

Buddhist Monsters in the Chinese Manichaean *Hymnscroll* and the Guanyin Chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*

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THE PRESENT paper explores the influence of Chinese Buddhism on Chinese Manichaeism. When spreading their teachings, Manichaean missionaries applied the local religious terminology: a Christian one in Europe and Egypt, Zoroastrian in Iran, and Buddhist in Central Asia and China. It is a widely acknowledged fact that the *Hymnscroll*, an eighth or ninth century collection of Chinese Manichaean hymns, contains a wide range of Buddhist terminology, which was chosen to convey a basically

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Manichaean message. In this paper, through the close reading of some verses, I will argue that the first two hymns of this collection apply the terminology of the Guanyin chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*, a text extremely popular during the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE). This particular Buddhist influence on these Manichaean hymns has not been hitherto noticed.

In the first part of my paper, I offer a brief overview of Manichaeism, the *Hymnscroll*, as well as the terminology of evil in Manichaean texts. In the second part, I analyze some references to demonic creatures (*wangliang* 魍魎, *yecha* 夜叉 [Skt. *yakṣa*], *mojie* 魔竭 [Skt. *makara*], *luocha* 羅刹 [Skt. *rākṣasa*]) in the first two hymns of the *Hymnscroll*. In the third part of the paper, I compare these and several other references with those in the Guanyin chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* to demonstrate the decisive impact of that chapter on the Manichaean *Hymnscroll*. Finally, I conclude that through the intricate borrowings of these specific Buddhist motifs, the Manichaean author indirectly suggests the identification of Guanyin and the addressee of these two Manichaean hymns.

Manichaeism

Manichaeism was a world religion that existed from the third to at least the seventeenth century CE, spanning the Eurasian continent from Europe and Egypt to southeastern China.¹ It was founded by Mānī (216–277), who based his teachings on several revelations that he received during his youth. At a young age his father took him to a Jewish-Christian baptismal community, and he was raised there until the age of twenty-four, when, encouraged by his spiritual Twin, he left the community. After converting some members of the royal house, he met the Sasanian ruler Šābuhr I (r. 241–272), who granted him permission to carry out his missionary work. Thereafter, Mānī and his disciples led several missions into various parts of Sasanian Iran. Furthermore, his followers Mār Addā and Mār Ammō left Iran and spread the faith to Egypt and the Transoxanian region, respectively. Even after the execution of Mānī by another Sasanian ruler, Wahrām (r. 274–293), in 277, his followers persisted in their missionary zeal, and achieved considerable success in Europe and northern Africa despite the continuous banning of their religion by various Roman emperors. Nevertheless, by the fifth and sixth centuries, Manichaeism was on the verge of disappearance in the West. On the other hand, it was flourishing along the Silk Road. Sogdian missionaries played a preeminent role in

¹ For a comprehensive introduction to Manichaeism, see Lieu 1992 and Baker-Brian 2011.

spreading this new religion towards the eastern end of the Asian continent. Manichaeans were skilled at adapting their novel teachings to familiar religious forms, leading them to adopt terminology from various other religions: Christianity in the West, Zoroastrianism in Iran, and Buddhism along the Silk Road and in China.

In 694, a Manichaean teacher entered the court of Wu Zetian 武則天 (625–705, r. 690–705), who welcomed the foreign religion. The history of Manichaeism in China can be roughly divided into two phases: from 694 to 842 when Manichaeism was basically a *religio licita*, or officially approved religion,² and from the Huichang 會昌 persecution of Manichaeans and Buddhists (843–845) by Wuzong 武宗 (814–846, r. 841–846) until at least the seventeenth century,³ when it survived in the southeastern coastal region of China (present-day Zhejiang and Fujian).

Manichaeans developed an elaborate written and visual culture. They translated Mānī's seven canonical scriptures into various languages, and also composed new works in these tongues. Thus, Manichaean writings survive in a wide variety of languages, including Coptic, Latin, Greek, Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Uighur, and Chinese. In Chinese, there are three extant Manichaean manuscripts (the so-called *Compendium*, *Traité*, and *Hymnscroll*) that were recovered from Cave 17 of Dunhuang.⁴

The Hymnscroll and the Manichaean Terminology of Evil

The subject of the present study is the first two hymns of the *Hymnscroll* (*Monijiao xiabu zan* 摩尼教下部讚), housed in the British Library (S.2659 [Or. 8210]). The majority of the hymns were translated from a Middle Iranian language (probably Parthian) by someone named Daoming 道明 (n.d.). The *Hymnscroll* is usually dated to the second half of the eighth century or the

² However, from 732 to 750 only foreigners were allowed to join the religion.

³ Recent material from Xiapu 霞浦 suggests an even later date.

⁴ The Chinese Manichaean texts from Dunhuang, which were all composed during the eighth and ninth centuries, are abbreviated as follows: TR = *Traité* (BD00256), H = *Hymnscroll* (S.2659), C = *Compendium* (S.3969+P.3884). The number after these abbreviations indicates the column number in the respective manuscripts. These texts are also included in the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經: *Compendium* (T no. 2141A, 54: 1279c–1281a); *Traité* (T no. 2141B, 54: 1281a–1286a); *Hymnscroll* (T no. 2140, 54: 1270b–1279c). Some small fragments deriving from Turfan and preserved in the Turfansammlung der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin), abbreviated as Turfansammlung, have been identified, which are designated with the abbreviation Ch, followed by a number. Translations of Chinese texts, unless otherwise indicated, are by the author.

first part of the ninth.⁵ An even more precise dating has been offered by Yu Wanli, who convincingly argues that the translation was made not earlier than the reign of Daizong 代宗 (727–779, r. 762–779) based on the fact that his given name (Yu 豫) appears in non-orthodox forms several times (H66, H71, H76, H118) due to its taboo status at the time.⁶

This translated collection consists of hymns to various divine beings including Jesus, Mānī, the Father of Light, the Light Envoys, the Five Lights, and others. As some of the instructions in the text suggest, Manichaean believers likely sang these hymns on various liturgical occasions. The first two hymns of the *Hymnscroll* are addressed to Jesus: “A Hymn in Praise of Jesus” (*Zan Yishu wen* 讚夷數文, H7–H44), and “A Hymn in Praise of Jesus, Part II” (*Zan Yishu wen di er die* 讚夷數文第二疊, H45–H82). (Since the Manichaean concept of Jesus greatly differs from the Christian one, hereafter I will use the Chinese transcription Yishu 夷數 to refer to the Manichaean figure).⁷

Manichaeism postulates two ontologically independent principles: Light and Darkness. Both concepts and their various concrete manifestations appear frequently in Manichaean scriptures. The paradisiacal Realm of Light is a place where Manichaeans yearn to go after death, and the hellish Land of Darkness is an abhorrent place to be avoided at all costs. The latter realm is populated with various creatures from the Manichaean imagination.

In Eastern (especially Parthian, Uighur, and Chinese) Manichaean texts, where the influence of Buddhism is pronounced, Buddhist monsters appear as menacing representations of the dark principle. In this article, I will examine the motifs of monsters that are of Indian or Chinese Buddhist origin (*Māra*, *wangliang*, *yakṣa*, *makara*, *rākṣasa*) mainly in the first two hymns of the Chinese Manichaean *Hymnscroll* to show that Chinese Manichaeans used rather sophisticated methods to create mythological images that balanced on the border of the Chinese Buddhist and Manichaean traditions. Furthermore, I will also explore how these Buddhist ideas were adopted and embedded in the alien context of Manichaeism in a sophisticated fashion.⁸

⁵ Dates scholars have proposed include the following: eighth century (Giles 1957, p. 229), early ninth century (Haloun and Henning 1952, p. 189, n. 2), from 762 to 832 (Waldschmidt and Lentz 1926, p. 8), and from 762 to 842 (Lin 1987, p. 216; Mikkelsen 2004, p. 213).

⁶ Yu 1995.

⁷ On the Manichaean figure of Jesus, see e.g., Franzmann 2003.

⁸ Upon arriving in China, other foreign religions (such as Nestorianism and Judaism) applied methods that were both similar to and different from those of Manichaeism in

An important discovery of the present study is that Manichaeans were not only using refined techniques at the level of vocabulary, but, as will be clear from the second part of this paper, they also succeeded in transforming micro-level choices of words to a new macro-level representation by implicitly identifying Yishu with Guanyin 觀音 (Skt. Avalokiteśvara).

The Land of Darkness and Māra

Like other Manichaean texts, Chinese Manichaean scriptures also repeatedly hint at the existence of two basic “kingdoms”: the Realm of Light and the Land of Darkness. The various names used in different languages for the latter are summarized in figures 1 and 2 on the next page.

The Land of Darkness is the inverse of the Realm of Light in every way.⁹ Though there was some kind of underworld concept in pre-Buddhist China as well, it is *dīyu* 地獄, an expression of Buddhist origin, which plays the most prominent role in the Chinese nomenclature of the Manichaean Land of Darkness. The most important features of this kingdom are the following:

1. The complete lack of light (“dark,” “lightlessness”).
2. The presence of poison (e.g., Chinese: *wu du quan* 五毒泉 [Five Poisonous Springs]; Parthian: *jhr, jhryn*¹⁰).
3. The fivefold nature of darkness (e.g., Chinese: *wu chong keng* 五重坑 [H21]; Parthian: *pnj 'hrywr*,¹¹ *pnz knd'r 'y mrg*;¹² Coptic: Ⲫⲟϥ ⲡⲓⲧⲁⲙⲓⲟⲛ;¹³ ⲡⲪⲟϥ ⲡⲟϥⲛ ⲙⲡⲕⲕⲉ;¹⁴ ⲡⲪⲟϥ [ⲡⲓⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲡⲓⲧⲉ] ⲡⲕⲁⲗ ⲙⲡⲕⲕⲉ;¹⁵ Greek: πενταμόρφος;¹⁶ Lat. *quinque antra*¹⁷).¹⁸

order to accommodate their teachings to the pre-existing Chinese religious landscape. The relationship between the techniques used by the Manichaeans and these religions, however, lies beyond the scope of this paper.

⁹ Ephrem Syrus: *Hymns against Heresies*, 126.31–127.11 (Reeves 1997, pp. 262–63).

¹⁰ M 507 (Boyce 1975, p. 97).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² M 98/1/V/7 (Boyce 1975, p. 61).

¹³ *Psalmbook* 9,17–18.

¹⁴ *Psalmbook* 10,9.

¹⁵ *Kephalaia* 48,15–16.

¹⁶ *In Enchiridion Epicteti* 71,21. Also see Lieu 1997, pp. 226–27.

¹⁷ *De moribus Manichaeorum* 9,14.

¹⁸ Jackson 1965, pp. 48–49, n. 35, in chapter 2, “The Manichaean Cosmological Fragment M. 98–99 in Turfan Pahlavi.” Cf. *De moribus Manichaeorum* 9,14; *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* 28,1; *In Enchiridion Epicteti* 71. On the fivefold nature of the Kingdom of Darkness and its rulers in the Coptic Manichaica, see Pettipiece 2009, pp. 51–62.

mókū 魔窟 – Demonic Cave(s) (H244)
wúmíng ànkū 无明暗窟 – Lightless Dark Cave(s) (TR169)
wúshǐ wúmíng jìngjiè 无始无明境界 – Lightless World Without Beginning (TR67–68)
ànkēng wúmíng jìngjiè 暗坑无明境界 – The Dark Pit, The Lightless World (TR9)
mógōng luóchànguó 魔宫羅刹國 – The Demonic Palace, The Country of the *Rākṣasas* (H20)
wūkēng 五坑 – Five Pits (TR10)
wūzhǒng wúmíng ànkēng 五重无明暗坑 – The Five Kinds of Lightless Dark Pits (TR145–46)
ànjiè 暗界 – Dark World (TR215)
ànjiè wūzhǒng kēng 暗界五重坑 – The Five Kinds of Pits of the Dark World (H21)
dìyù 地獄 – Earthly Prison (Hell) (TR51, TR130; H26, H100, H226, H247; Ch 174 R)
zhū dìyù 諸地獄 – Hells (H407)
yǒngyù 永獄 – Eternal Prison (Hell) (H26, H100)
ànyù 暗獄 – Dark Prison (Hell) (H234)

Figure 1. Names of the Land of Darkness in Chinese Manichaean Sources

SYRIAC: *atrā da-ḥeššōkā* – The Land of Darkness¹⁹
 ARABIC: *ardū az-zulmatī* – The Land of Darkness²⁰
 PARTHIAN: *dwjx* – Hell;²¹ *nrh* (*narah*) – Hell (Sanskrit *naraka*)²²
 UIGHUR: *tamu* – Hell;²³ *tamu yir* – The Hellish Country;²⁴ *tünäriḡ tamu* – Dark Hell²⁵
 COPTIC: *ⲡⲏⲗⲟ ⲙⲓⲛⲕⲉⲕⲉ* – The Land of Darkness;²⁶ *ⲧⲙⲓⲧⲣⲣⲟ ⲙⲓⲛⲕⲉⲕⲉ* – The Kingdom of Darkness;²⁷ *ⲡⲓⲅⲉⲣⲏⲏⲗ* – Gehenna (pl.)²⁸
 LATIN: *regnum tenebrarum* – The Kingdom of Darkness;²⁹ *tenebrarum terra* – The Land of Darkness³⁰
 GREEK: *γεέννας, γεέννας* – Hell³¹

Figure 2. Names of the Land of Darkness in non-Chinese Manichaean Sources

Chinese sources frequently state that demons appear in groups of various sizes to exert their malevolent influence (H39, H54, H187, H225, H229, H234).³² Some of the sources say that there are five types of demons (TR2,

¹⁹ St. Ephrem: *Sermons to Hypatius* 2,40.

²⁰ *Al-Fihrist* 62,14 (Dodge 1970, p. 787).

²¹ E.g., M 48/II/V/2, M 270a + M 869/I/V/3 (Sundermann 1981, pp. 22, 29).

²² E.g., M 7/II/R/i/27, M 77/R/8 (Andreas and Henning 1934, pp. 873, 886).

²³ E.g., text no. T I α x32 in Zieme 1975, p. 43.

²⁴ *X^uāstvānīft* VIII A.

²⁵ Text no. T II 122 in Zieme 1975, p. 68.

²⁶ *Kephalaia* 31,11–12; 49,3–4; 67,33; 68,7; 100,13; 169,13.

