The 'Elchasaites' Sanhedrin of the Cologne Mani Codex in Light of Second Temple Jewish Sectarian Sources

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In 1969 a new document purporting to be a 'life of Mani', the notorious founder of the Manichaean religion, was deciphered at the University of Cologne. This text, henceforth designated the Cologne Mani Codex (= CMC), is in its present form a Greek work of Egyptian provenance which can be dated palaeographically to the fourth or fifth century of the Common Era. In the opinion of its modern editors, the Greek text appeared to be a translation of an Aramaic Grundschrift which might ultimately derive from Mani himself. The text is autobiographical in form and occasionally quotes literary sources when seeking to elaborate a specific point. Although badly damaged in parts, the Codex yields one hundred and ninety-two pages of fragmentary text which clarify the ideological background of Mani's thought.

Pages 1–13 of the Codex relate a detailed but largely hagiographic account of Mani's childhood. Pages 14–44 describe the circumstances and contents of two 'revelations' received by Mani prior to his separation from his childhood community, self-characterized in the Codex as 'of the Law' (τοῦ νόμου). What follows on pages 45–72 is a lengthy apologetic section in which five Jewish apocalypses are quoted in an attempt to lend credence to Mani's own visionary experiences. These writings are identified by name as 'apocalypses' of Adam, Seth, Enosh, Shem, and Enoch. Those bearing the


2 CMC 9:1 and passim.

3 Adam (CMC 48:16–50:7); Sethel (50:8–52:7); Enosh (52:8–55:9); Shem (55:10–58:5); and Enoch (58:6–60:7).
names of Seth, Enosh and Shem are heretofore unattested. Those of Adam and Enoch do not correspond to extant works which bear similar titles. Also contained within this section are three largely accurate quotations from the Pauline corpus, and some selections from works attributed to Mani himself.4

Pages 72–99 relate the customs and rituals of the sectarian Jewish Christian community, identified as followers of Elchasai,5 to which Mani belonged and Mani’s growing disenchantment and opposition to them. The sect terms itself ‘those of the Law’ and designates those who are not members of the sect ‘Gentiles’ (τὰ ξῆθη).6 Decisions affecting the lifestyle of the community are discussed in a council apparently composed of elders (ὁ πρεσβύτερος τοῦ συνεδρίου αὐτῶν).7 The sect was particularly concerned with purity of body and foodstuffs. They revered traditions regarding purity received from ‘our fathers and teachers’ (οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν καὶ διδάσκαλοι).8 Certain foods were prohibited according to dietary law. A period of ‘rest’ was observed by the sect.9 An eschatological prophecy concerning the advent of a new ‘teacher’ was preserved by it.10 Mani is charged by the sect’s sanhedrin with being an ‘enemy of our Law’, one who has ‘turned aside from our Law’ and who opposes the teachings of the ‘fathers’.11

Following this section, on pages 100–116, is an account of Mani’s departure from the sect. His initial success in gaining adherents to his own teachings is remarked. The remainder of the Codex, which is very badly damaged, apparently contained a description of Mani’s further journeys throughout the ancient Orient.

The significance of the Cologne Mani Codex for Manichaean studies cannot be overestimated. Perhaps the most important information communicated by the Codex concerns the substantial influence exerted upon the young Mani by Jewish and Christian heterodox thought during his formative years. That such influence did not cease with his final break with the Elchasaites might be postulated from the surprising

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7 CMC 77:7; 74:12–13; cf. 89:7.
8 CMC 88:5–6. For examples of the sect’s ‘washing’ practices, see 83:1; 80:1–82:23; 88:1–4.
9 CMC 87:4; cf. 5:6–7: κατέχουν τὴν διάπανου ‘keeping the Rest’.
11 CMC 87:16; 89:12; 91:7.
invocation of pseudepigraphic Jewish sources within the *Codex* as testimony for Mani's apostolic credentials. Yet there is further evidence outside the *Codex* which suggests that Jewish traditions were known and adapted by him for use in his religious system.

