Chen Yuan's suggestion (Lin Wushu 1987: 195-96).

Lin Wushu also thinks that (a) the *Traité manichéen* is not an outline of Manichaeism, as it must have been the case for the *Scripture of the Two Principles*, but that it concentrates on the single question of the dual nature of man composed of Light and Darkness; (b) in contrast with the *Šabuhragān*, the *Traité manichéen* does not deal with the «last period» 末世, nor is it possible that this question would have been taken up in the missing part at the beginning. Lin Wushu (1987: 196-97) concludes:

Based on what is stated above we think that the contents of the *Scripture of the Two Principles* mentioned in the Chinese historical works must have consisted of an overall presentation of Manichaean doctrines, very probably deriving from the Middle Old Persian text of the *Šabuhragān*, while the extant *Monjiao canjing yi* 摩尼教殘經一 [i.e. the *Traité manichéen*] is a treatise on a special subject; it is not an overall presentation of Manichaean doctrines and does not derive from the *Šabuhragān*. Hence it cannot be the *Scripture of the Two Principles*.

As to the nature of the *Scripture of the Two Principles [and Three Times]*, Samuel Lieu (1985: 226; 1992: 269) too thinks that it «might have

been a Chinese version of the *Šabuhragān*», but he adds: «Or it might have been an alternative title of the *Compendium* ...». This last title refers, as we have seen, to the *Moni guangfo jiaofayi lüe*.

My impression is that Lin Wushu does not do justice to Chen Yuan when criticising his view that the two occurrences of the expression 'Two Principles' in the *Traité manichéen* are good reason for thinking that the text itself is the *Scripture of the Two Principles*. In reality, the main point of Chen Yuan's suggestion is not so much the fact that the expression 'Two Principles' occurs twice in the text, but rather that the text contains «a very minute exposition of the doctrine of Light and Darkness». Besides, Lin's remark that the *Shimen zhengtong* quoted in *Fozu tongji* 39 «reveals some concrete contents of this scripture» is disputable as it will be seen below in my point (c). Last, it is easy to realize the weakness of Lin's conviction that the *Scripture of the Two Principles* corresponds to the *Šabuhragān*: not only is there no proof for this, but also his reasoning does not take into account the Chinese historical context and audience, which were entirely different from the situation in third-century Persia when the *Šabuhragān* was presented to the king. I suppose that it might not have been so wise to present a simple translation of the *Šabuhragān* to the Chinese ruler as the very first Manichaean text in Chinese, and that there was certainly no lack of Manichaean scholars in late seventh century who could have produced a new presentation of the doctrine especially suited for a different ruler of another country in a completely new historical context.

Having clarified the pointlessness of Lin's criticism, it must be admitted that Chen Yuan's suggestion is not supported in any way by himself.

Samuel Lieu's suggestion that the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* might have been an alternative title of the *Compendium* is hard to accept. The *Scripture* was presented to the Chinese court in 694, while the *Compendium* was translated only in 731.

Since in my above mentioned letter of 1973 to Demiéville and in the article of 1986 I substantially made the same suggestion as Chen Yuan that the title *Scripture of the Two Principles* may refer precisely to the *Traité manichéen* translated by Chavannes and Pelliot, I would like to discuss certain points here, not so much to give support to Chen Yuan's (and to my own updated) suggestion, but to show the complexity of the question, and to demonstrate that, after all, Chen Yuan's suggestion cannot be rejected so simply, even after having realized that the title *Scripture of the Two Principles* is to be understood in the sense of *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times*.

It may be helpful to put the question in somewhat different terms: is there some compelling reason why the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* cannot be the *Traité manichéen*? In order to answer this question, I will consider the following three points: (a) the date of the *Traité manichéen*; (b) the title; (c) the so-called contents of the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times*.

(a) *The Date of the Traité manichéen*

Can the date of the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* be the same as that of the *Traité manichéen*? A crucial point for any possible identification of the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* with the *Traité manichéen* is the date of the latter. It is evident, in fact, that if the *Traité manichéen* could not be dated to the late seventh century, the idea that it might be the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* could not even be advanced because we know that the latter was presented in 694. Let us, then, look at the opinions on this fundamental issue. Chavannes and Pelliot (1911: 503-4) had first suggested a date around 900 AD for the Chinese translation of the *Traité manichéen* and ca. 900-1000 for the manuscript itself. Soon after, however, they revised their view, suggesting that the last part might be a translation of about 700 AD.¹⁷ They based their revised suggestion on the fact that towards the end of the manuscript the character *shou* 授 is once written in the particular way this character was written during the Zhou dynasty (690-705) founded by Empress Wu, that is *shou* 𠂔. As they were convinced that the *Traité manichéen* is a composite text, Chavannes and Pelliot (1913: 380-81) suggested also that it could include part of the *Scripture of the Two Principles*.