²⁷ *Psalmbook* 9,17.

²⁸ *Psalmbook* 96,28.

²⁹ *De moribus Manichaeorum* 3,5.

³⁰ E.g., *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* 15,8; 24,26; 25,28.

³¹ *Acta Archelai* X.5, XI.2.

³² On these Chinese sources, see Reeves 1992, p. 181, n. 39.

<p><i>mó</i> 魔 – Māra, demons (TR29, TR47, TR110, TR201, TR274; H69, H95, H106, H130, H134, H218, H219)</p> <p><i>ànmó</i> 暗魔 – dark demons (TR13)</p> <p><i>móguǐ</i> 魔鬼 – demons (H193)</p> <p><i>zhū móguǐ</i> 諸魔鬼 – the (various) demons (H33, H35)</p> <p><i>zhūmó</i> 諸魔 – (various) demons (TR70, TR83, TR89, TR94, TR98, TR103, TR113, TR217, TR219; H23, H53, H77, H100, H187, H294, H326; Ch 174 R)</p> <p><i>mónán jí mónǚ</i> 魔男及魔女 – demon males and demon females (H23, H199)</p> <p><i>mójiā</i> 魔家 – demon family (H46, H229)</p> <p><i>mózú</i> 魔族 – demonic clan (H234)</p> <p><i>módǎng</i> 魔黨 – demon horde (H39)</p> <p><i>mójūn</i> 魔軍 – demon army (C1; H54)</p> <p><i>jīmó</i> 飢魔 – hungry demon (TR64)</p> <p><i>è'guǐ</i> 餓鬼 – hungry demons (H326)</p> <p><i>shāguǐ</i> 殺鬼 – murderous demons (H331)</p> <p><i>wùlèi (zhū) mó</i> 五類(諸)魔 – the five kinds of demons (TR10, TR12, TR16, TR19, TR28)</p> <p><i>mólèi</i> 魔類 – demon classes (H63)</p> <p><i>zhū mólèi</i> 諸魔類 – various demon classes (TR40–41)</p> <p><i>hēi'àn zhū mólèi</i> 黑暗諸魔類 – dark demon classes (H187)</p> <p><i>wǔzhǒng cí mólèi</i> 五種雌魔類 – five kinds of female demon classes (H43)</p> <p><i>wǔzhǒng [xióng mólèi]</i> 五種[雄魔類] – five kinds of male demon classes (H43)</p> <p><i>wǔzhǒng tān (mó)</i> 五種貪(魔) – five kinds of greedy demons (H8)</p> <p><i>wǎngliǎng zhū móguǐ</i> 魍魎諸魔鬼 – <i>wangliangs</i> and demons (H33)</p>
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Figure 3. Various Designations of Demons in Chinese Manichaean Sources

H8, H43), as does a description found in Uighur materials (*biš türlüg yäklärlüg*).³³ Fragment U(ighur) 267 (Turfansammlung, Berlin) gives an even more specific list: *yäklär* (demons), *p(a)riglar* (witches), *ičgäklär* (vampires), *büdüklär* (giants), *b(a)šdanlar* (archons).³⁴ In another Uighur document (MIK III 200 = So 14411 [Turfansammlung, Berlin]), various demons are mentioned who appear after a sinner dies to take him to hell.³⁵ The Coptic sources seldom name the specific dark forces, more frequently simply using the expression archon or (demonic) forces,³⁶ though in the sixth chapter of the *Kephalaia* the inhabitants of the Land of Darkness are presented in a fivefold group.³⁷

³³ *X^uāstvánīft* I B.

³⁴ Wilkens 2001–2, pp. 81, 87, 90. The Coptic *Psalmbook* (103,29; 108,18) mentions “the seven fearful demons” (ⲡⲥⲁⲱⲩⲧⲓ ⲛⲁⲗⲁⲓⲙⲟⲛ [ⲉⲧ]ⲟ ⲛⲉⲣⲧⲉ).

³⁵ Wilkens 2009, pp. 322–25.

³⁶ Van Lindt 1992, p. 210.

³⁷ *Kephalaia* 30,25–34,12.

Tān Mó 貪魔 – the greedy demon (H24; TR21, TR31, TR34, TR68, TR82, TR83, TR138, TR169, TR213)
tān (character illegible) *mó* 貪口魔 – the greedy . . . demon (H77)
Mówáng 魔王 – the demon king (H24, H25, H37, H100, H118, H189, H225, H275)
xūwàng è mówáng 虛妄惡魔王 – the false and evil demon king (H90)
Mózūn 魔尊 – the demon venerable (H221)
Mójiàng 魔將 – the demon general (H218)
yuànmó tānzhǔ 怨魔貪主 – the greedy lord of malevolent demons (TR49)
ròushēn tǎn mózhǔ 肉身貪魔主 – the greedy demon lord of the carnal body (H94)
tānyín chánmó chirán wáng 貪姪饑魔熾燃王 – the flaming king of the greedy and lustful demons (H107)
yīqiè mówáng zhī ànmǔ 一切魔王之暗母 – the dark mother of all demon kings (H24)
tānyù èrmó 貪慾二魔 – the two demons of greed and desire³⁸ (TR61)

Figure 4. Various Designations of the Ruler(s) of Demons in Chinese Manichaean Sources

Similarly to the Father of Greatness, who governs the Realm of Light, the Land of Darkness is also under the rule of one principal governor, Ahrimān, although there is also a female representative of the dark principle, Āz, who is active in this world.³⁹ They are called by various names in the Chinese and the non-Chinese sources (figs. 4 and 5).⁴⁰

Both male and female inhabitants of the Kingdom of Darkness are characterized by ugliness in appearance, constant greediness, and are often said to have theriomorphic attributes.⁴¹

In the Buddhist tradition, Māra, the eternal antagonist of the Buddha and everyone on the path of enlightenment, represents all kinds of evil, greed, illusion, desire, and lust. In Chinese Buddhist texts, his name was translated phonetically as Moluo 魔羅 or Mo 魔,⁴² the latter of which can also refer to demons or anything related to them. In fact, the Sanskrit *māra* can refer to

³⁸ Although *tanyu* 貪慾 (or *tanyu* 貪欲) could be regarded as a single concept, I have consciously translated each character individually.

³⁹ Sundermann 2003, p. 332; Wilkens 2009, p. 328.

⁴⁰ See e.g., Puech 1979.

⁴¹ Wilkens 2009, pp. 328–29. A well-known example is the description of the kings of the five dark elements in the *Kephalaia* (33,9–34) who have the faces of a lion, eagle, dragon, fish, and demon. A similar description can be found in the *al-Fihrist*, where the Lord of Darkness has the head of a lion, the body of a dragon, the wings of a bird, the tail of a great fish, and the feet of a beast of burden (Dodge 1970, p. 778).

⁴² Since Mānī's name was written with another Chinese character with the same pronunciation (*mo* 摩), Chinese literati who were hostile to Manichaeism used Māra's *mo* 魔 to refer to Manichaeans as “demon-worshippers” (*Gaofeng wenji* 高峰文集 2.22; *Songhuiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿, “Xingfa” 刑法, 2.111.)

SYRIAC: *mleḵ ḥeššōḵā* – the king of darkness; *arkōn* – archon; *hūlā* – the matter (ῥλη)⁴³
 ARABIC: *Šayṭān* – Satan; *iblis al-qadīm* – the primeval devil; *ʿarākina* – archons; *šayṭān* – devils; *ʿaḳārīt* – demons⁴⁴
 MIDDLE PERSIAN: *ʿhrymn (Ahremen)* – Ahriman;⁴⁵ *ʿz (Āz)* – (Desire);⁴⁶ *ʿšmg tʿryg (išmag tāriḡ)* – the dark demon;⁴⁷ (*Kunī dēβ* – demon *Kunī*)⁴⁸
 PARTHIAN: *ʿhrymn (Ahremen)* – Ahriman;⁴⁹ *ʿz (Āz)* – (Desire)
 SOGDIAN: *šmnw* – (Ahriman);⁵⁰ (δywδʿt) *ʿz* – (demonic) *Āz*⁵¹
 UIGHUR: *šimnu* – (Ahriman);⁵² *šimnu yāk* – (Ahriman demon);⁵³ *todunčsuz uvutsuz suk yāk* – insatiable and shameless demon of greed⁵⁴
 COPTIC: πρρο μπκεκε – the king of darkness; πρρο πηαπκεκε – the king of those belonging to darkness;⁵⁵ παηκωχ μπκεκε – the head of darkness;⁵⁶ πδαιμωη – demons; παρρωη – archons; κακια – the evil; τργλη, ϑγλη – the matter (= Greek ῥλη)⁵⁷
 LATIN: *princeps tenebrarum* – ruler of darkness; *principes tenebrarum* – rulers of darkness;⁵⁸ *duces* – leaders;⁵⁹ *gens tenebrarum* – the clan of darkness;⁶⁰ *princeps magnus* – the great ruler⁶¹
 GREEK: ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ σκοτόυς – the ruler of darkness;⁶² ὁ ἄρχων ὁ μέγας τῆς κακίας – the great ruler of evil;⁶³ ὁ ἄρχων ὁ μέγας – the great ruler;⁶⁴ κακία – evil;⁶⁵ ῥλη – matter⁶⁶

Figure 5. Various Designations of Demons and the King of Demons in non-Chinese Sources

⁴³ The first two terms appear in *Liber Scholiorum* at 316.26.4–5, 317.9.4–5 and 315.8.6, 316.13.3, respectively, while the third is in *Sermons to Hypatius* 71, 140–42.

⁴⁴ The first two terms appear in *al-Fihrist* at, e.g., 53,8; and 53,13, 54,12–13, respectively, while the latter three appear in *Kitāb al-milal wa-n-nihāl* 242.

⁴⁵ E.g., M 454/II/V/10 (Sundermann 1981, p. 136).

⁴⁶ E.g., M 5794/I/V/1 (Sundermann 1981, p. 132). Also see Jackson 1965, pp. 106–8, in chapter 3, “The Manichaean Fragment S. 9 in Turfan Pahlavi.”

⁴⁷ Text no. T II K d V + M 173; Boyce 1952, p. 438.

⁴⁸ *Škand-gumānīg wizār* XVI.13.

⁴⁹ E.g., M 4576/V/i/8 (Sundermann 1981, p. 59).

⁵⁰ M 378/V/3 (Sundermann 1981, p. 138).

⁵¹ *Book of Prayer and Confession*, line 665 (Henning 1937, p. 38).

⁵² E.g., *Xʷāstvānīft* I B.

⁵³ E.g., text no. T I (= I B 426): 11 (Zieme 1975, p. 26).

⁵⁴ E.g., *Xʷāstvānīft* I B.

⁵⁵ These two terms appear in *Kephalaia* at 30,33; and 29,18–19, 31,2, 51,23, respectively.

⁵⁶ *Psalmbook* 152,13.

⁵⁷ These terms appear at *Kephalaia* II.267,14; and *Kephalaia* 30,27, 110,6, respectively.

⁵⁸ The first is at *De natura boni* 46; the second is at *De haeresibus* 46,12; *De natura boni* 41.

⁵⁹ *Contra Epistolam Fundamenti* 15,19.

⁶⁰ *Commonitorium Sancti Augustini* 6,981.

⁶¹ *Acta Archelai* IX,3.

⁶² *Acta Archelai* XII.4.

⁶³ *Contra Manichaeos* 31,6.

⁶⁴ *Acta Archelai* IX,3.

⁶⁵ *Contra Manichaei opinionones disputatio* 3.6,12.

⁶⁶ *Contra Manichaei opinionones disputatio* 2.5,2.

various demons in the plural, and thus no precise distinction is made between the hordes of demons and their lord, which is similar to Manichaean usage.⁶⁷ Chinese Buddhist texts also use the character *mo* 魔 both in the singular and plural form. The latter appears as various numbered groupings—“the three Māras” (*san mo* 三魔), “the five types of Māras” (*wu zhong mo* 五種魔), and “the eight Māras” (*ba mo* 八魔)—as well as in compounds and phrases where the quantity is not given: “evil demons” (*xie mo* 邪魔, *e mo* 惡魔), “to overcome demons” or “to exorcise demons” (*po mo* 破魔), and “karma-demons” (*ye mo* 業魔).⁶⁸ Due to the characteristics of the Chinese language the plural form is not immediately evident, and thus Chinese Manichaean sources usually mark plural terms using prefixes and qualifiers (*zhu* 諸, *jia* 家, *zu* 族, and *dang* 黨).⁶⁹

Like the Buddhist Māra, the most prominent attribute of the Manichaean King of Darkness is desire. This feature is frequently repeated in the Chinese sources, where the character *tan* 貪 (greed) is connected to this figure.⁷⁰ In the Chinese *Traité*, Tan Mo (The Greedy Demon) is a relatively accurate interpretative translation of Āz, who was originally the Zoroastrian demon of hunger, thirst, gluttony, avarice, and death. (The Manichaean system added a further important attribute: sexual desire).⁷¹ On the other hand, the compound *tan mo* appears exclusively in Chinese Manichaean texts, never in the earlier Buddhist ones.

Some of the Manichaean compounds containing *mo* that are listed in the above charts basically do not appear in any Chinese Buddhist texts even though they seem to be Buddhist,⁷² while others are found in a handful of Buddhist texts⁷³ or frequently in Chinese Buddhist literature.⁷⁴ Rui

⁶⁷ “The later Buddhist theory of races of gods led to the figment of millions of Māras ruled over by a chief Māra” (Monier-Williams 1872, p. 811). Also see Boyd 1975, pp. 100–104.

⁶⁸ The Buddhist examples are taken from Soothill and Hodous 1937.

⁶⁹ All these compounds (*zhumo*, *mojia*, *mozu*, *modang*) also appear in the Chinese Buddhist texts.

⁷⁰ TR21, TR31, TR34, TR68, TR82–83, TR138, TR169, TR213; H8, H77, H94, H107, H275.

⁷¹ Sundermann 2003, pp. 328–29. Cf. Parthian: *’wrjwǰ* [*āwaržōǰ*]; Greek: ἐπιθυμία; Latin: *concupiscentia*, *libido*; Arabic: *šahwat(un)*, *hirs(un)*. On the religious roots of the concept of Āz, see Schmidt 2000. Also see Mikkelsen 1995, p. 102. Cf. text no. T I (I B 426) (Zieme 1975, p. 26).

