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**Abstracts**

**The Abstract of a Religion: Brief Descriptions of Manichaeism in the  
Manichaean Sources**

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For Manichaeism as a missionary religion it was of greatest importance to introduce itself concisely and convincingly to all people within the vast area of mission. Consequently the need emerged for significant descriptions of the new religion in all missionary languages. Attention must be paid not only to a terminological adaptation to the local and religious peculiarities, facing many different religions, cultures and languages, but also to the propagation of the essential elements of the Manichaean system far from any misunderstandings. One should expect therefore the existence of a standard abstract of Manichaeism as a short and clear expression of Manichaean self-conception in all sources, but this seems to be not the case. We find a variety of abstracts instead, following different patterns and ranging from schematic catechism to detailed descriptions using mythological subjects. The paper is to discuss these various patterns.