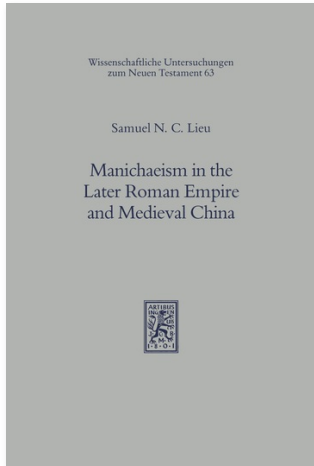


Samuel N. Lieu

Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China

[Der Manichäismus im Spät Römisches Reich und im mittelalterlichen China.]



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In the third century A.D. the Syro-Persian Mani founded a highly evangelistic Gnostic religion in Mesopotamia which was to claim among its converts in the Roman Empire the young Augustine, and which was later to be seen as the inspiration for Paulicians, Bogomils and Cathars in the Medieval West. It became a world religion with followers spread across Central Asia and even parts of China. Persecuted in the West as a major heresy, in medieval China it was suppressed as a rebel ideology. Its origins and history have rarely been told, and this study presents them to the English reader making full use of the many Manichaean documents discovered in Egypt, North Africa, Central Asia and China.

Many of the texts cited are translated for the first time into English from Greek, Latin, Syriac and Chinese – thus making the book accessible to a wider readership. The history of its persecution in the Roman and Chinese Empires and of its extraordinary survival and diffusion are presented in detail.

This is a book which will appeal both to the specialist and to the more general reader in the history of Rome, China and Iran, in theology and comparative religion, but will also be found both readable and instructive by anyone with interest in the history of contacts between ancient civilisations.

First published in 1985 (by Manchester University Press), the book received world-wide academic acclaim from historians, theologians and orientalist. This substantially expanded and revised second edition brings up to date a work which is generally regarded as standard in its field.

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