⁷² In figure 3, the terms *moku*, *mogong luochaguo*, *anmo*, *monan ji monü*, *jimo*, *wulei* (*zhu mo*, *hei’an zhu molei*, *wuzhong ci molei*, *wu zhong xiong mo lei*, *wuzhong tan mo*, and from figure 4, the terms *tan mo*, *xuwang e mowang*, *Mozun*, *yuanmo tanzhu*, *roushen tan mozhu*, *tanyin chanmo chiran wang*, *yiqie mowang zhi anmu*, *tanyu ermo*.

⁷³ In figure 3, *mojia*, *mozu*, *molei*, *zhu molei*, and *Mojiang* in figure 4.

⁷⁴ From figure 3, *mo*, *mogui*, *zhumo*, *modang*, *mojun*, and *Mowang* from figure 4.

Chuanming has pointed out that even though one would think Tan Mo derives from Buddhism since Hylè derives from Greek philosophy and Āz from Zoroastrianism, Tan Mo must be a Manichaean neologism, because it does not appear in earlier Buddhist scriptures.⁷⁵ On the other hand, because both *tan* and *mo* are clearly part of the Chinese Buddhist vocabulary, it would be better described as a “pseudo-Buddhist expression.”⁷⁶

In the Iranian sources, from which the Chinese *Traité* and *Hymnscroll* were translated,⁷⁷ the most typical appellation is Āz, who is often regarded as greedy and gluttonous, the opposite of content.⁷⁸ This feature of Manichaean Āz was inherited from the pre-Manichaean (Zoroastrian) depiction. “In the Zoroastrian Middle Persian texts, including those possibly based on lost Avestan material, Āz especially represents gluttony as opposed to contentment (*hunsandīh*).”⁷⁹ In the Manichaean system, the Land of Darkness’s attack against the Realm of Light, which is held to be the most important mythological event that ever took place, stemmed from the greed and desire of its inhabitants.⁸⁰ In later texts, Āz appears also as the creator of the human body. As Asmussen points out, “The Manichean Āz formed the human body and imprisoned in it the soul (i.e., the particle of light, God’s substance). Āz is Hylē, Matter, Evil itself; as an active, invisible power (*mēnōgīh*) of the body, this demon tries to make man forget his divine origin, thus excluding him (and God) from salvation.”⁸¹

Both Āz and Tan Mo seem to have been regarded as female figures: Āz is called the “mother of the demons” (*m’d cy dyw’n*)⁸² and “the angry mother of all demons” (*[drw]ynd m’d ‘y wysp’n [dyw’n]*),⁸³ while the Chinese *Hymnscroll* (H24) mentions “the dark mother of all demon kings” (*yiqie mowang zhi anmu*). The *Kephalaia* (78,22–23) claims that her Coptic equivalent *hylē* (ϩΥΛΗ) is “the Mother of the demons and the devils” (ΤΜΕΥ ΝΗΔΑΙΜΩΝ ΜΗ ΝΙΖ).⁸⁴ Asmussen emphasizes that “the Manichean Āz is unambiguously feminine.”⁸⁵ Based on these examples, it is reasonable to

⁷⁵ Rui 2009, pp. 159, 162.

⁷⁶ See Kósa 2012.

⁷⁷ Sundermann 1996, pp. 104, 118.

⁷⁸ Asmussen 1989, p. 168b.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Kephalaia* 4,1–2; Reeves 1992, pp. 169–70.

⁸¹ Asmussen 1989, p. 168.

⁸² M 183/I/V/7 (Sundermann 1973, p. 63).

⁸³ S 13/V/7–8 (Asmussen 1975, p. 133).

⁸⁴ Van Lindt 1992, p. 203.

⁸⁵ Asmussen 1989, p. 169a. Cf. Rui 2009, pp. 140, 143, 146.

assume that the fundamental influence on the creation is exerted by a female deity, referred to as Matter (ἄτηλη), nevertheless, there also seems to be a male king in the Realm of Darkness (πρρο ἄπκεκε), however, “the relation between the King of Darkness and hyle is not consistent.”⁸⁶

The Figure of Wangliang in the Hymnscroll and Its Parallels

H33 || We wish you would remove the unconscious madness and the ailments of the numerous *kalpas*, the *wangliangs*, and all the demonic spirits!⁸⁷

Like the other verses to be discussed later, this one appears in the first hymn addressed to Yishu at the beginning of the *Hymnscroll* (The Praise of Jesus, *Zan Yishu wen*, H7–H44). As a *par excellence* representative of the Realm of Light, Yishu is asked to remove the sinister influences of the Dark Principle. These influences include psychic aberrations (the first part of the verse) and the presence of various demonic beings (the second part). In this hymn, unconsciousness, or dimness, is mentioned as a negative state of mind caused by demonic influence.⁸⁸ Although the above verse simply enumerates these obstructions, it may be surmised that the former is caused by the latter. As with other hymns (H40, H55, H64, H247), the references to “numerous *kalpas*” also hint at the Manichaean doctrine of reincarnation, probably reflecting the fact that these hymns were sung by a community of auditors (lay Manichaean followers), for an elect (a chosen one, the Manichaean “priest” or “monk”) is basically not supposed to undergo further reincarnations. Therefore, I will use the plural for the inferred subject in the translations of this text.

The act of removing (*chu* 除) is a recurring motif in the *Hymnscroll*. Though this term is present throughout it,⁸⁹ approximately half of the requests for removal appear in the two hymns addressed to Yishu, which only occupy about one fifth of the entire text.

The concept of *wangliang* can be traced back to the early, pre-Buddhist phase of Chinese religious history. One of the functions of exorcists (*fangxiangshi* 方相氏) during the Warring States period (453–221 BCE) and

⁸⁶ Van Lindt 1992, p. 203.

⁸⁷ 願除多劫昏癡病及以魍魎諸魔鬼 (H33, T 54: 1271a24).

⁸⁸ “[The Demon king] made me dim and drunken, without consciousness” 令我昏醉无知覺 (H38). Also see H62.

⁸⁹ H31, H40, H55, H70, H81, H150, H192, H193, H200, H238, H263, H377.

Han 漢 dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) was to exorcise *fangliang* 方良 (the phonetic variant of *wangliang*, discussed in detail below) from tombs, as can be seen in this passage from the *Zhouli* 周禮.⁹⁰

At great burials, they [the exorcists] proceed in front of the coffin. When they reach the tomb, they enter the pit, thrust in the four directions with their daggers, thus exorcising the *fangliang*.⁹¹

Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200 CE), who wrote a commentary on the *Zhouli*, remarked that “*fangliang* is *wangliang*”⁹² as well as that “*fangliang* should be *wangliang*.”⁹³ Yet another variant is found in the second or third century *Fengsu tongyi* 風俗通義, where the above *Zhouli* passage is written using a third name, *wangxiang* 魍象:

On the tomb, they plant a cypress, and at the beginning of the road [leading to the tomb] a tiger made of stone [is placed]. The *Zhouli* [states,] “On the day of the burial, the *fangxiangshi* enters the tomb to chase away the *wangxiang*.” The *wangxiang* likes to eat the liver and the brain of the deceased, but the family [of the deceased] cannot always make an exorcist [*fangxiang*] stand beside the tomb to keep it [the *wangxiang*] away. Since the *wangxiang* fears the tiger and the cypress, they place a tiger and a cypress in front of the tomb.⁹⁴

The three words (*fangliang*, *wangxiang*, *wangliang*) mentioned in the same context seem to be variants of the same concept. The third one also appears in two graphic variants: *wangliang* 魍魎 and *wangliang* 罔兩.⁹⁵ Thus, according

⁹⁰ On this exorcism ritual, see Bodde 1975, pp. 75–138 and Hildebrand 1989.

⁹¹ 大喪先柩及墓入壙以戈擊四隅驅方良。From “Xiaguan sima” 夏官司馬, chapter 4 of the *Zhouli* 周禮. See Ruan 1973, pp. 474–75.

⁹² 方良, 罔兩也 (Ibid., p. 475).

⁹³ 方良當為罔兩也 (Ibid.); Bodde 1975, p. 103.

⁹⁴ 墓上樹柏路頭石虎周禮方相氏葬日入壙毆魍象魍象好食亡者肝腦人家不能常令方相立于墓側以禁禦之而魍象畏虎與柏故墓前立虎與柏 (*Fengsu tongyi* 風俗通義, “Yiwen” 佚文, Wang 1981, p. 574). Also see Harper 1985, p. 482.

⁹⁵ Cf. Boltz 1979, p. 433: “We are not just seeing a confusion between various similar, but independent, names, rather that these are actually all variants of one and the same underlying designation.” On the other hand, the *Guoyu* 國語 (part 2 of “Luyu xia” 魯語, 5.7a in the *Sibu beiyao* 四部備要 edition) and the *Shuoyuan* 說苑 (chapter 18) both cite the same passage, in which *wangliang* is said to be the spirit of trees and stones, while *wangxiang* is said to be the spirit of water (木石之怪曰魍魎水之怪曰龍罔象).

to the traditional, pre-Buddhist Chinese concept, *wangliangs* (or *fangliangs*, *wangxiangs*) are malevolent beings in the tomb that will harm the dead if they are not exorcised.⁹⁶ In these sources *wangliangs* are evidently connected with the burial practice. Interestingly, this parallels the above Manichaean hymn where the auditors request to be removed from *post mortem* existence (through the *kalpas*, i.e., the cycles of reincarnations), although there is no evidence of conscious intent to do so on the part of its authors.

The *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 by Xu Shen 許慎 (58?–147? CE), the first Chinese “etymological” dictionary, is a pre-Buddhist work from the early second century CE. It defines *wangliangs* as “beings of the essence of mountains and rivers.”⁹⁷ Afterwards, it cites a lost passage from the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 that says, “The *wangliang* looks like a three-year-old child, it is dark-red, its eyes are red, its ears are long, and its hair is beautiful.”⁹⁸ Furthermore, *wangliangs* are frequently connected to water and diseases. The *Duduan* 獨斷 of Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133–192 CE) and the *Lunheng* 論衡 by Wang Chong 王充 (27–100 CE) both contain a myth about *wangliangs*: “Zhuan Xu 顓頊 had three sons who died after birth and became demons of disease: one of them is a fever-demon living in the water of the Yangzi, the second one lives in the Ruo river and became a *wangliang* spirit, [the third] one lives in the corners of palaces and houses and is good at frightening adults and children.”⁹⁹ This citation explicitly links *wangliang* with water.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Cf. Harper 1985. He states the following regarding yet another demonic figure, *wanghang* 罔行: “In the Shui-hu-ti demonography, Wang-hang surely refers to the same class of telluric sprites as Wang-liang, Wang-hsiang, and Fang-liang. It is to combat these predatory spirits that people must have recourse to magical prophylactics, to talismans, spells, and all manner of exorcistic devices. To this end, as stated in the third line of the prologue, ‘let the way for how to spellbind them be declared’” (Harper 1985, pp. 482–83).

⁹⁷ 魍魎，山川之精物也 (*Shuowen jiezi* 13A.8b [Xu 1991, p. 569]).

⁹⁸ 魍魎狀如三歲小兒赤黑色赤目長耳美發 (*Shuowen jiezi* 13A.8b [Xu 1991, p. 569]). Bodde 1975, p. 103.

⁹⁹ 顓頊氏有三子生而亡去為疫鬼一居江水是為虐鬼一居若水是為魍魎鬼一居人宮室區隅溷庫善驚人小兒 (*Lunheng*, chapter 65, also in chapter 76). The passage in the *Duduan* is in the first fascicle (p. 11).

¹⁰⁰ The earliest occurrence of the word is attested in the fourth-century *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (in the entry for the third year of Xuangong 宣公), which claims that bronze vessels depict various creatures so that people can know them. “Thus the people, when they went among the rivers, marshes, hills, and forests did not meet injurious things and the hill-sprites, monstrous things, and water-sprites did not meet with them [to do injury]” 故民入川澤山林不逢不若魍魎魅罔兩莫能逢之 (Legge 1960, p. 293). It is worth noting that James Legge here translates *wangliang* as “monstrous things, and water-sprites” to express that they dwell in rivers and marshes, even though the text does not say so explicitly.

Likewise, the *Yupian* 玉篇, a sixth-century CE dictionary compiled by Gu Yewang 顧野王 (519–581), claims that *wangliang* is a water spirit.¹⁰¹ In this passage *wangliangs* are also linked to diseases, which are precisely one of the influences to be removed in the above Manichaean hymn. It could be considered a coincidence that disease (*bing* 病) is mentioned together with a *wangliang* in the Manichaean verse, however the subsequent line in the same stanza of this hymn stresses this again: “Send down the medicine of the Great Law so that we might recover quickly! Silence them and drive them [*wangliangs*, demons] away with the magical mantra!”¹⁰²

There is one typical ancient attribute of *wangliangs* that does not appear in the *Hymnscroll*: their affinity to (but not complete identification with) water. This association in the pre-Buddhist sources is not unambiguous, however it is still discernible: the Zhuan Xu myth in the *Duduan* and the *Lunheng* links the two, while the *Shuowen jiezi* mentions both mountains and rivers. Interestingly, the Manichaean stanza just before the one we are considering here contrasts a huge and dark sea tempest (which denotes the power of darkness) with the shining weather of the Light in human hearts.

H32 || 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 the
Great Law shine everywhere, so that our hearts and soul may be
always bright and pure!¹⁰³

In this context it is evident that the *wangliang* mentioned in the subsequent stanza that was quoted at the beginning of this section is somehow related to the dark billowy forces of the sea. The image in the stanza above combined with the aquatic nature of the malevolent *wangliang* in the subsequent stanza together suggest that the huge waves were in fact generated by *wangliang(s)* in the water.¹⁰⁴

In summary, the pre-Buddhist concept of the *wangliang* includes three characteristics: (1) It is connected to death (tomb, burial ritual). (2) It is a demon of disease. (3) It is related to water. Interestingly, these three features are all present in the hymn under consideration from the *Hymnscroll* at the

¹⁰¹ Cited in *Fahua wenju ji* 法華文句記, T no. 1719, 34: 271a; *Miaofa lianhua jing xuanzan* 妙法蓮華經玄贊, T no. 1723, 34: 759a; *Zhiguan fuxing zhuan hongjue* 止觀輔行傳弘決, T no. 1912, 46: 321c.

¹⁰² 降大法藥速醫治噤以神呪驅相離 (H34, T 54: 1271a25).