It escaped the attention of the two French scholars that the character *shou* 𠂔 was not the only special character of Empress Wu appearing in the treatise. In fact the character *zheng* 𠂔 (instead of the usual *zheng* 正) appears there twice.¹⁸

Lin Wushu in 1983 noticed that the character *zheng* 𠂔 of Empress Wu appeared twice, but the character *shou* 𠂔 escaped his attention. Lin thought that the *Traité manichéen* dates back to the Zhou dynasty, but, convinced as he was that it corresponds to another text (see below), he ignored Chavannes's and Pelliot's idea that it might embody part of the *Scripture of the Two Principles*.

Regarding the *Scripture of the Two Principles*, introduced in 694 by Mihr-Ormuzd, Samuel Lieu (1985: 189; 1992: 230) wrote: «It is quite possible that Mihr-Ormuzd also initiated the translation of other Manichaean texts into Chinese as one of the characters used by the scribe in a surviving Manichaean work from Tun-huang was especially created by the Empress Wu in 689 and

¹⁷ «Ainsi ce serait une traduction des environs de l'an 700 qui serait entrée, avec une seule graphie anormale, dans le traité composite qui nous est parvenu» (Chavannes – Pelliot 1913: 380). This escaped the attention of Bryder (1985: 39) who mentions only the previous opinion of Chavannes and Pelliot.

¹⁸ See Luo Zhenyu's edition reproduced in Chavannes – Pelliot (1911: 598, 591). See also Chen Yuan's edition (1923: 541, 544; 1980-82: I, 387, 392 [where unfortunately 𠂔 was changed into 正]) and T 54 no. 2141B: 1284c28, 1286a23. The first time they came across the character 𠂔 Chavannes and Pelliot (1911: 577, n. 3) did remark that this was a «forme anormale» for 正, but did not realize that it was a special character of Empress Wu. The second time (*ibid.*: 588-89) they added no comment on the character's anomaly.

abolished in 705». The «surviving Manichaean work from Tun-huang» is obviously the *Traité manichéen*. But it is not clear which is the special character he alluded to. In any case, this clearly indicates that Lieu thought that the *Traité manichéen* belongs to the Empress Wu's time, although he considered it «other» than the *Scripture of the Two Principles*, in line with his above-mentioned opinion that the *Scripture of the Two Principles* «might have been a Chinese version of the *Šabuhragān* ... Or it might have been an alternative title of the *Compendium* ...».

In brief, there is no objection to the fact that the special characters *shou* 授 (for *shou* 授) and *zheng* 正 (for *zheng* 正) in the *Traité manichéen* clearly indicate that the work (not the manuscript itself) dates back at least to the Zhou dynasty founded by Empress Wu.¹⁹ We might suppose, with Chavannes and Pelliot, that the *Traité manichéen* was a text made up of different works produced in different periods and, in this case, we might also suppose, following their reasoning, that only those parts where the special characters of the Empress Wu are found are to be considered of her time. However, this complicates the question further – and needlessly. Hence, it is better to consider the *Traité manichéen* as a single text produced at one time in its Chinese form.

(b) *The Title*

Can the title *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* be applied to the *Traité manichéen*? Chen Yuan is right when stressing that the Manichaean treatise is «a very minute exposition of the doctrine of Light and Darkness». However, Lin Wushu (1987: 197) has certainly reason to stress, as I have mentioned above, that in the *Traité manichéen* there is no question of the last period 末世. I may also add the remark that the expression *sanji* («Three Times») never occurs in it. The other observation of Lin (*ibid.*: 196-97) that the *Traité manichéen* is not an outline of Manichaeism, as the *Scripture of the Two Principles* must have been, but that it concentrates rather on the single issue of the dual nature of man composed of Light and Darkness, is also true. In fact the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* must have been a

