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## Abstracts

### Some Aspects of the Manichaean Doctrine of Revelation

Luigi Cirillo (Napoli)

The source is represented by two texts of Baraies, quoted in the *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis* (CMC): (1) pp. 14, 4-26, 5 and (2) 45, 1-72,7 and 72,8-74,5. Baraies was one of the first disciples of Mani, who had been educated in the same Babylonian cultural environment of the first half of the third century where Mani too had grown up. Baraies was a member of the college of the Teachers of the Manichaean Church, with the title of “teacher” (*didaskalos*) his name figures in the *Codex* (cf.p. 13, 3 and 72, 8). The two texts of Baraies have to do with the Manichaean interpretation of the *Paraclete*, as announced by Jesus in the *gospel of John* (cf.14, 16-17; 14, 26; 15, 26; 16, 7-11; 16, 13-14) and the identification of the *Paraclete* with Mani.

According to al-Biruni in the *al-Athar*, Mani in his *Gospel* said that he was the *Paraclete* (“In his Gospel, which he arranged according to the twenty-two letters of the alphabet, he says that he is the *Paraclete* announced by the Messiah, and that he is the seal of the prophets [(i.e. the last of them)]. The two texts of Baraies confirm the identification of Mani with the *Paraclete* and their value lies in the fact that they cite the words of Mani (the *logia Mani*) which have to do with this identification. The historical value of the *logia Mani* is still an open question in regard to what degree they represent the same words of Mani both with regard of the substance as well as with regard to the form (an analogous problem to the one with regard to the *logia Jesu* in both the canonical and apocryphal tradition).

1. The first *abstract* of Baraies consists of two parts. In the first part (pages 14, 4-17,6) the “teacher” refers to the words of Mani which have as their goal the activity of the divine *Nous* which frees and redeems men reduced to slavery by announcing the message of the Saving Gnosis. This mission of the *Nous* in the world is carried out through Mani, the *apostle of the Nous*. The sayings of Mani cited in this section develop this idea by means of the presentation of the relationship which exists between the “body” of Mani and the divine *Nous*: the body (*tò soma*) is the instrument which the *Nous* uses to reveal “the truth of its own gnosis” (p. 16, 11-12). The activity of the divine *Nous*, the revelation of the Gnosis, as carried out by Mani, constitutes the main goal of Mani’s birth (cf. p. 15, 1-16: “the birth has come about”). In this section the Greek term (*tò soma*) has the same meaning as the Semitic one *basar*: the body is the man and not just a part of the individual. The doctrinal context is that of the *kephalion* VII on the *Nous*, Father of all the apostles, and about his emanation, the *Apostle of*

*Light*, who takes on the body of Mani to announce to the world the gnostic message of salvation. The relationship of Mani to the divine *Nous* is expressed by means of a series of allegories: the horse who is raised to serve the king (the *Nous*) (14, 4-14), the allegory of the suit made for he who will wear it (the *Nous*, 15, 3-5), the allegory of the ship which is needed by the helmsman to find treasures in the sea (15, 5-9) and finally the allegory of the temple, the sanctuary, prepared for the glory of the *Nous* and for the revelation of his knowledge (15, 10-14). Now, the allegory of the "body", temple of God (cf. particularly *I Cor.* 6, 19s) indicates exactly who Mani is: he is the recipient/receptacle of the *Nous*, recipient in which and through which the divine *Nous* explicates his liberatory and redeeming function of freeing from spiritual slavery (p. 16, 10-12). From this is derived the conclusion on p. 17, 4-17: in his work as revealer the *divine Nous* is (become) *the Paraclete and coryphaeus of the apostleship in the present generation*. The *Paraclete*, the Holy Spirit of the gospel of John, is therefore the *Nous*. Inasmuch as there is an intimate union between Mani and the *Nous* (the *Nous* lives in Mani), the meaning of the logion seems clear: the *Paraclete* is Mani. Certainly, it is difficult to enter into the problematics concerning the announcement of the Holy Spirit *Paraclete* because our understanding of these texts comes from the Trinitarian dogma of the Christian Church according to the interpretation given to them by the first Christian theologians, the Fathers of the Church. But for Mani and the earliest Manichaean tradition, the Holy Spirit in the texts of the announcement is simply "he who is sent", the apostle who will bring to the world the definitive revelation. So the connection of "apostle" and "Holy Spirit", apostle and *Paraclete*, cannot be separated if one wants to understand the Manichaean doctrine of revelation. Now, the idea expressed in the words referred by Baraies is this: the *Paraclete and coryphaeus* is the *Nous* or specifically his emanation, the *Apostle of Light*, who is identified with Mani.