¹⁰³ 願息火海大波濤暗雲暗霧諸纏蓋降大法日普光輝令我心性恒明淨 (H32, T 54: 1271a22–23).

¹⁰⁴ On this motif, see Kósa 2011, pp. 37–38.

beginning of this section: it refers to a near-death situation¹⁰⁵ and Yishu is implored to remove the ailments of many *kalpas*, it mentions disease and madness, and it describes a sea with huge waves. However, despite the similarities, it is still much more probable that the Han-dynasty concept of the *wangliang* did not directly influence this Tang-dynasty Manichaean hymn, but rather did so through a Buddhist filter. The validity of this statement can only be proven by showing that Chinese Buddhist texts contain this ancient pre-Buddhist concept and incorporate its associated meanings.

First of all, it needs to be stressed that of the four variants of *wangliang*, basically only the compound *wangliang* 魍魎 appears in Buddhist texts. This variant is at the same time identical with that found in the Manichaean hymn. In the Buddhist texts, the expression *wangliang* is associated with other demonic creatures: *guishen* 鬼神,¹⁰⁶ *e'shen* 惡神,¹⁰⁷ *e'gui* 惡鬼,¹⁰⁸ or *limei* 魑魅.¹⁰⁹ *Wangliang* is listed together with these figures so many times to the extent that it almost loses its specific characteristics. Similarly to its Buddhist usage, in the Manichaean context it is also combined with the expression “demonic spirits” (*zhu mogui*), as was seen in the previous stanza. These Buddhist demons generally cause sickness, while in some cases they seem to be associated with water: “evil spirits and *wangliangs*, be they in the rivers or in the seas.”¹¹⁰

In this way, similarly to its Manichaean context, in Buddhist scriptures, *wangliang* appears together with other demonic creatures that cause sickness and are sometimes associated with water.

¹⁰⁵ In a previous piece (Kósa 2011, p. 49), I have noted, “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.40–41, H.52).”

¹⁰⁶ *Fo benxing ji jing* 佛本行集經, T no. 190, 3: 685b; *Dizang pusa benyuan jing* 地藏菩薩本願經, T no. 412, 13: 784a; *Fo shuo foming jing* 佛說佛名經, T no. 441, 14: 225b.

¹⁰⁷ *Da boruo boluomiduo jing* 大般若波羅蜜多經, T no. 220c, 7: 151a; *Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 14a.

¹⁰⁸ *Daban niepan jing* 大般涅槃經, T no. 374, 12: 586b. The term also appears with *xiegui* 邪鬼 in *Da fangdeng daji jing* 大方等大集經 (T no. 397, 13: 356a).

¹⁰⁹ *Faju piyu jing* 法句譬喻經, T no. 211, 4: 590a; *Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 14a; *Fo shuo luomojie jing* 佛說羅摩伽經, T no. 294, 10: 854a; *Fo shuo foming jing*, T 14: 225b.

¹¹⁰ 邪魔魍魎若河若海 (*Chan zong yongjia ji* 禪宗永嘉集, T no. 2013, 48: 395a; *Zimen jingxun* 緇門警訓, T no. 2023, 48: 1064c). Also see *Faju piyu jing*, T 4: 590a.

Further evidence for the Buddhist origin of the expression is that in the Manichaean hymn a spiritual mantra (*shenzhou* 神咒) is requested to defend against the influence of *wangliangs*.¹¹¹ Similar passages can also be found in Chinese Buddhist scriptures. For example: “This mantra can annihilate all the evil *wangliangs*.”¹¹²

In sum, the orthography and the context of *wangliang* in the stanza at the beginning of this section suggest that it has its origins in the Buddhist demon pantheon, regardless of the fact that the word itself also has pre-Buddhist, Chinese roots.

The Figure of Yakṣa in the Hymnscroll and Its Parallels

H24 || The dark mother of all demon-kings, the source of all evil deeds, also the heart of the fierce and poisonous *yakṣas*, as well as the thoughts within the mind of the Demoness of Greed.¹¹³

In these verses of the same hymn, the translator-author details the disastrous and malevolent world of the dark principle, against which the Manichaean auditors seek protection in Yishu. Though *yakṣas* theoretically can also be tutelary, those appearing in Chinese and other Manichaean scriptures are always the representatives of the dark principle.

In addition to referencing Māra kings, which were already discussed above, this passage characterizes *yakṣas* as fierce and poisonous creatures with a mental state of supreme evil who might menace the pure minds of Manichaean believers.

This usage of a Buddhist creature in the Manichaean corpus is important, because *yakṣas* appear relatively frequently in non-Chinese Manichaean texts, especially in the Parthian ones. Thus, unlike in the previous case of *wangliang*, in this instance, although we do not have the original Parthian

¹¹¹ Cf. Ma and Xu 2008.

¹¹² 此咒能滅一切惡邪魍魎 (*Da fanguang pusa zangjing zhong Wenshushili genben yizi tuoluoni jing* 大方廣菩薩藏經中文殊師利根本一字陀羅尼經, T no. 1181, 20: 780b). Also see, for instance, *Da boruo boluomiduo jing*, T 5: 568b; *Daban niepan jing*, T 12: 586b; *Qian shou qian yan Guanshiyin pusa guangda yuanman wu'ai dabeixin tuoluoni jing* 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經, T no. 1060, 20: 108a, c; *Fo shuo guanding jing* 佛說灌頂經, T no. 1331, 21: 501a. In the following scriptures the more general *zhou* 咒 is mentioned in connection with the *wangliang*: *Tuoluoni zaji* 陀羅尼雜集, T no. 1336, 21: 613b; *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林, T no. 2122, 53: 931b; *Longshu wuming lun* 龍樹五明論, T no. 1420, 21: 959b.

¹¹³ 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 (H24, T 54: 1271a6–7).

text at our disposal, it can be safely surmised that *yakṣas* could have been present in the hymn from which the Chinese version was translated.¹¹⁴

Below, I quote four examples of *yakṣas* appearing in Parthian Manichean texts to demonstrate their presence in non-Chinese Manichean works. The first is from a Parthian Manichean amulet (M1202) that lists various evil creatures against which it protects its owner. Among others, Iranian demons (*peri*, *drūj*) and Buddhist demons (*yakṣa*, *rākṣasa*) are mentioned.

In your name, by your will, at your command, and through your power, Lord Jesus Christ. In the name of Mār Mani, the Savior, the Apostle of the gods, and in the name of your [chosen], praised and blessed spirit who destroys all the demons and powers of Darkness . . . [who will smite] all you demons, *yakshas*, *peris* (she-devils), *drūjs*, *rākshasas*, idols of Darknesses, and spirits of evil.¹¹⁵

The darkness and dross exuded (?) by them you shake down to the world. The yakshas and demons become ashamed, but the Light was freed from the bondage.¹¹⁶

Countless demons seized me, loathsome ones captured me. My soul has been subjugated (by them), I am torn to pieces and devoured. Demons, yakshas and peris, black, hideous, stinking dragons that I could hardly repulse: I experienced much pain and death at their hands.¹¹⁷

In higher and greater measure am I especially errant and sinful against Religious Conduct (*dyncyhryft*). This yakṣa, the wicked

¹¹⁴ “In anderen Fällen wie bei *yakṣa* (夜叉) können wir mit Gewissheit sagen, dass das indische Wort bereits im iranischen Original gestanden hat” (Waldschmidt and Lentz 1926, p. 10).

¹¹⁵ Translation by Walter B. Henning (1947, p. 50). M 1202/R/1–4, 8–9 (Boyce 1975, pp. 188–89; Durkin-Meisterernst 2008): pd tw n'm pd t[w] (k)[']m pd t[w] f(r)[m'n '](wd) pd tw z'wr // (xw)d'y yyšw mšyh[° p]d n'm mrym'[ny] 'nywgy yzd'n // [f](ryštg) ° 'wd pd n'm cy tw'n (w)'[d{?}] wjyd[g] ['st'w'dg // 'frydg k(y) wyg'n(yd) (°)w hrwyn dyw'n 'wd z'wr[° n t'ry][g][°] . . . ['](w) 'šm'h hrwyn dyw'n yxš'n pryg(°)n [d](r)[w]j'n r(x)[šs'n{?}] // ['](w) zdys'n t'ryg'n 'wd w'd'n bzg'n."

¹¹⁶ Translated by Mary Boyce (1951, p. 915). M 737/R/1–4 (Boyce 1975, p. 120; Durkin-Meisterernst 2008): t'r 'wt qrmgb cy 'c hwyn // wyz'wg wyš'nyh 'dr 'w zmbwdyg // ° yxš'n dyw'n bwynd šrmjd 'wt // rwšn '(°)z'd bwt 'c bndgyft °°.

¹¹⁷ Translated by Hans-Joachim Klimkeit (1993, p. 46). M 7/II/V/ii/15–27 (Boyce 1975, pp. 106–7; Durkin-Meisterernst 2008): gryft hym 'n's'g / 'šmg'n gšgr'n / ky kyrd hym wr'd / gryw wxybyy nmr / kyrd g(š)t / 'ng'f'd w: wxrd / hym ° dyw'n / yxš'n 'wd prygy / dwj'rwš t'ryg / 'jdh'g dwrcyhr / gnd'g 'wd sy'w / drdwm ws mrr / dyd 'c hwyn.

evil, who turns hither and thither, constantly pursuing me, who also herself is mixed into this body, in its spiritual and material limbs, and is clothed with them, has encased her arts in all botanical creation, and in the fleshly body scans for what her concupiscence and passions can provoke.¹¹⁸

Though the expression “the heart of the fierce and poisonous *yakṣas*” (*meng du yecha xin* 猛毒夜叉心) is uniquely Manichaean, poisonous snakes are sometimes closely linked to *yakṣas* in the Buddhist canon. Below is a set of passages from Buddhist texts. It is clear from the second one that *yakṣas* and poisonous snakes both share the characteristic of being able to attack unexpectedly from a hiding place.

Venomous snakes, vipers and *yakṣas* . . .¹¹⁹

Yakṣas, *rākṣasas*, *piśācas*, all kinds of venomous insects and evil animals. They want to afflict and harm sentient beings. All of them hide from view and conceal themselves.¹²⁰

In the four directions of that mountain, there are innumerable *yakṣas*, *rākṣasas*, tigers, wolves, lions, venomous snakes, and evil spirits who harm and kill sentient beings.¹²¹

Though the importance of the following reference will be clear only later on, it should be emphasized that *yakṣas* are associated with *rākṣasas* in one of the most influential Buddhist sutras, the so-called Guanyin chapter (“Pumen pin” 普門品) of the *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 (Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma, hereafter, *Lotus Sutra*).

Though enough yakshas and rakshasas to fill all the thousand-millionfold world should try to come and torment a person, if

¹¹⁸ Translation by Henning (1937, p. 35), from German into English by Jason D. BeDuhn (2000, p. 44). For another English translation, see Klimkeit 1993, p. 140. M 801a/35/6–36/2 (Henning 1937, p. 35; Durkin-Meisterernst 2008): 'sk'tr / fy'tr / (pr dyn)cyhryft γw'nkryy str jkrystr 'ym xyδ / (yk)šyy γnd'kryy s'n ky / (r)[m'n](d zw)[r](t) prwrt(y)[y mn'] / škrtyskwn ° ms pry(m)[yδ] / tmb'r xwty pr w'xšyk' / tnygyrdy' 'nōmyt wrysty / ptmwγtyy 'sty xypδδ / qrw'ncy' pr mywn / δ'rwkync δ'm (p)tsytw / δ'rt pr ptynt tmb'r(t) / wysp'rōyy tkwšt cw / wyny "rwxst 'tyh / ryj 'nxj(t).

¹¹⁹ 毒蛇虵蝮及諸夜叉 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 14b).

¹²⁰ 夜叉羅刹毘舍闍一切毒蟲諸惡獸所欲惱害衆生者靡不隱蔽自藏匿 (*Da fangguang fo huayanjing* 大方廣佛華嚴經, T no. 293, 10: 769b).

¹²¹ 其山四方有無量夜叉羅刹虎狼師子毒蛇惡鬼殺害衆生 (*Fo wei xinwang pusa shuo toutuo jing* 佛為心王菩薩說投陀經, T no. 2886, 85: 1402a).

they hear him calling the name of Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds, then these evil demons will not even be able to look at him with their evil eyes, much less do him harm.¹²²

The Figure of Makara in the Hymnscroll and Its Parallels

H19 || 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.¹²³

Mojie 魔竭 is a Chinese transcription of the Sanskrit *makara*, which refers to an aquatic fish-like monster that threatens maritime merchants.¹²⁴ In Indian iconography, *makaras* originally possessed the trunk of an elephant, but in the Chinese Buddhist context these elephant trunks became shorter, and the *makara* became known simply for its upturned snout.¹²⁵ Aside from nine exceptions in the entire Buddhist canon, all from the pre-Tang period,¹²⁶ this compound is always written with a different character for the first sound than is used in the Manichean text, namely, *mo* 摩.¹²⁷

¹²² 若三千大千國土滿中夜叉羅刹欲來惱人聞其稱觀世音菩薩名者是諸惡鬼尚不能以惡眼視況復加害 (T 9: 56c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 120.

¹²³ 我今懇切求哀請願離肉身毒火海騰波沸涌无暫停魔竭出入吞舩舩 (H19, T 54: 1270c25–26).

¹²⁴ See Kósa 2011, pp. 36–37.

¹²⁵ Salviati 1997–99, pp. 239–41.

¹²⁶ *Fo benxing jing* 佛本行經, T no. 193, 4: 56c (424–453 CE); *Zhengfa hua jing* 正法華經, T no. 263, 9: 129a (286 CE); *Fo shuo yueguang tongzi jing* 佛說月光童子經, T no. 534, 14: 816a (third century CE); *Baoyun jing* 寶雲經, T no. 658, 16: 227b, 239a (503 CE); *Zhengfa nianchu jing* 正法念處經, T no. 721, 17: 73b (538–541 CE); *Fenbie gongde lun* 分別功德論, T no. 1507, 25: 45b (25–220 CE); *Ayu wang zhuan* 阿育王傳, T no. 2042, 50: 112a (306 CE); *Faju jing* 法句經, T no. 2901, 85: 1434c (224 CE).