We possess several lists which enumerate the books which formed the Manichaean 'scriptural canon', so to speak, and they invariably include notice of a so-called 'Book of Giants'.\(^{12}\) Unfortunately, this book is never explicitly quoted in ancient sources. As early as the eighteenth century, I. de Beausobre opined with remarkable prescience that Mani's Book of Giants might be related to the stories recounted about the illicit intercourse between heavenly beings and mortal women described in such passages as Genesis 6:1-4 or the Greek fragments of 1 Enoch 6–16 preserved by the Byzantine chronographer Syncellus.\(^{13}\) However, precise knowledge of the contents of Mani's Book of Giants eluded scholars until the publication by W. B. Henning in 1943 of various fragments from the Turfan collection of Manichaean manuscripts unearthed in Chinese Turkestan during the early part of this century.\(^{14}\) Henning's identification and collation of the Manichaean Book of Giants received further dramatic confirmation from an unexpected quarter—the discovery of a Jewish Aramaic Vorlage of the Book of Giants among the manuscript remains from Qumran in Palestine.\(^{15}\) This demonstrated dependence of Mani upon ancient Jewish lore, and, what is more, a traditional lore that is associated with a heterodox Jewish community which flourished during the latter part of the Second Temple era, is intriguing and worthy of careful attention. One must seriously entertain the possibility that some of the significant formative influences upon the young Mani were derived ultimately from sectarian Judaism of the pre-*Hurban* era.

This paper explores one facet of this possible relationship by comparing the organizational structure and judicial operation of the 'baptist'...

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\(^{12}\) For a listing and thorough analysis of these references, see the first chapter of my *Jewish Lore in Manichaean Cosmogony: Studies in the 'Book of Giants' Traditions* (Hebrew Union College Press, forthcoming).


community\textsuperscript{16} among whom Mani was reared with the hierarchy of offices and the legal procedures appearing in one significant corpus of Jewish sectarian literature, that of the group centered at Qumran on the western shore of the Dead Sea. The information and data which permit such a comparative study have in both instances only recently come into focus. Prior to the discovery and publication of the Codex, practically nothing was known of the communal structure and internal governance of an Elchasaite community. Similarly, the particular offices and judicial procedures of the Jewish sect whose writings were discovered at Qumran have only come to light with the publication of the Serek ha-Yahad (IQS)\textsuperscript{17} and the Damascus Covenant (CD).\textsuperscript{18} It is true that Josephus and Philo supply some information regarding the organization of the ‘Essenes’,\textsuperscript{19} but it remains very much a live issue whether the Essene sect described by these writers is identical with the group who sojourned at Qumran.\textsuperscript{20} For the purposes of this study, primary reliance will be placed upon the fuller testimonies supplied by the Hebrew documents mentioned above which emanate from


the Jewish sect which called itself ha-Yahad ('Commune'). 21

An examination of the text of the Codex reveals several offices and institutions apparently operative in the daily life of this Mesopotamian baptist sect. The utmost respect was evidently accorded to certain individuals termed ἀρχηγοὶ or 'leaders'. The text applies this title to Elchasai himself during Mani's impassioned defence of his allegedly deviant ritual behaviour. Mani appeals to the paradigmatic conduct of Ἀλχασαίος ὁ ἀρχηγός τοῦ νόμου ὡμῶν. 22 On the other hand, a contemporary unidentified ἀρχηγὸς of the sect admonishes the youthful Mani regarding the latter's avoidance of sanctioned agricultural labour (CMC 9:1–13). It is unclear whether the designation ἀρχηγός is used in the Codex to denote an actual office in the Elchasaiite community. 23 No reference to such an authority appears in the description of Mani’s ‘trial’ before the Elchasaiite sanhedrin. According to the Byzantine ‘long abjuration-formula’, the title ἀρχηγός was borne by the supreme head of the Manichaean Church, 24 and this rank is paralleled by the terms sḥr in Middle Persian documents and Ṿav rm or Ṿav ʾāmām in Arabic testimony. 25 The Codex itself also refers to the leaders of distinct


23 In CMC 85:17–20, it is reported that some of the baptists considered the youthful Mani to be a ‘leader and a teacher’ (μονοκλίτων ἀρχηγοῦ καὶ διδάσκαλον ἐκεῖνον με), but whether these designations reflect actual sectarian offices or simply complimentary praise remains unclear.


religious bodies as ἀρχήγοι (CMC 104:1). It is thus possible that the usage of ἀρχήγος in the Codex reflects an anachronistic borrowing from later Manichaean organizational structure instead of an actual Elchasaite office. This may explain the application of the title to religious leaders in general and to the unidentified Elchasaite authority mentioned above, but the employment of the same designation for the 'founder' of the Elchasaite schism gives one pause. Here the term appears to be used in the sense of 'originator' or 'progenitor', as when Josephus similarly entitles Noah 'the progenitor of our people'. One might compare this nuance of ἀρχήγος to the references in the Codex to the 'fathers' or 'forefathers' revered as spiritual authorities by both Mani and the baptism sect. These were figures from the past who had transmitted either oral or written teachings that were granted programmatic authority by the present-day baptism community. Examples of such influential individuals were a series of Jewish patriarchs, Jesus, Elchasai, and two otherwise unknown teachers named Sabbaios and Aianos. One might furthermore compare with this roster of teachers and interpreters the analogous Qumranic veneration for the religious instructions imparted by God through Moses and the Prophets, and especially for the 'correct' interpretation given to these traditions by an early leader of that sect, the Moreh (ha-)Sedeq or 'True Lawgiver'. According to CD 1:11, God had raised up among the proto-sectarian Jewish group a 'True Lawgiver to lead them upon the path of his [i.e. God's] intention'. This Qumran concept of authoritative guidance might illuminate the baptist