The identification of Mani with the *Paraclete* is proclaimed as a truth of faith by the Manichaean Church as is evident from the *kephalaion* I, p. 16, 30-31: *You are the Paraclete who comes from the father, the revealer of all the secrets*. In the *Epistula Fundamenti* 6, according to the statement of Saint Augustine, Mani doesn't say to have been sent by the *Paraclete* (*non missum se a Paraclete*) but to have been assumed by him, in such a way as to define himself as the *Paraclete* (*ut ipse Paracletus diceretur*). See also, *Epistula Fundamenti*, 8: the Manichaeans state that Mani is called the *Paraclete* because the Holy Spirit came to dwell in him. This was Faustus' doctrine contradicted in *Contra Faustum*, 15, 4. Likewise, the identification of Mani with the *Paraclete* is widely attested in the heretical tradition, cf. *Acta Archelai*, 15, 3, p. 24, 3 Beeson (*sum quidem ego paracletus qui a Jesu Cristo praedictus sum*); Epifanius, *Panarion*, 66, 15, 6; Evodius, *De fide contra Manichaeos*, 24 (CSEL 25, 961).

The subject of the second part of the first abstract of Baraies (pp. 17, 7-26,5) is the coming of the *Suzygos*, the Twin of Mani, and his revelation: a topic which is closely related to the preceding part (cf. *toinum*, p. 17, 8). An up to date presentation of the question and relative problems can be found in an excellent article by François de Blois, "Mani's Twin" in Irenian and Non-Irenian texts" (in the *Festschrift Gh. Gnoli*). In the pages of the *Mani-Codex* Mani says that the

revelation was given him in the course of a vision (cf. p. 17, 12), when he became twenty four years old, and even he mentions the historical coordinates of this event (cf. p. 17, 23-18, 10). We are likely in the year 240 A.D. The vision described here corresponds, as is known, to the second revelation of the angel al-Tawm (arabized form of the Aramaic *tauma/toma* = twin), reported by Ibn al-Nadim, in his *Kitab al-Fihrist*.

The revelation of the *Syzygos* has a deep theological meaning. It is a total and complete revelation (cf. pp. 22, 155) which refers to the mission of the *Paraclete* which is to teach (cf. *John* 14, 26; 16, 13 “he will teach you everything” and “he will guide you in the knowledge of the whole truth”). This revelation coincides with the calling of Mani to begin his mission and coincides therefore with the investiture of Mani in his role of apostle, cf. in fact p. 18, 12-13: “God called me to his grace” (a text which also corresponds with the calling of St. Paul to the apostleship, cf. *Galatians* 1,5). The revelation of the *Syzygos*, in so far as the envoy of God to Mani, has the characteristics of a mission of the Spirit of truth, the *Paraclete*, which will be sent into the world. The coming of the *Syzygos* appears therefore as the fulfillment of the promise of the *Paraclete*'s mission. Hence the *Paraclete* is the *Syzygos*. But the relationship *Syzygos* - Mani (the *Syzygos* is Mani's Alter-ego) permits us to conclude that in the context the *Paraclete* is Mani himself.

2. The second *Abstract* is a sermon: Baraies (a) intends to explain to the faithful Manichaeans how the mission of Mani, the *Paraclete Spirit*, was sent “in the present generation” (CMC 45, 1-72,5) and (b) to exhort them to recognize his coming spiritually (72,9-74,5). The essence of the first point is to demonstrate the authenticity of the visionary and revelatory experience of Mani, which is the basis of his mission, and to show that Mani in his experience conducted himself like his predecessors, the prophets and revealers of the primeval history of mankind, according to the first chapters of *Genesis*: Adam, Sethel (Seth), Enosh, Sem, Enoch, and even the apostle St. Paul, who is the immediate predecessor of Mani. Mani closes the series of the revelations for ever. The revealers quoted in this series constitute (according to Baraies) “the chain of the prophets” from Adam to Mani.” And the chain of the prophets represents the principle of the Jewish christian and gnostic theory of the revelation. To this purpose Baraies quotes in order (1) five Jewish *Apocalypses*, attributed to the primeval forfathers (Adam, Sethel, Enosh, Sem, Enoch), (2) texts from the letters of St. Paul (Gal. 1,1; 1, 11-12; 2 Cor. 12,1-5), (3) and the works of Mani (the *Letter to Edessa* and the *Gospel*). Comparative analysis of the quotations of the five Jewish *Apocalypses* demonstrates that they are artificially constructed in order to prove that Mani “is an authentic link in the chain of apostles” (cf. John C. Reeves in his magistral volume: *Heralds of That Good Realm*, p. 17)