¹²⁷ Theoretically, this fact could suggest three possibilities regarding the Manichean text: (1) The Chinese Manichean *Hymnscroll*, or at least this particular hymn, was translated during the pre-Tang period. This hypothesis is also supported by the fact that in the entire *Hymnscroll* Mānī's name is written in a unique fashion, as Mangni 忙你 [Late Middle Chinese pronunciation: Maŋ-ni']. This is different from the standard name that was used during the Tang dynasty and later (Moni 摩尼). On the other hand, no researchers date this collection of hymns at such an early period, and there seems to be only rather meager evidence for a Manichaean presence in pre-Tang China (Liu 1976, de la Vaissière 2005). Moreover, as mentioned above, Yu Wanli offers convincing evidence for dating the collection to or after the reign of Daizong 代宗 (Yu 1995), therefore this hypothesis is not very probable. (2) The scribe might have used this rare transcription in order to avoid any kind of association with Mānī (Moni), whose standard name's transcription contains this character, however this is even more unlikely than the first possibility. This effort on the part of the scribe could be a possibility

In his *Yiqie jing yinyi* 一切經音義 that was compiled in 810, Huilin 慧琳 (737–820) defines *makara* as follows: “*Mojie* is a Sanskrit word that denotes a huge fish in the sea that swallows all aquatic creatures as well as boats and ships.”¹²⁸ According to a Buddhist legend that was well known in the Tang dynasty, and retold, for example, in the famous *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 compiled by Dao Shi 道世 (n.d.–683) in 668, once the triple recitation of Buddha’s name saved a ship of merchants from a *makara*’s attack.

The *Sutra of Great Compassion* says: “Buddha said to Ānanda: ‘. . . Once an influential merchant was travelling with other merchants, and a *makara* wanted to swallow their ship. They called out “Homage to the name of Buddha” three times¹²⁹ and they were all saved from the peril.’”¹³⁰

There are several other scriptures that mention the same story, attesting to the popularity of the narrative. These include the *Dabei jing* 大悲經 and the *Dazhi du lun* 大智度論. Furthermore, the *Fanyi mingyi ji* 翻譯名義集 quotes a section of the latter that deals with this story.¹³¹ Compared to the *Fayuan zhulin* version, the *Dazhi du lun* (and the *Fanyi mingyi ji*) gives a more detailed version of the story.

only if Mānī’s name had originally been written in its standard form and been altered to Mangni only later on, with the rare orthography of *makara* remaining as it was originally. This shift could have happened as a result of the edict against Chinese Manicheans in 732 CE. (3) The ingenious scribe simply realized that *mo* 魔, with its signification of anything demonic, is obviously much more suitable for the negative meaning of the *makara* figure. In this case, this unorthodox usage is simply a creative (re-)invention of an individual character.

Though it most likely 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—it is said to have the traits of a crocodile, elephant, rhinoceros, dolphin, and sometimes other animals (Sutherland 1991, pp. 35–36; Salviati 1997–99). This is a salient feature of the Land of Darkness, as well as its king (e.g., *Kephalaia* 30,34–31,2; Klimkeit 1998, p. 157). Yet another coincidence is that in India *makara* is equated with the constellation Capricorn, which in Manichaeism belongs to the dark element/world of Darkness (*Kephalaia* 167,29–31), thus, together with the scorpion-snake, this term can be associated with the darkest of the dark elements in the Manichean system.

¹²⁸ 摩竭者梵語也海中大魚吞啗一切諸水族類及吞船舶者 (T no. 2128, 54: 577a). The motif of a *makara* destroying a ship laden with treasures is also present in the *Mahābhārata* (Vogel 1957, pp. 563–64).

¹²⁹ Coincidentally, Yishu appears three times in the first Manichean hymn, thus he is also summoned three times (H13, H29, H35).

¹³⁰ 又大慈經云佛告阿難. . . 過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 (*Fayuan zhulin*, T 53: 434a).

¹³¹ See, for instance, *Dabei jing*, T no. 380, 12: 957b–c; *Dazhi du lun*, T no. 1509, 25: 109a; *Fanyi mingyi ji*, T no. 2131, 54: 1091b.

Once upon a time five hundred merchants went to sea to collect jewels and they came across a *makara*,¹³² the king of the fishes, with its mouth open. The water of the sea entered the boat very quickly. The captain asked the man on the mast: “What do you see?” He answered: “I can see three suns emerging from the White Mountain, the water is rushing as if it were flowing into a huge pit.” The captain said: “This is the *makara*, the king of the fishes, with its mouth open: One of the suns is the real one and the other two are the eyes of the fish. The White Mountain is the teeth of the fish and the rushing water is hastening into its mouth. We are finished.” One by one everybody [on board] was asking the gods to save himself. When the individual prayers did not prove to be effective, a Buddhist lay follower [*upāsaka*], who followed the five precepts, said to the others: “We should call Namō Buddha together. Buddha is supreme as one who can save [others] from perils.” The people together called Namō Buddha with one heart. In its former life, this fish was a disciple of the Buddha who had achieved the knowledge of past lives and violated the precepts. When it heard the call of Buddha, it repented in its heart, and then closed its mouth. The men on board were thus saved because they called the Buddha’s name.¹³³

Though the length of the narratives and the individual motifs may vary, the fundamental narrative and the characters are constant: After meeting a *makara*, the merchants on a boat are saved by calling the Buddha’s name. In the stanza cited above, the community of Manichaean auditors is calling Yishu to save their boat from a *makara* who wants to swallow it.

The Figure of Rākṣasa in the Hymnscroll and Its Parallels

H20 || Originally this is the palace of Māra and the country of *rākṣasas*. It is also a dense forest and a marsh of reeds and rushes.

¹³² *Dazhi du lun* uses the characters *magaluo* 摩伽羅 as a transliteration, while *Fanyi mingyi ji* has *mojie* 摩竭.

¹³³ 昔有五百估客入海採寶值摩伽羅魚王開口海水入中船去駛疾船師問樓上人汝見何等答言見三日出白山羅列水流奔趣如入大坑船師言是摩伽羅魚王開口一是實日兩日是魚眼白山是魚齒水流奔趣是入其口我曹了矣各各求諸天神以自救濟是時諸人各各求其所事都無所益中有五戒優婆塞語衆人言吾等當共稱南無佛佛爲無上能救苦厄衆人一心同聲稱南無佛是魚先世是佛破戒弟子得宿命智聞稱佛聲心自悔悟即便合口船人得脫以念佛故 (*Dazhi du lun*, T 25: 109a).

It is where all evil wild beasts run about jostling with each other, and where poisonous insects and venomous snakes gather.¹³⁴

Precisely after the previously considered stanza containing the reference to *makara* comes this one that mentions the land of *rākṣasas*, demonic creatures that are especially famous for eating people. A well-known example of the land of *rākṣasas* can be found in the extremely popular Guanyin chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*,¹³⁵ where people on a journey seeking precious stones mistakenly arrive there and are saved by calling Guanyin's name.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ 元是魔宮羅刹國復是稠林簾葦澤諸惡禽獸交橫走蘊集毒虫及蛇蝮 (H20, T 54: 1270c27–c28).

¹³⁵ “The growing popularity of the cult of Guanyin during the Sui and Tang dynasties was attested to by a large number of copies of the scripture from Dunhuang: there are 1100 copies of scriptures related to Guanyin, including 860 copies of the *Lotus Sutra* which outnumbered by far copies of any other sutra found in the cave and almost 128 individual copies of the *Guanyin Sutra*” (Kim 2001, p. 17, n. 5). “Among the favorite eleven chapters the Guanyin chapter is certainly one of the most popular, and it was often singled out as the one which is most suited to elucidate the teachings of the entire Lotus. . . . Probably it was not long after this time [late sixth century] that the Guanyin chapter was separated from the main body of the Lotus and treated as a subject of independent painting. At any rate, the Guanyin chapter continued to play an important role in Chinese Buddhist art for a long time: through the Tang, through the most creative periods in Dunhuang until the early eleventh century. . . . The wall paintings of Guanyin stories at Dunhuang range over a period of about four hundred years, from the early seventh to the eleventh century. In contrast to them, the smaller Guanyin pictures on silk or paper found at the same site are almost exclusively limited to a short period of one hundred years from the ninth to the tenth century” (Murase 1971, pp. 42–43). The Guanyin chapter was so popular that Daoists based a similar scripture in a Daoist disguise on it: “This Tang work, entitled the *Marvellous Scripture of the Great Unity, the Savior from Suffering and Protector of Life* (*Taiyi jiuku hushen miaojing* 太一救苦護身妙經, Dz 351; hereinafter referred to as the *Scripture of the Savior from Suffering*), is entirely dedicated to Jiuku tianzun and emphasizes his charismatic and iconographic proximity to Guanyin. Besides its descriptive value in regard to the Taoist saint's features and functions, it appears also, in my view, to be a Taoist adaptation of the *Pumen pin*. . . . Contrary to other Taoist writings dealing with Jiuku tianzun, the *Scripture of the Savior from Suffering* does not emphasize its central actor in his well-known role as protector of the dead but reveals a hitherto hidden aspect of his personality: Jiuku tianzun as the savior from peril, a vocation directly derived from Guanyin. Though prefigured, as already noted, in the *Lingbao Scripture of Karmic Retribution*, this specific role becomes here the main point of focus” (Mollier 2008, pp. 179–80).

¹³⁶ Another type of story elaborates on the adventures of merchants who, taken by the wind to the land of the *rākṣasas*, find their boat is ruined. They then go to the shore to meet *rākṣasa* women, however in the end they are usually eaten by them (*Fo benxing ji jing*, T 3: 879b; *Fo shuo huguo zunzhe suo wen dasheng jing* 佛說護國尊者所問大乘經, T no. 321, 12: 5c; *Mohe moye jing* 摩訶摩耶經, T no. 383, 12: 1009b; *Fo shuo dasheng zhuangyan bao*

If someone, holding fast to the name of Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds, should enter a great fire, the fire could not burn him. This would come about because of this bodhisattva's authority and supernatural power. If one were washed away by a great flood and called upon his name, one would immediately find himself in a shallow place.

Suppose there were a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, a million living beings who, seeking for gold, silver, lapis lazuli, sea-shell, agate, coral, amber, pearls, and other treasures, set out on the great sea. And suppose a fierce wind should blow their ship off course and it drifted to the land of rakshasa demons. If among those people there is even just one who calls the name of Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds, then all those people will be delivered from their troubles with the rakshasas. This is why he is called Perceiver of the World's Sounds.¹³⁷

This scene is one of a series of perils from which Guanyin can save those who ask for him. This narrative was highly popular in medieval China;¹³⁸ the series is listed, for example, in the *gāthā* (hymn) version of the same Guanyin chapter, where other creatures are also mentioned.¹³⁹

Suppose someone should conceive a wish to harm you, should push you into a great pit of fire. Think on the power of that Per-

wang jing 佛說大乘莊嚴寶王經, T no. 1050, 20: 56b; *Fayuan zhulin*, T 53: 522a, 675a; *Zhu jing yao ji* 諸經要集, T no. 2123, 54: 64c).

¹³⁷ 若有持是觀世音菩薩名者設入大火火不能燒由是菩薩威神力故若為大水所漂稱其名號即得淺處若有百千萬億衆生為求金銀琉璃車碾馬瑙珊瑚琥珀真珠等寶入於大海假使黑風吹其船舫飄墮羅刹鬼國其中若有乃至一人稱觀世音菩薩名者是諸人等皆得解脫羅刹之難以是因緣名觀世音 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 56c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 120. Cf. *Tianpin miaofa lianhua jing* 添品妙法蓮華經, T no. 264, 9: 191c.

¹³⁸ “Elaborately described, these seven (or twelve) hazards—including fire, water, shipwreck in the sea of the *rākṣasa*-demons, (falling from Mount Sumeru,) knives and staves, demons, pillory and shackles, (poison and sorcery,) brigands, (wild beasts,) (snakes,) (thunder and storm)—had an enduring impact on the Chinese imagination and were, time and again, pictured in art and literature” (Mollier 2008, pp. 174–75). The following Dunhuang caves contain these scenes: Nos. 303, 420 (Sui); 23, 45, 74, 126, 205, 217, 444 (High Tang); 7, 112, 185, 231, 361, 468, 472 (mid-Tang); 8, 12, 14, 18, 85, 128, 141, 156, 196, 232, 468 (late Tang); 6, 61, 108, 261, 288, 345 (Five Dynasties); 55, 76, 368, 454 (Song). See He 1999, p. 250; Tanabe 2009, p. 177; Wong 2007, pp. 274–76. This Chinese type of depiction of Guanyin with scenes on both sides of him derives from India, as exemplified in Cave 7 of Aurangabad (Wong 2007, p. 275).

¹³⁹ On a comparison of the prose and the *gāthā* list, see Tanabe 1988, pp. 16–17.

ceiver of Sounds [Guanyin] and the pit of fire will change into a pond! If you should be cast adrift on the vast ocean, menaced by dragons, fish and various demons, think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and the billows and waves cannot drown you! . . . Suppose you are imprisoned in cangue and lock, hands and feet bound by fetters and chains. Think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and they will fall off, leaving you free! Suppose with curses and various poisonous herbs someone should try to injure you. Think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and the injury will rebound upon the originator. Suppose you encounter evil rakshasas, poison dragons and various demons. Think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and then none of them will dare to harm you. If evil beasts should encircle you, their sharp fangs and claws inspiring terror, think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and they will scamper away in boundless retreat. If lizards, snakes, vipers, scorpions threaten you with poison breath that sears like flame, think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and, hearing your voice, they will flee of themselves.¹⁴⁰

Comparing the references to *makaras* and *rākṣasas* in the above Manichaean stanzas with those found in the two popular Buddhist myths introduced in these two sections, one can hypothesize that the Manichaean translator-author of the *Hymnscroll*, in fact, conflated two motifs: (1) *Makaras* attack and try to engulf boats containing precious goods, and the boats' passengers are saved from peril by calling the Buddha. (2) A boat in search of precious goods drifts to the land of *rākṣasas*, but calling out to Guanyin saves the travellers/merchants onboard. The first narrative is not connected with *rākṣasas* and the figure of Guanyin, but does explicitly relate the story to *makaras*. The second narrative does mention Guanyin but the translation by Kumārajīva (334–413), at least, ignores *makaras*.

The question now arises whether this conflation was the work of the Manichaean translator-author, or had existed previously. Here, I will contend that the latter possibility is more likely. In the next section, I will introduce textual and visual evidence which substantiates that contention.