26 ... καὶ τῶν ἀρχήγων τῶν δογμάτων (CMC 104:1–3). Cf. also CMC 137:10.
27 Josephus, Contra Apionem 1.130: Ναχος ὁ τῶν γόνων ἡμῶν ἀρχήγος.
28 CMC 47:3–5 (τῶν προγένεστέρων πατέρων); 71:8–9 (ἀπὸ τῶν προγόνων ἡμῶν[ν] πατέρων); 87:3–4 (ὁ πρόγονος ἡμῶν πατέρων); 88:5–6 (οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν καὶ διδάκται); 91:6–8 (τὸ βαπτίσμα τοῦ νόμου ἡμῶν καὶ τῶν πατέρων). Compare also CMC 71:18–19 (τὰ προγόνημα ἀπὸ στόλων) and 99:13 (τοὺς προφανείς). For a discussion of the importance of the 'forefathers', see Henrichs–Koenen, ZPE 32 (1978), p. 159. Henrichs calls attention to the use of this designation in Kephalaias 7.7 (cf. H. J. Polotsky and A. Böhlig (eds.), Kephalaias (Stuttgart, 1940)) and M 7 (apud Andreas-Henning, 'Mitteliranische Manichaica aus Chinesisch-Turkestans. III', SPAW (Berlin, 1934), p. 872); see HSCP 77 (1973), p. 25, n. 8. One might note the frequent appeals to the 'fathers' (οἱ πατέρες) and 'forefathers' (οἱ πράγματα) in Qumranic texts.
32 ἱερὸς έρημὸς διάκος τῆς ἐνώσεως διερκεῖ ἡλικία (Jeremias, Der Lehrer der Gerechtigkeit (Göttingen, 1963), p. 166.)
sect’s recognition of Elchasai as the ἄρχων of their mode of life.33

Another office mentioned in the Codex is that of οἰκοδεσπότης or ‘master of the house’.34 The term is used in the New Testament to denote a property owner or the head of a household.35 The use of the word with regard to a functionary within a religious community does not seem to be attested in Greek literature outside the Codex, and scholars have diligently endeavoured to supply possible analogues from Syrian monastic literature.36 Very little can be gleaned from the Codex about the responsibilities of this office, aside from the literal translation of the title itself. According to the Codex, this office was held by Pattikios, a person known to us from other sources as the biological father of Mani.37 Interestingly, one of the few references to the position of οἰκοδεσπότης occurs when a bishop court is being convened to try Mani for his offences against the precepts of the sect. The text relates that when the judges were assembling, the οἰκοδεσπότης was also summoned, and the charges against Mani were initially presented before him. Only after his assent to the proceedings was Mani brought before the tribunal.38

33 A connection between the Qumran Moreh (ha)-Sedeq and Elchasai in terms of their function for their respective communities was already suggested by C. Colpe, ‘Die Thomas-psalmen als chronologischer Fixpunkt in der Geschichte der orientalischen Gnosis’, Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum 7 (1964), pp. 87–88.

34 CMC 89:9–10; 100:21–22; 140:12–13.


37 The most important testimonies are supplied by Puech, Le manichéisme, pp. 35–36 and 117–118, n. 124. See also Sundermann, AcOrH 24 (1971), pp. 83–84, n. 28.

This particular course of action, which hints at an established legal procedure, is reminiscent of several regulations regarding the presentation of charges against a fellow sectarian that are found in Qumranic literature. In a passage of the Damascus Covenant that outlines certain qualifications for an official designated mebaker or 'the inspector who (has authority over) all the camps', we read that anyone prosecuting a suit or dispute must consult the mebaker, presumably prior to any further legal action. One might also compare the sequence of actions enjoined in CD 9:16–23 upon those persons who observed other members of the group transgressing the precepts of the Torah, the basic charter of the sect. Each offence was apparently reported by the witness(es) first to the mebaker before any subsequent legal proceedings took place.

