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Abstracts

The Mystery of the *Epistula Fundamenti*

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There has been quite a bit of debate on what the *Epistula Fundamenti* really is. This letter, found in Augustine's *Contra epistulam quam uocant Fundamenti*, has been the object of two studies, but there has been no detailed investigation of what this work might have been. It has been suggested that it could be: 1) a version of Mani's *Living Gospel* or a supplanting of the *Living Gospel*; 2) the text of Mani's *Picture Book*; 3) a part of the *Kephalaia* that became detached because of the importance of its topic; 4) a handbook or study guide for initiating the Manichaean hearers (or catechumen) into the religion or 5) a letter from the canonical Mani epistles. This paper will examine a few of these suggestions. It will be determined that, as the title suggests, it was a letter from the hand of Mani, the founder of Manichaeism.