¹⁴⁰ 假使興害意推落大火坑念彼觀音力火坑變成池或漂流巨海龍魚諸鬼難念彼觀音力波浪不能沒 . . . 或囚禁枷鎖手足被桎械念彼觀音力釋然得解脫咒詛諸毒藥所欲害身者念彼觀音力還著於本人或遇惡羅刹毒龍諸鬼等念彼觀音力時悉不敢害若惡獸圍遶利牙爪可怖念彼觀音力疾走無邊方虻蛇及蝮蠍氣毒煙火燃念彼觀音力尋聲自迴去 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 57c–58a). English translation from Watson 2002, pp. 124–25.

Demons and the Guanyin Chapter of the Lotus Sutra

In the standard prose narrative found in Kumārajīva's translation of the *Lotus Sutra's* Guanyin chapter, a ship searching for precious stones drifts away due to a sinister wind and arrives at the land of *rākṣasas*. No other creatures that threaten the ship are mentioned. However, in the *gāthā* part of this chapter, which partially repeats and partially expands the prose narrative, a *longyu* 龍魚 is mentioned in addition to the various (*rākṣasa*) demons.

If you should be cast adrift on the vast ocean, menaced by dragons, fish [*longyu*] and various demons, think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and the billows and waves cannot drown you!¹⁴¹

The expression *longyu* allows for a twofold interpretation. First, it could refer to “dragons and fish.” This is how the compound is rendered in Burton Watson's translation above. Second, it could refer to a dragon-fish. While both interpretations are possible, the above sentence's logic appears to be in favour of the latter one. It speaks of the difficulties (*nan* 難) caused by *longyu* and *zhugui* 諸鬼. Since the latter compound should be read together to mean various demons, it is most likely that *longyu* should be read as a compound (“dragon-fish”).¹⁴² Even if Buddhist texts do not directly equate dragon-fish with *makaras*, two things should be noted here. First, there appears to have been an uncertainty among Buddhists about what *longyu* exactly meant. This ambivalence can clearly be seen in the *Tianpin miaofa lianhua jing* (The Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Finest Dharma with Added Sections, 601) by Jñānagupta (Shenajueduo 闍那崛多, 523–600) and Dharmagupta (Damojiduo 達摩笈多, 590–616), which is a slightly corrected version of Kumārajīva's translation. Here, instead of *longyu*, we find *yulong* 魚龍.¹⁴³ This difference seems to indicate that this compound, in this context at least, was not unambiguous. Second, as can be seen in the passage quoted below, an earlier translation by Dharmarakṣa (Zhu Fahu 竺法護, ca. 265–313 or 239–316) clearly features a *makara* in the same context.

¹⁴¹ 或漂流巨海龍魚諸鬼難念彼觀音力波浪不能沒 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 57c). English translation from Watson 2002, pp. 124–25.

¹⁴² Wang states, “Both Hurvitz and Watson translate the phrase *longyu* as ‘dragons, fish’ . . . The two characters are better treated as describing one hybrid creature, often featured in omen lore. In any case, the designer of the composition certainly understood the phrase *longyu* to be a ‘dragon-fish’, instead of ‘dragon and fish’” (Wang 2005, p. 423, n. 119).

¹⁴³ *Tianpin miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 192c.

Though Kumārajīva's translation was certainly the most popular and widely used version, it needs to be remembered that the earlier translation (286 CE) by Dharmarakṣa explicitly mentions *makaras*. Even more interesting is the fact that this earlier translation refers to *makaras* in prose (there is no *gāthā* section in his translation).

Suppose there were a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, a million living beings who set out on the great sea. From the depth of the sea, the bottomless source, they obtained gold, silver, various bright-moon pearls, wish-fulfilling jewels [*cintāmaṇi*], crystal, lapis lazuli, seashell, agate, coral, amber and tiger-eye stone, thus their ship was filled with treasures. And suppose a wind should blow their ship off to the whirling waves of the Black Mountains. If there they cross the land of demons and encounter a *makara* [*mojieyu* 魔竭魚], and among those people there is just one who secretly and alone calls the virtuous and magical power of Illuminator of the Voice of the World [Guanyin] Bodhisattva and recites his name, all [the others] will be delivered from all their troubles and their companions will all be saved. They call him the Illuminator of the Voice of the World, because they will not meet the misfortunes caused by demons and evil spirits.¹⁴⁴

Despite the numerous interesting differences between the two translations, the two narratives are basically the same, although Dharmarakṣa and Kumārajīva may have been working with different versions of the original text. The presence of the *makara* motif in the earliest Chinese translation clearly indicates that there was a textual tradition in which *makaras* played a more central role. Interestingly, the *gāthā* part of Kumārajīva's translation seems to echo the prose part of Dharmarakṣa's translation. Kumārajīva has perhaps substituted *longyu* for *mojieyu*, but also refers to the *rākṣasa* in his own prose portion in a more general fashion as demons. The answer to the question of whether or not Dharmarakṣa's translation served as a direct source of the later representations of this scene depends on how available his translation was after Kumārajīva's version became popular.

¹⁴⁴ 若入大海百千億姦衆生豪賤處海深淵無底之源採致金銀雜珠明月如意寶珠水精琉璃車碾馬腦珊瑚虎魄載滿船寶假使風吹其船流墮黑山迴波若經鬼界值魔竭魚衆中一人竊獨心念光世音菩薩功德威神而稱名號皆得解脫一切衆患及其伴侶衆得濟渡不遇諸魔邪鬼之厄故名光世音 (*Zhengfa hua jing*, T 9: 129a). For an English translation of Kumārajīva's version, see Watson 2002, p. 120.

According to the International Dunhuang Project Database, there are at least nine fragments left from Dharmarakṣa's *Zhengfahua jing* 正法華經 (Sutra of the Flower of the True Dharma).¹⁴⁵ Four are from Toyuk, one is from Murtuk, and the provenance of the rest is unknown. The fact that at least half the fragments come from the Turfan region and not Dunhuang means that Dharmarakṣa's translation was present in the Central Asian regions where the Manichaeen missionaries who came to China were from.¹⁴⁶

In this way, the link between the *makara* story and the *rākṣasa* narrative can, at least in theory, be traced textually. The Manichaeen hymn that mentions *makaras* swallowing ships and the land of *rākṣasas* can be seen as explicitly using these pre-existing textual motifs.

While there has been an intense scholarly debate about the relationship of the prose and the verse parts of the *Lotus Sutra*'s Guanyin chapter, it is usually acknowledged that a great number of its Chinese pictorial representations are largely based on the *gāthā* portion found in Kumārajīva's translation.¹⁴⁷ Including the shipwreck, there are altogether seventeen perils mentioned in this *gāthā* section.¹⁴⁸ While in some cases only the ship with the merchants and the *rākṣasas* are depicted,¹⁴⁹ there are several depictions of the scene where other creatures, some similar to *makaras*, also make an appearance.

The representations of this chapter at the sixth-century Wanfosi 萬佛寺 (Sichuan) are clearly based on the *gāthā* section.¹⁵⁰ Eugene Y. Wang, an expert on *Lotus Sutra* representations, stresses that in the shipwreck scene "the horned creature afloat on the sea represents the 'dragon-fish.'" Thus, it can be assumed that the artists based their depictions on the *gāthā* section from Kumārajīva's translation.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵ Text nos. Ch 155, Ch 712, Ch 1788a–b, Ch 2105, Ch 2492, Ch 2774, Ch 2821, Ch 3176, Ch 3681.

¹⁴⁶ It must be also added that in the same region many more translations by Kumārajīva have been found (e.g., text nos. Ch 118, Ch 125, Ch 127, Ch 132, Ch 154, Ch 178, Ch 188, Ch 195, Ch 333, Ch 384, Ch 422, Ch 431, Ch 1401, Ch 2643). The Turfan remains of this version, unlike the Dunhuang ones, are usually fragmentary.

¹⁴⁷ Murase also sees *gāthā* stories as having played a more important role in India as well. See Murase 1971, pp. 60, 71.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 60–61.

¹⁴⁹ Cave 303, Dunhuang, Sui dynasty (581–618). See He 1999, p. 37. Cf. Wang 2005, p. 71, fig. 2.1.

¹⁵⁰ Wang 2005, p. 222, fig. 4.21.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 222–23.

While in this depiction the horned creature in the water is a dragon-fish, significantly, two other representations of the same scene appear to depict it differently. A painting from the early eighth-century Cave 205 at Dunhuang shows a ship menaced by demons, as well as two huge water creatures apparently aiming to swallow the craft.¹⁵² While depictions of the other perils from the Guanyin chapter are shifted to the two sides of the painting, the shipwreck scene is featured prominently in the middle under the figure of a standing Guanyin. This scene's importance becomes even more apparent when compared with the size of the other scenes: it is at least twice as large (due partly, of course, to its position). Although I cannot speak about the artist's intention in painting these beasts, the result is water creatures with upturned noses that closely resemble *makaras*.¹⁵³ The awkward and slightly unnatural lines of the snout in this painting suggest that the painter did not exactly know what a *longyu* looked like, leading him to use the typical nose of a *makara*. Identification of these monsters as *makaras* can also be supported by the fact that during the Tang dynasty *makaras* were usually depicted in pairs, just like in this painting.¹⁵⁴

In another, later mural painting at Dunhuang (Cave 55),¹⁵⁵ one finds two *makaras* appearing in the sea, just beside the ship, one of them apparently trying to swallow the vessel.¹⁵⁶ Meanwhile, on the shore one can see three *rākṣasas* who seem to be making an effort to seize the ship and its rudders. Similarly to that of Cave 205, this representation also portrays the ship-swallowing *makaras* and the land of *rākṣasas* together.

In an early, Sui dynasty representation from Cave 420 at Dunhuang, there is a scene with two boats. The lower boat seems to have encountered a huge monster with a strange snout (appearing in the bottom left corner) that evidently wants to swallow it.¹⁵⁷ Moreover, there is a small dragon-like creature depicted in the water (probably a *longyu*). The boat appearing in the upper part of the scene is drifting to the land of *rākṣasas*. Though it cannot be said for certain that the huge monster in the bottom portion of the scene is a *makara*, considering its strange nose and the presence of a *longyu*, one cannot exclude this possibility. It can be further confirmed

¹⁵² Pelliot 1920, pl. 126; Murase 1971, p. 51, fig. 9; Ma 2001, p. 114, color pl. 82; Wang 2005, p. 293, fig. 5.28.

¹⁵³ Cen 1983; Salviati 1997–99, pp. 241, 244.

¹⁵⁴ Salviati 1997–99, p. 242.

¹⁵⁵ The southern wall of Cave 55, Dunhuang, Song dynasty (960–1276).

¹⁵⁶ Duan and Fen 2006, pl. 153.

¹⁵⁷ He 1999, p. 28.

that the small dragon-like creature in the center of the scene in Cave 420 is a dragon-fish (*longyu*), and therefore that the other, huge figure in the front is probably a *makara*, by looking at a post-Tang representation of the same scene from Cave 208 at Dunhuang. Here, instead of the *makaras*, a dragon is depicted along with menacing creatures in the water and equally wild-looking *rākṣasas* on the shore.¹⁵⁸ In this painting, none of the fish have the typical nose of a *makara*, and thus it can be assumed that the painter interpreted *longyu* to mean “dragon and fish.” In sum, in Cave 420 (Sui), Cave 205 (Tang), and Cave 55 (Song), we find visual depictions of the second difficulty of the Guanyin chapter, which all seem to portray a *makara* or a pair of *makaras*, a motif which Kumārajīva’s translation does not contain, while that of Dharmarakṣa does. In these three cases, the *makara*-like monsters directly menace the boat, and it is this emergency situation where Guanyin offers help.

All these representations might suggest that altogether three textual motifs were conflated:

- (1) *Makaras* trying to swallow a treasure-ship in which somebody calls the name of the Buddha, thereby saving its passengers.
- (2) The prose part of the Guanyin chapter of Kumārajīva’s popular translation of the *Lotus Sutra* about a treasure-ship that drifts to the land of *rākṣasas*. After calling Guanyin’s name, all the boat riders are saved.
- (3) Kumārajīva’s *gāthā* part and Dharmarakṣa’s prose part of the *Lotus Sutra*’s Guanyin chapter, which respectively mention dragon-fish and *makara*. Again, Guanyin appears here as a savior figure.

Naturally, the above remarks only touch the tip of the iceberg, and in the present paper I will not trace the exact historical development of these motifs. Nevertheless, it seems highly probable that oral traditions and possibly other textual sources substantially contributed both to the Dunhuang paintings and the Manichaean translations considered above. In sum, it is highly probable that the appearance of the *makaras* together with the land of *rākṣasas* in the Chinese Manichaean *Hymnscroll* is not a simple enumeration of evil creatures but a consciously applied integration of a complex Buddhist image.

A General Comparison of the Manichaean Hymn and the Guanyin Chapter

It is worth noting that the links between this Manichaean hymn and this *Lotus Sutra* passage can be confirmed in various other ways. Here I will

¹⁵⁸ Duan and Fen 2006, pl. 106.

highlight some similarities between the Guanyin chapter and the two hymns to Yishu in the Manichaean *Hymnscroll*. More specifically, I will concentrate on the motif of Guanyin saving people from the land of *rākṣasas* in the Guanyin chapter and the description of the Land of Darkness in the first Manichaean hymn, while also analyzing some of the surrounding motifs and attributes in the two texts.

Before continuing, I would like to briefly summarize the various Chinese translations of the *Lotus Sutra*, since quotations will appear from various versions of this source.¹⁵⁹ There were multiple Chinese translations of the sutra (depending on the source, six or fourteen),¹⁶⁰ however only three are known to still survive:

- (1) Dharmarakṣa translated the sutra during the Western Jin 晉 period (265–316 CE), finishing it in 286. His translation is entitled *Zhengfahua jing* (Sutra of the Flower of the True Dharma, T no. 263). This is the earliest translation of the sutra. In this version, the Guanyin chapter is the twenty-fourth chapter.
- (2) In 406, Kumārajīva finished his translation, the *Miaofa lianhua jing* (*Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma*, T no. 262). He based his translation on a Sanskrit manuscript written in Kucheian characters, which was probably more genuine than the one used by Dharmarakṣa (which is said to represent “a later stage of textual tradition at an earlier date”¹⁶¹). This has been the most popular version, which is also attested by the fact that this recension has served as the basis for nearly all the English translations of the sutra.¹⁶² It is important to note that the *gāthā* part of the Guanyin chapter was, as the preface of the *Tianpin miaofa lianhua jing* testifies, added later: “As to the *Devadatta-pin* and *Pumen pin* verses, we observe that former worthies have continued to give them out, following the fashion of adding what is lacking.”¹⁶³ On the other hand, the extant Sanskrit version does have *gāthās* in the twenty-fifth chapter, but since this manuscript is much later than Kumārajīva’s translation, this fact cannot be taken as proof of their presence in his base text. Regardless of the exact date between 406 and 601 CE when this interpolation by “worthies” took place, the fact that these verses

¹⁵⁹ For a good summary of the textual history of the *Lotus Sutra*, see, for instance, Pye 2003, pp. 167–81.