The office of mebaker has elicited much comment from interpreters of the Qumran documents. The term mebaker is most frequently translated as 'inspector' or 'overseer', and several scholars have sought to establish a philological correspondence between this title and the Christian office of πεποπτητης. The duties of the mebaker emerge from several passages in the Damascus Covenant and the Serek ha-Yahad. This official is first and foremost responsible for the education and authoritative guidance of the

39 אלל בור אחיו היי למל המבקר יבר ובבוד מכל למבקר יבר אלל ריב המוספ (CD 9:16–23). 'And concerning any matter which any person has to speak about, let him speak to the mebaker regarding any suit or ruling' (CD 14:11–12).


41 See Vermes, Dead Sea Scrolls (cf. n. 20 above), p. 99.


members of the sect. In CD 13:7–10, these responsibilities are expressed in almost poetic language: ‘He [i.e. the מֶבָּקֵר] will instruct the group in the works of God, and will teach them His awesome deeds, and will recount before them the eternal events ... he will show mercy to them as a father does for his son, and he will return those who wander away as a shepherd does for his flock, and he will loosen the fetters that bind them so that there will not be an oppressed or broken (member) in his group.’

His exemplary mastery of the divine precepts and the correct interpretation of those precepts is such that when the priesthood, a rank otherwise recognized as the supreme authority over the community, are ignorant of certain ordinances pertaining to a ritual ruling, they receive instruction in these ordinances from the מֶבָּקֵר. The pedagogic responsibility of the מֶבָּקֵר is clearly visible in the rules governing the admission of new members to the community. Candidates for admission are first examined by him before they are permitted further intercourse with the group, and it is the מֶבָּקֵר who administers the solemn ‘oath of the Mosaic covenant’ to the petitioner for membership.

The מֶבָּקֵר also seems to have exercised control over the economic life of the sect. He collects a portion of each member’s monthly earnings for distribution among the indigent and the disabled, and maintains written records which catalogue the assets and stores of the community. Finally, no member of the group can enter into any kind of trading partnership without the consent of the מֶבָּקֵר.

It is regrettable that the Codex does not contain further information which might illustrate the duties or authority of the official termed oikodesmós. The aforementioned possible parallel in legal procedure of consulting the oikodesmós or מֶבָּקֵר prior to an actual trial must remain an intriguing coincidence until further evidence is forthcoming.

44 A slightly different version of this section has been recorded in a parallel passage in CD 6:19–20. A reading of מֶבָּקֵר as מֶבָּקֵר [Mdcb] is preferred to מֶבָּקֵר [Mdcb] for CD 13:7–10. These lines are in fact arranged as poetry by Rabin, Zadokite Documents (see n. 18 above), pp. 64–66.
45 IQS 5:2; 6:8–9; 9:7. For discussion, see Licht, Megillat Haseverah, pp. 110–115; Vermes, Dead Sea Scrolls, p. 90.
46 Amsa Meshul, Ḥahor ve-Avah Moshe, 169: “The group, the מֶבָּקֵר of the group.”
48 These two lines are to be understood as a parallel poetic couplet.
49 Each line is preceded by מֶבָּקֵר [Mdb].
50 Amsa Meshul, Ḥahor ve-Avah Moshe, 169. For discussion, see Licht, Megillat Haseverah, pp. 110–115; Vermes, Dead Sea Scrolls, p. 90.
51 CD 13:15–16.
We move now to a consideration of another title used in Mani’s baptist community, that of πρεσβύτερος or ‘elder’.52 This designation is of course familiar to us due to its employment in both Jewish and Christian tradition to denote one who exercises special authority in a social community, most frequently in a juridical context.53 A similar usage of the term is visible in the Codex. A prominent baptist antagonist of Mani is identified as ‘Sitaios’54 son of Gara, an elder of their sanhedrin’.55 An official status for the office of ‘elder’ is suggested in the statement that Sitaios in company with an indeterminate number of ‘elders’ convoked a formal assembly (σύνοδος) for the purpose of reproving Mani’s deviant behaviour.56 Presumably the resulting trial was conducted before this board of ‘elders’, perhaps in the presence of the entire baptist community.

One might compare the status of the ‘elder’ (πρεσβύτερος) in the Qumran community. According to 1QS 6:8–9, a session of the מנהיגים of the Sanhedrin or ‘general assembly of the group’ (a designation to which we will return below) observes a strict hierarchical seating arrangement of priests in the first position, elders (πρεσβύτερος) in the second position, and finally the remainder of the community in positions befitting each member’s credentials.57 No further information can be gleaned from the Serek ha-Yahad regarding the function of these elders in the assembly, but it is apparent that their position is second only to the priesthood in matters which come before the מנהיגים.