¹⁹ Chavannes and Pelliot (1913: 379) thought that the list of twelve characters created in 689 was incomplete and consequently that the character 授 (not included among the twelve characters) was also created in 689. Lieu, as we have just seen, is implicitly of the same opinion if he thinks that precisely this character was introduced in 689. However, the writing 授 was not among the twelve new forms implemented on December 25, 689, but was adopted on October 16, 690 (Tianshou 1.9.9 [renwu]). It is curious that this same new form for *shou* 授 is extant at the beginning of some editions of the Buddhist *Baoyu jing* 寶雨經 (Forte 1976: 47-48, 129; see also *Id.* 1996b: 417-18 for other remarks on these special characters). The persistence of these characters even after they were abolished in 705 might be due to the distraction of scribes who were supposed to adopt the regular forms of the characters when copying from manuscripts of the period of Empress Wu.

work through which the Manichaeans tried to present the essential principles of their doctrine to the Chinese, a kind of synthesis summarizing the Manichaean Canon that had not yet been translated into Chinese. Consequently, the title *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* applies to the *Traité manichéen* only partially. This consideration would be sufficient then to reject the hypothesis that the two might be identical. However, the point is that in reality we do not know of how many *juan* the *Traité manichéen* was originally constituted. The statement by Chavannes and Pelliot (followed by other scholars) that the *Traité manichéen* could not be defined as fragmentary, but rather as incomplete because only the beginning is missing, has so far found no confirmation and might, after all, be untrue.²⁰ If it were a work of only one *juan*, Lin Wushu's objections would be valid, but nothing prevents us from thinking that what remains now is an almost complete *juan* of a multi-*juan* work. The fact itself that at the end of the extant *juan* – contrary to usual practice in manuscripts – there is no title might be an indication that the work does not finish here. Nevertheless, it must be said that it was a good rule to give the title at the end of the *juan* both in the case of one-*juan* works and multi-*juan* works. In other words, nothing prevents us from thinking that the *Traité manichéen* might have been in more than one *juan*, and that only one almost complete *juan* is extant. Attention must be paid at this juncture to the fact that no source specifies the number of *juan* constituting the *Erzong jing*.

We have then no good reasons to reject the hypothesis that the title *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* might be applied to the *Traité manichéen*.

(c) *The So-called Contents of the Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times*

Does the quotation from the *Shimen zhengtong* in *Fozu tongji* 39 reveal «some concrete contents» of the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* as maintained by Lin Wushu? I do not think so. Manichaeism, as we have seen, is itself defined by Zhipan as «the false religion of the *Erzong jing*». I think that in the *Shimen zhengtong* the reference is to some practices of Manichaean adepts in China, and not to the content of the scripture itself. Even if it referred to the *Erzong jing* itself, there is always the possibility suggested in my point (b) that the *Traité manichéen* was constituted of more than one *juan*, and that such «concrete contents» might be included in the lost por-

²⁰ Above, note 5. The statement seems based also on the assumption that the title *Bosijiao can-jing* given by Luo Zhenyu means «Incomplete Text of a Persian Religion» (Chavannes – Pelliot 1911: 501: *Livre saint incomplet d'une religion de la Perse*). In reality, since *can* 殘 means «remnant, residue», the accent is on «what remains of a whole», and not on how much remains of it (as in the case of terms like «incomplete» and «fragmentary»).

tions of the *Traité manichéen*. But I insist that it is not clear from the text if such «contents» refer to the scripture itself or rather to the practice of the religion which found its most representative text in the scripture.

In conclusion, I do not think that there is any compelling obstacle to the possibility that the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* could be identified with the *Traité manichéen*.

Although I think that the old hypothesis of Chen Yuan cannot be rejected, this does not mean that I think the one advanced by Lin Wushu, the author who has so far paid the greatest attention to the original (non-Chinese and Chinese) title of the *Traité manichéen*, must be rejected. It is another possibility that awaits verification. In a long section of his article of 1983 Lin tries to establish the original title of the *Traité manichéen* (Lin Wushu 1987: 197-205). He asks himself if this Chinese text might be the translation of a work by a disciple of Mani, but he does not think so. He does not think either that it is a work by a Chinese Manichaean master. Lin believes instead that it is the translation of a work by Mani, not the *Šabuhragān*, as referred above, but a different one. His belief is based on the following two reasons: (1) Since Mani's works were translated in many languages according to the regions where his teachings spread, the *Traité manichéen* too must be a translation of one of his works; (2) The *Traité manichéen* circulated in China already at the time of Empress Wu because a character (actually two characters, as mentioned above) used only under her rule is found there. The character *zheng* 正 appears nine times in the manuscript, but in two instances it is written in the special form 𠄎 used at the time of Empress Wu. Clearly, the *Traité manichéen* circulated already at the time of Empress Wu, which means that the text is of the time before the banning of Manichaeism, when Manichaean texts circulated freely. Then it is possible that it is a translation of one of Mani's works. If it is a work by Mani different from the *Šabuhragān*, we must look for it among Mani's seven works listed in the *Compendium* of 731. Lin concentrates his attention on the works 2, 4, 5, and excludes from consideration the other works (1, 3, 6, 7). He eventually concludes that the *Traité manichéen* might correspond to the work Πραγματεῖα whose Chinese title in 731 was *Zhengming guoqu jiao jing* 證明過去教經 («Scripture Testifying the Teachings of the Past»);²¹