¹⁶⁰ Teiser and Stone 2009, p. 28.

¹⁶¹ Fuss 1991, pp. 57–58; Pye 2003, pp. 168–70, 176.

¹⁶² Teiser and Stone 2009, pp. 237–40.

¹⁶³ 竊見提婆達多及普門品偈先賢續出補闕流行 (*Tianpin miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 134c). English translation from Pye 2003, p. 170.

originally were not present certainly did not have any influence on their relationship with the Manichaeic collection of hymns, as the latter was composed much later (around the eighth or ninth century), when the *gāthās* of the Guanyin chapter had not only already been inserted into Kumārajīva's text, but also had gained immense popularity.¹⁶⁴

- (3) In 601 CE the *Tianpin miaofa lianhua jing* was authored by Jñānagupta and Dharmagupta.¹⁶⁵ This translation is basically a revision of Kumārajīva's accepted version and in some places simply adds corrections to it.

There were several commentaries written during the centuries,¹⁶⁶ however, since they do not add new information to the parallels with the Manichaeic *Hymnscroll*, I will not cite them. In this section, I will use the following abbreviations: D = Dharmarakṣa's version, K = Kumārajīva's version, JD = Jñānagupta's and Dharmagupta's version, P = prose parts, V = verse (*gāthā*) parts. Below, I have listed the similarities between the Manichaeic hymn to Yishu and the Guanyin chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* while adding the relevant passages.

- (1) The Chinese Manichaeic hymn preceding its reference to *rākṣasas* (H19) mentions the sea of fire, while the *Lotus Sutra* quotation mentions fire and sea preceding its *rākṣasa* reference.

H32 || 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
the Great Law shine everywhere, so that our hearts and soul may
be always bright and pure!¹⁶⁷

K/P [= JD/P] || If someone, holding fast to the name of Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds, should enter a great fire, the fire could not burn him. This would come about because of this bodhisattva's authority and supernatural power. If one were washed away by a great flood and called upon his name, one would immediately find himself in a shallow place.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ Tanabe 2009, pp. 174–77.

¹⁶⁵ Fuss 1991, pp. 61–62.

¹⁶⁶ Such as those by Daosheng 道生 (355–434), Zhiyi 智顛 (538–597), Jizang 吉藏 (549–623), and Kuiji 窺基 (632–682).

¹⁶⁷ 願息火海大波濤暗雲暗霧諸繚盖降大法日普光輝令我心性恒明淨 (T 54: 1271a22–23).

¹⁶⁸ 若有持是觀世音菩薩名者設入大火火不能燒由是菩薩威神力故若為大水所漂稱其名號即得淺處 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 56c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 120.

K/V [= JD/V] || Suppose someone should conceive a wish to harm you, should push you into a great pit of fire. Think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and the pit of fire will change into a pond!¹⁶⁹

(2) In connection with the *rākṣasas*, both the Manichaean and the Buddhist texts use an uncommon compound for boat (*chuanfang* 船舫). In the entire Buddhist canon, there are altogether approximately seventy occurrences of this compound that are not related to the *Lotus Sutra*.

H19 || 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 [*chuanfang*].¹⁷⁰

K/P [JD/P] || And suppose a fierce wind should blow their ship [*chuanfang*] off course and it drifted to the land of rakshasa demons.¹⁷¹

(3) In both texts, the events take place in a sea tossing with waves.

H19 || Its tossing waves are boiling and bubbling ceaselessly, the *makaras* surface and submerge to swallow [our] vessel.¹⁷²

K/V [=JD/V] || If you should be cast adrift on the vast ocean, menaced by dragon-fish and various demons, think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and the billows and waves cannot drown you!¹⁷³

D || If a wind blows their boat, which is thus carried away to the whirling waves resembling the Black Mountains, while crossing the demons' land, they encounter a *makara*.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ 假使興害意推落大火坑念彼觀音力火坑變成池 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 57c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 124.

¹⁷⁰ 我今懇切求哀諸願離穴身毒火海騰波沸涌無暫停魔竭出入吞舫舫 (T 54: 1270c25–26).

¹⁷¹ 假使黑風吹其船舫飄墮羅刹鬼國 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 56c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 120.

¹⁷² 騰波沸涌無暫停魔竭出入吞舫舫 (T 54: 1270c26).

¹⁷³ 或漂流巨海龍魚諸鬼難念彼觀音力波浪不能沒 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 57c). English translation based on Watson 2002, pp. 124–25.

¹⁷⁴ 假使風吹其船流墮黑山迴波若經鬼界值魔竭魚 (*Zhengfa hua jing*, T 9: 129a).

(4) Both texts mention the land of *rākṣasas* (*luocha guo* 羅刹國, *luochagui guo* 羅刹鬼國), from which one wishes to be liberated.

H20 || Originally this is the palace of Māra and the country of *rākṣasas*. It is also a dense forest and a marsh of reeds and rushes. It is where all evil wild beasts run about jostling with each other, and where poisonous insects and venomous snakes gather.¹⁷⁵

K/P [= JD/V] || And suppose a fierce wind should blow their ship off course and it drifted to the land of rakshasa demons. If among those people there is even just one who calls the name of Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds, then all those people will be delivered from their troubles with the rakshasas.¹⁷⁶

K/V [= JD/V] || Suppose you encounter evil rakshasas, poison dragons and various demons. Think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and then none of them will dare to harm you.¹⁷⁷

(5) Both texts mention *yakṣas* (*yecha* 夜叉) shortly after the reference to the *rākṣasas*' country.

H24 || The dark mother of all demon-kings, the source of all evil deeds, also the heart of the fierce and poisonous *yakṣas*, as well as the thoughts within the mind of the Demoness of Greed.¹⁷⁸

K/P [= JD/P] || Though enough yakshas and rakshasas to fill all the thousand-millionfold world should try to come and torment a person, if they hear him calling the name of Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds, then these evil demons will not even be able to look at him with their evil eyes, much less do him harm.¹⁷⁹

(6) The expression “skilful means” (*fangbian* 方便) is one of the basic teachings of the entire *Lotus Sutra*. This important Mahāyāna concept receives

¹⁷⁵ 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蚊虻 (T 54: 1270c27–28).

¹⁷⁶ 假使黑風吹其船舫飄墮羅刹鬼國其中若有乃至一人稱觀世音菩薩名者是諸人等皆得解脫羅刹之難 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 56c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 120.

¹⁷⁷ 或遇惡羅刹毒龍諸鬼等念彼觀音力時悉不敢害 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 58a). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 125.

¹⁷⁸ 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 (T 54: 1271a6–7).

¹⁷⁹ 若三千大千國土滿中夜叉羅刹欲來惱人聞其稱觀世音菩薩名者是諸惡鬼尚不能以惡眼視之 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 56c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 120.

special attention and clarification in a *Lotus Sutra* chapter bearing the same name.¹⁸⁰ On the other hand, the Guanyin chapter does contain the essence of this teaching in that it describes how Guanyin is able to appear in various forms to save various beings. The Manichaean hymn analyzed here also contains this expression.

H53 || Send down the great skilful means and the power of compassion! We beg you to revive the light-natures [souls] who are in complete distress.¹⁸¹

K/V [= JD/V] || The power of the Perceiver of Sounds' wonderful wisdom can save them from the sufferings of the world. He is endowed with transcendental powers and widely practices the expedient means of wisdom.¹⁸²

(7) While appearing in the context of a different story, in both cases people with precious goods are mentioned.

H25 || The armor and the weaponry of all demon-kings and the poisonous net of all opposing teachings can sink the precious wares, as well as the merchants, and can cloud the light-buddhas of the Sun and Moon.¹⁸³

K/P [= JD/P] || Suppose there were a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, a million living beings who, seeking for gold, silver, lapis lazuli, seashell, agate, coral, amber, pearls, and other treasures, set out on the great sea. And suppose a fierce wind should blow their ship off course and it drifted to the land of rakshasa demons. If among those people there is even just one who calls the name of Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds, then all those people will be delivered from their troubles with the rakshasas. . . . Suppose, in a place filled with all the evil-hearted bandits of the thousand-millionfold world, there is a merchant leader who is

¹⁸⁰ For instance, see the classical study Pye 2003.

¹⁸¹ 降大方便慈悲力請蘇普厄諸明性 (T 54: 1271c5).

¹⁸² 觀音妙智力能救世間苦具足神通力廣修智方便 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 58a). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 126.

¹⁸³ 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 (T 54: 1271a8–9).

guiding a band of merchants carrying valuable treasures over a steep and dangerous road.¹⁸⁴

(8) The addressees of these texts can appear (*xian* 現) as they please. Guanyin has the power to appear in any desired form in order to save various kinds of beings. In addition to those found in a long list of potential forms,¹⁸⁵ Guanyin can appear as a young boy (*tongnan* 童男) or a young girl (*tongnü* 童女).¹⁸⁶ In the Manichaean hymn, Yishu is also said to have the ability to appear at will as a young boy or girl in order to destroy various demons.

H43 || [He] sometimes appears as a young boy, with a subtle and wonderful form, to drive the five kinds of female demons mad, and [he] sometimes appears as a young girl with a harmonious body, to make the five kinds of male demons fall into a mad confusion.¹⁸⁷

K/P || If they need a young boy or a young girl to be saved, immediately he becomes a young boy or a young girl and preaches the Law for them.¹⁸⁸

(9) The addressees in both texts are capable of bestowing a state of fearlessness (*wuwei* 無畏) upon petitioners.

H66 || [So that our light-flock] could wander freely, and always without fear.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁴ 若有百千萬億衆生爲求金銀琉璃車碾馬瑙珊瑚琥珀眞珠等寶入於大海假使黑風吹其船舫飄墮羅刹鬼國 . . . 若三千大千國土滿中怨賊有一商主將諸商人齎持重寶經過嶮路 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 56c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 120.

¹⁸⁵ Other forms include a buddha, *pratyekabuddha*, *śrāvaka*, King Brahma, Lord Śakra, Īśvara, Maheśvara, a great general of heaven, Vaiśravaṇa, a petty king, a rich man, a householder, chief minister, a brahman, a monk, a nun, a layman believer, a laywoman, a heavenly being, a *nāga*, a *yakṣa*, a *gandharva*, an *asura*, a *garuḍa*, a *kiṃnara*, a *mahoraga*, a human or a nonhuman being, and Vajrapāṇi.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Keyworth 2011, p. 525: “The *Lotus* and Chinese *Śūraṅgama* present thirty-three and thirty-two manifestations of Guanyin, respectively.”

¹⁸⁷ 或現童男微妙相癡發五種雌魔類或現童女端嚴身狂亂五種雄魔口 (T 54: 1271b15–16).

¹⁸⁸ 應以童男童女身得度者即現童男童女身而爲說法 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 57b). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 123.

¹⁸⁹ 遊行自在常無畏 (T 54: 1272a3).

K/P [= JD/P] || This bodhisattva and mahāsattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds can bestow fearlessness on those who are in fearful, pressing or difficult circumstances. That is why in this saha world everyone calls him Bestower of Fearlessness.¹⁹⁰

(10) In both texts, a pit of fire (H35: *huokeng* 火坑; *Lotus Sutra: dahuokeng* 大火坑) appears as a place from which the addressee rescues the petitioners.

H35 || Presently we reside in the pit of fire; lead us quickly and give us peace in the pure land!¹⁹¹

K/V [= JD/V] || Suppose someone should conceive a wish to harm you, should push you into a great pit of fire. Think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and the pit of fire will change into a pond!¹⁹²

(11) Both texts mention bound states, such as being fettered (H27: *jinfu* 禁縛; *Lotus Sutra: qiujin* 囚禁) by cangues (H27, *Lotus Sutra: jiasuo* 枷鎖), entangled, or knotted.

H17 || You can be the savior of those who were robbed, you can be the liberation for those who are entangled and knotted.¹⁹³

H27 || Now [the dark principle, the ruler of demons] returns to us, creating obstacles and troubles, trussing us up by putting cangues and chains on us, and always ensnaring us. It makes us similar to a lunatic and a drunkard, thus we sin against the Three Constancies and the Fourfold Body [the divine entities].¹⁹⁴

H35 || We only wish that Yishu would send down his mercy to free us from the bonds of demons.¹⁹⁵

K/P [= JD/P] || Suppose there is a person who, whether guilty or not guilty, has had his body imprisoned in fetters and chains,

¹⁹⁰ 是觀世音菩薩摩訶薩於怖畏急難之中能施無畏是故此娑婆世界皆號之為施無畏者 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 57b). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 123.

¹⁹¹ 現今處在火坑中速引令安清淨地 (T 54: 1271a29).

¹⁹² 假使興害意推落大火坑念彼觀音力火坑變成池 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 57c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 124.

¹⁹³ 與抄掠者充為救與纏縛者能為解 (T 54: 1270c22).

¹⁹⁴ 今還與我作留難枷鎖禁縛鎖相繫令我如狂復如醉遂犯三常四處身 (T 54: 1271a12–13).

¹⁹⁵ 唯願夷數降慈悲解我離諸魔鬼縛 (T 54: 1271a28).

cangue and lock. If he calls the name of Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds, then all his bonds will be severed and broken and at once he will gain deliverance.¹⁹⁶

K/V [= JD/V] || Suppose you are imprisoned in cangue and lock, hands and feet bound by fetters and chains. Think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and they will fall off, leaving you free!¹⁹⁷

D || If [somebody] who, caught by an evil officer who binds his body, puts fetters and shackles on him, puts chains on him, locks him in prison, and interrogates him torturously using bitter poison, calls the name of Guangshiyin 光世音 [Illuminator of the World's Sounds] and takes refuge wholeheartedly, he will be immediately liberated, open the gates of the prison, and leave with nothing able to restrain him, that is why [the bodhisattva] is called Guangshiyin.¹⁹⁸

(12) Both texts speak of fierce animals (*e'shou* 惡獸) as obstacles to be removed by the addressees. Also, precisely after mentioning these fierce animals, both texts refer to various venomous, snake-like animals.