I do not intend here to discuss the question, but I only wished to introduce briefly Lin Wushu's suggestion, which may be considered a second hypothesis on the title of the *Traité manichéen*, after the first one advanced in 1923 by Chen Yuan.

²¹ Haloun and Henning (1952: 195) have given a different translation of this Chinese title: *Book of Instruction which Testifies the Past*. This was adopted by Lieu (1985: 235; 1992: 277). I maintain my interpretation (Forte 1973: 239): *Livre sacré attestant les enseignements du passé*, which is very similar to Demiéville's (1990: 269) *Livre sacré attestant la doctrine du passé*, unduly modified by Tajadod (1990: 57) into *Livre de la doctrine qui témoigne du passé*.

A third hypothesis must not be forgotten. In 1985 Peter Bryder, basing himself on the title of what is considered a parallel text of the *Traité manichéen* in Parthian, hypothetically suggested (1985: 38) «that the Chinese title was something like **Huiming jiangyi* 惠明講義, ‘Sermon of the Light Nous’». Unfortunately, no such title, nor a similar one, is attested in any Chinese source. Considering the great relevance of the *Traité manichéen*, I suppose that it would be curious indeed if its title were never mentioned among the Chinese sources on Manichaeism, which have been shown to be, after all, very rich.

Summing up, there were three suggestions about the original Chinese title of the *Traité manichéen*: (a) Chen Yuan in 1923 suggested that it was *Erzong jing* 二宗經, a title we now know was shortened from *Erzong sanji jing* 二宗三際經 («Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times»); (b) Lin Wushu in 1983 advanced the hypothesis that it was the *Zhengming guoqu jiao jing* 證明過去教經 («Scripture Testifying the Teachings of the Past») mentioned in the *Compendium* of 731; (c) Peter Bryder in 1985 suggested the unattested title *Huiming jiangyi* 惠明講義 («Sermon of the Light Nous»). With the due respect for Lin’s and Bryder’s suggestions, there is no convincing reason to renounce the old hypothesis of Chen Yuan. On the contrary, the fact that until now the *Traité manichéen* remains the only Manichaean text which we know for certain to have existed during the Zhou Dynasty (690-705), precisely when the *Scripture of the Two Principles and Three Times* was introduced, should be a matter for reflection.

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- Ishida (1925) and Pelliot (1925) realised that the two parts were connected with one another, the second part was conventionally called *Monijiao jing canjuan* and *Fragment Pelliot*. It was also called *Monijiao canjing er* by Chen Yuan (1923: 545-46; 1980-82: I, 392-97). For the trans. of the first part, see Haloun – Henning (1952), Schmidt-Glintzer (1987: 69-74), Pelliot (1990), Demiéville (1990); for the trans. of the second part, see Chavannes – Pelliot (1913: 105-16), Schmidt-Glintzer (1987: 74-75). There is also the annotated French trans. of the whole text in Tajadod (1990: 43-253), but it is better to verify it against the more authoritative versions mentioned above.
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- Monijiao canjing er* 摩尼教殘經二 [Remnant Two of a Text of Manichaeism]. See *Moni guangfo jiaofayi lüe*.
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- Monijiao jing canjuan* 摩尼教經殘卷 [Remnant of a Roll of a Text of Manichaeism]. See *Moni guangfo jiaofayi lüe*.
- Shimen zhengtong* 釋門正統 [The Correct Lineage of Buddhism], 8 *juan*, written originally by Wu Keji 吳克己 (d. 1208) and completed by Zongjian 宗鑑 (d. u.) in 1237 (Jiaxi 1) [= *Wan xu zangjing* vol. 130].
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