H50 || All the evil beasts beyond any comparison, all the poisonous snakes impossible to classify.¹⁹⁹

K/V [= JD/V] || If evil beasts should encircle you, their sharp fangs and claws inspiring terror, think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and they will scamper away in boundless retreat. If lizards, snakes, vipers, scorpions threaten you with poison breath that sears like flame, think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds and, hearing your voice, they will flee of themselves.²⁰⁰

(13) Both texts refer to the addressee's ability to subdue water and other natural phenomena while also shining light everywhere.

¹⁹⁶ 若有罪者無罪桎械枷鎖檢繫其身稱觀世音菩薩名者皆悉斷壞即得解脫 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 56c). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 120.

¹⁹⁷ 或囚禁枷鎖手足被桎械念彼觀音力釋然得解脫 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 57c–58a). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 125.

¹⁹⁸ 若為惡人縣官所錄縛束其身桎械在體若枷鎖之閉在牢獄拷治苦毒一心自歸稱光世音名號疾得解脫開獄門出無能拘制故名光世音 (*Zhengfa hua jing*, T 9: 129a).

¹⁹⁹ 一切惡獸無能比一切毒蛇何能類 (T 54: 1271b28).

²⁰⁰ 若惡獸圍遶利牙爪可怖念彼觀音力疾走無邊方虻蛇及蝮蠍氣毒煙火燃念彼觀音力尋聲自迴去 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 58a). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 125.

H32 || 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
the Great Law shine everywhere, so that our hearts and soul may
be always bright and pure!²⁰¹

K/V [= JD/V] || His pure light, free of blemish, is a sun of wisdom
dispelling all darkness. He can quell the wind and fire of misfor-
tune and everywhere bring light to the world.²⁰²

(14) Wisdom and compassion are recurring motifs used to describe Yishu and Guanyin. Though most of the verses cited below emphasize the compassionate character of Yishu, they also mention his close relation to wisdom. In the case of Guanyin, one of his most important characteristics is compassion: “Thousand-armed and Thousand-eyed Guanyin, known as Dabei (Great Compassionate One) is the esoteric form and became popular during the Tang Dynasty with the introduction of tantric Buddhism into China.”²⁰³ Interestingly, the characteristic of compassion and the motif of salvific arms and hands found in descriptions of Guanyin are combined in the Manichaean expression “compassionate hands” (*cibei shou* 慈悲手). This term appears three times in the hymns addressed to Yishu (H39, H55, H63), and it is never associated with any other divine figure in the Manichaean pantheon.

H12 || Ever-flourishing jewel-tree, the sea of souls, listen to our
sincere request compassionately!²⁰⁴

H13 || [You are] the compassionate father of all the light-natures
[souls].²⁰⁵

H29 || Beneficent and glorious Yishu Buddha, raise [your] great
compassion and forgive our sins!²⁰⁶

H35 || We only wish that Yishu would send down his mercy to free
us from the bonds of demons.²⁰⁷

²⁰¹ 願息火海大波濤暗雲暗霧諸繚盖降大法日普光輝令我心性恒明淨 (T 54: 1271a22–23).

²⁰² 無垢清淨光慧日破諸闇能伏災風火普明照世間 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 58a). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 126.

²⁰³ Kim 2001, p. 19, n. 19. Also see Keyworth 2011.

²⁰⁴ 常榮寶樹性命海慈悲聽我真實啓 (T 54: 1270c11).

²⁰⁵ 一切明性慈悲父 (T 54: 1270c13).

²⁰⁶ 廣惠庄嚴夷數佛起大慈悲捨我罪 (T 54: 1271a16).

²⁰⁷ 唯願夷數降慈悲解我離諸魔鬼縛 (T 54: 1271a28).

H39 || Oh, Great Saint [Yishu], stretch out quickly your compassionate hands and place them on the light-head of our souls [bud-dha nature]!²⁰⁸

H44 || [You, Yishu are] also the wise and compassionate mother.²⁰⁹

H47 || The power among the powers of the Unsurpassable Honored of the Lights, the King among the wisdoms of the unsurpassable sweet dew.²¹⁰

H53 || Send down the great skilful means and the power of compassion! We beg you to revive the light-natures [souls] who are in complete distress.²¹¹

K/V [= JD/V] || If living beings encounter weariness or peril, immeasurable suffering pressing them down, the power of the Perceiver of Sounds' wonderful wisdom can save them from the sufferings of the world.²¹²

K/V [= JD/V] || He of the true gaze, the pure gaze, the gaze of great and encompassing wisdom, the gaze of pity, the gaze of compassion—constantly we implore him, constantly look up in reverence. . . . The precepts from his compassionate body shake us like thunder, the wonder of his pitying mind is like a great cloud.²¹³

(15) As we have seen before, the *Hymnscroll* abounds with typically Buddhist expressions. One of these is supernatural ability (*shentong* 神通, Skt. *abhijñāna* or *ṛddhi*), which appears in both the *Hymnscroll* and the *Lotus Sutra*.

H42 || [Your] wonderful form is unparalleled in the world, and so are your supernatural abilities to transform your forms of appearance.²¹⁴

K/V [= JD/V] || The power of the Perceiver of Sounds' wonderful wisdom can save them from the sufferings of the world. He

²⁰⁸ 大聖速申慈悲手按我佛性光明頂 (T 54: 1271b7).

²⁰⁹ 復是智慧慈悲母 (T 54: 1271b18).

²¹⁰ 无上明尊力中力无上甘露智中王 (T 54: 1271b22).

²¹¹ 降大方便慈悲力請蘇普厄諸明性 (T 54: 1271c5).

²¹² 衆生被困厄無量苦逼身觀音妙智力能救世間苦 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 58a). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 126.

²¹³ 真觀清淨觀廣大智慧觀悲觀及慈觀常願常瞻仰 . . . 悲體戒雷震慈意妙大雲 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 58a). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 126.

²¹⁴ 妙色世間无有比神通變現復如是 (T 54: 1271b14).

is endowed with transcendental powers and widely practices the expedient means of wisdom.²¹⁵

K/P [= JD/P] || If there are living beings who hear this chapter on Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds, on the freedom of his actions, his manifestation of a universal gateway, and his transcendental powers, it should be known that the benefits these persons gain are not few!²¹⁶

(16) The expression “saving from the sufferings” (*jiu ku* 救苦) appears twice in the Yishu hymns and once in another hymn, but in this latter case it again refers to one of Yishu's forms. In addition to the fact that the entire Guanyin chapter is about Guanyin's power of saving people from various sufferings and perils, the expression itself also is found in the chapter's *gāthā* section.

H48 || [Oh, Yishu], who saves from suffering and whose judgment is impartial.²¹⁷

H80 || [Oh, Yishu], who is generous, who saves from suffering, who is compassionate, and who forgives sins.²¹⁸

H138 || The ever-victorious robe of all the buddhas, that is the New Yishu who saves from suffering.²¹⁹

K/V [= JD/V] || If living beings encounter weariness or peril, immeasurable suffering pressing them down, the power of the Perceiver of Sounds' wonderful wisdom can save them from the sufferings of the world.²²⁰

Conclusion

Considering the fact that the two short Manichaean hymns to Yishu are basically translations from a Parthian text with adjustments made for a Chinese context, the overlapping expressions, similar wordings and motifs that the hymns share with the also rather short Guanyin chapter of the *Lotus*

²¹⁵ 觀音妙智能救世間苦具足神通力廣修智方便 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 58a). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 126.

²¹⁶ 若有衆生聞是觀世音菩薩品自在之業普門示現神通力者當知是人功德不少 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 58b). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 127.

²¹⁷ 救苦平斷无顔面 (T 54: 1271b24).

²¹⁸ 作寬泰者救苦者作慈悲者捨過者 (T 54: 1272b1).

²¹⁹ 一切諸佛常勝衣即是救苦新夷數 (T 54: 1273b29).

²²⁰ 衆生被困厄無量苦逼身觀音妙智能救世間苦 (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T 9: 58a). English translation from Watson 2002, p. 126.

Sutra are more numerous than would be statistically expected. I believe that this similarity is due to the ingenious skill of the Manichaeans, which has also been attested to in other cases, to adjust their “literary products” to the cultural environment and religious vocabulary of the societies in which they wished to spread their faith.²²¹ Their usual technique, employed from the West to the East, was to use the most popular religious topics of their time to gain the sympathy and understanding of their audience towards the unique Manichaean system. This was the usual Manichaean missionary practice: the Coptic texts found in Egypt reveal much Christian terminology, the Middle Persian texts a Zoroastrian vocabulary, while the Parthian, and even more so the Uighur and Chinese, texts were heavily influenced by Buddhism.

The emergence of an independent Guanyin chapter can be safely dated to the beginning of the Tang or earlier.²²² Guanyin’s ability to save people from various perils was widely depicted in Chinese Buddhist art,²²³ and sometimes even the names of the illustrators were recorded.²²⁴ Scenes from eleven of the twenty-eight chapters in the *Lotus Sutra* were frequently used to convey its basic message.²²⁵ Thus, it can be safely asserted that devotion to Guanyin based on the Guanyin chapter was one of the most popular Buddhist cults during the Tang dynasty. In addition to the several evident similarities between the figures of Guanyin and Yishu, it was precisely this popularity of the Guanyin figure that led Manichaeans to apply his characteristics in the introduction of their own savior figure.

²²¹ For instance, see Bryder 1994 and Mikkelsen 1999.

²²² Murase 1971, pp. 42–43. According to the *Fahua chuanji* 法華傳記 (T no. 2068, 51: 78b), it was Juqu Mengxun 沮渠蒙遜 (368–433, r. 401–433) of the Liang dynasty (397–439) who first promulgated an order for the circulation of the Guanyin chapter as an independent work (Yü 1997, pp. 440–41; Yü 2001, p. 75).

²²³ Murase 1971, p. 39.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42. While wall paintings were made between the seventh and eleventh centuries, silk and paper Guanyin pictures are usually from the ninth and tenth centuries (Murase 1971, p. 43). It is also interesting to consider the fact that not only did a complete Uighur translation of the *Lotus Sutra* exist, surviving fragments suggest that there might also have been an independent Guanyin chapter circulating in Uighur (Elverskog 1997, pp. 59–62; Zieme 2005). As Zieme (2005, p. 3) notes, “The 25th chapter is preserved completely, in a great number of fragments of different manuscripts and block prints.” The Uighur translation was most probably made through a Sogdian intermediary, though the latter is not extant. While scholars attribute a relatively late date (tenth century) to this translation, it can be assumed that the scripture was not completely unknown among the Manichaean Uighurs and Sogdians.

If we consider the fact that the Manichaean hymn to Yishu is a translation from a Parthian original that was evidently lacking the *Lotus Sutra* background, the number of similarities in both the images and the verbal expressions in the two parts of the respective works can hardly be simply attributed to a mere coincidence. Based on the parallels found in other, surviving hymns, we have ample evidence to prove that the Chinese Manichaeans were translating the original Parthian hymns freely and also made extensive use of pre-existing popular Buddhist narratives and vocabulary.²²⁶ In this case, one can assume that the expressions and concepts of the extremely popular *Lotus Sutra* (especially the independent Guanyin chapter) were consciously borrowed to make the otherwise distant Manichaean teachings (especially the figure of Yishu) more familiar to potential Chinese believers. Seen from this perspective, it could be said that the Manichaeans active during the Tang introduced Yishu to their Chinese audience as yet another form of Guanyin.

The fact that the translator, or more precisely the part-author, part-translator, of the *Hymnscroll* relied so heavily on the Guanyin chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* can be explained by the fact that it (and of course Guanyin himself) enjoyed unprecedented popularity during the Tang dynasty. The analysis above thus suggests that the Manichaean translator attempted to adapt a hymn of Yishu to the already popular chapter on Guanyin, thereby ultimately, though not *expressis verbis*, suggesting the identification of these two figures.²²⁷

ABBREVIATIONS

- C *Moni guangfo jiaofa yi lue* 摩尼光佛教法儀略 (*Compendium*). S.3969+P.3884; T no. 2141A, 54: 1279c–1281a.
- D *Zhengfahua jing* 正法華經, trans. Dharmarakṣa. T no. 263, 9: 63a–134b.
- H *Monijiao xiabu zan* 摩尼教下部讚 (*Hymnscroll*). S.2659; T no. 2140, 54: 1270b–1279c. Manuscript housed at the British Library, London.
- JD *Tianpin miaofa lianhua jing* 添品妙法蓮華經, trans. Jñānagupta and Dharmagupta. T no. 264, 9: 134b–196a.

²²⁶ Bryder 1999; Mikkelsen 2002, 2009.

²²⁷ It should be noted that during the Tang the feminization of Guanyin had not yet taken place—it was only a later development: “The Guanyin figures bearing a moustache clearly indicate the masculine aspects of the bodhisattva, and in the visual arts Guanyin was depicted as a young Indian prince throughout India and many Southeast and Central Asian countries. Even in China, until the late Tang dynasty, there was no change in his depiction as a male deity as we can see from the hanging scrolls of Dunhuang” (Kim 2001, p. 18). However, this does not mean that Guanyin had no feminine form (see Tay 1976, p. 151).

- K *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, trans. Kumārajīva. T no. 262, 9: 1a–62c.
- M Manichaean fragments in Parthian and Middle Persian stored in the Turfan Collection, Berlin. Numbering is based on Boyce 1960.
- MIK III Number for manuscripts held at the Museum for Asian Art (formerly the Museum für Indische Kunst, Haus III), Berlin.
- P Prose portions of the various translations of the *Lotus Sutra*.
- T *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經. Edited by Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡辺海旭, 85 vols. Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankokai, 1924–34.
- TR *Bosijiao canjing* 波斯教殘經 (*Traité*, also known as *Monijiao jing* 摩尼教經). BD00256; T no. 2141B, 54: 1281a–1286a. Manuscript held at the National Library of China, Beijing.
- V Verse, or *gāthā*, portions of the various translations of the *Lotus Sutra*.

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