54 On the variant forms of the name, see Henrichs–Koenen, ZPE 32 (1978), pp. 125–126, n. 150.
55 Σιταίος ὁ πρεσβύτερος τοῦ αυτοῦ αὐτοῦ ὁ τοῦ Γαρὰ νός (CMC 74:11–13).
56 τότε Σιταίων καὶ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἑναρίων αὐτοῦ πρεσβύτερων σύνοδον ἐποιήσαντο ἐμοῦ χάριν (CMC 89:5–8).
An interesting passage in the Damascus Covenant sheds more light upon their status. It states that any community member who has a grievance against his fellow and who does not rebuke the offender before witnesses, but instead later brings the offence to attention out of spite, or who denounces the offender (without proof) to the elders, is himself guilty of violating the biblical prohibition (Leviticus 19:18) against bearing rumour.\(^{58}\) From this passage it appears that the elders served as a type of internal ‘police’ who monitored the behaviour of the less proficient members of the sect. Presumably an accusation lodged against a member by an elder carried more weight than a similar charge levelled from one’s equal or inferior in status. It is hence indicative of the gravity of Mani’s transgressions that his accusers are ‘Sitaios and his fellow elders’,\(^{59}\) an inherently conservative body responsible for the preservation of the community’s distinctive identity vis-à-vis the secular world. It is highly unlikely that such a group would have been receptive to Mani’s radical reinterpretation of the community’s ideology.

As noted above, Sitaios is termed in the Codex ‘an elder of their sanhedrin’ (ὁ πρεσβύτερος τοῦ συνεδρίου αὐτῶν),\(^{60}\) the antecedent of ‘their’ being the baptist community among whom Mani lived. In rabbinic usage, the term συνεδρίον (= Greek συνέδριον) connotes a ‘law-court’, be it local, regional or national, and is a synonym of the parallel Hebrew expression בית דין.\(^{61}\) Both Josephus and the New Testament use συνέδριον in a more particular sense to refer to an administrative council of Jewish oligarchs which was seated in Jerusalem and which functioned as a court of law.\(^{62}\) The συνέδριον of the Elchasaites was apparently an identifiable communal


\(^{59}\) See n. 55 above.


institution. Based upon the above evidence, it would denote a group of recognized community leaders who periodically met together in order to deliberate upon issues of common concern. The Elchasaita sanhedrin perhaps consisted of all the community elders plus officials such as the oikos kolonitikon, meeting in conjunction with members of lesser status.

The institution in Qumran literature which would correspond to that of the sanhedrin is the one designated μέση or ‘session’. The word μέση signifies a ‘seat’ or ‘one (or more) who are seated’. There are references in the Qumran texts to distinctive מושב such as the ‘moshab of the cities of Israel’, presumably denoting an assembly comprised of sectarian leaders from various urban centres in Eretz Israel, or the ‘moshab of the camps’, perhaps an assembly of the leading authorities of the separate ‘wilderness’ establishments. However, the most common and significant employment of the term is in the phrase μέση ῥεβίμ. This expression is used to describe a general assembly of the entire community for the purpose of explicating the distinctive laws of the sect. The clearest illustration of the operation of this institution is provided by IQS 6:8 ff.: ‘And this is the rule for the moshab ha-rabbim: each person in his assigned place—the priests shall sit in the first position, the elders in the second position, and the remainder of all the people shall sit each in his assigned place. This same order (will they follow when) they are questioned regarding a legal ruling or any sort of counsel or affair that is of concern to the community, each giving response from his own knowledge to the Council of the community. Let no one interrupt the words of his fellow before the latter has finished speaking, and moreover, let no one speak prior to his assigned turn by rank. Anyone who asks a question must speak in his turn. And in the moshab ha-rabbim, no one will speak of any matter without the approval of the community or of


65 μήτσε βασιλείου (CD 12:19).

66 μήτσε βασιλείου (CD 12:22–23); μήτσε μέση (CD 13:20); μήτσε μέση (CD 14:3).


the man who is mebaqger of the community.69 Anyone who has a matter to speak of before the community, being one who is enquiring (of) the counsel of the community without an assigned place (in the community hierarchy),70 that one shall stand up and say: I have a matter to bring before the community, and if they respond to him (affirmatively), (then) he may speak.’71

We learn from this passage that the Meshubh haRavim was an assembly governed by strict organizational principles and a code of conduct emphasizing respect for the learned savants of the tradition.72 The assembly was comprised of the recognized authorities of the sect—the priests, the mebik, the elders—and of fully enrolled members of the sect, each occupying a seat in accordance with his rank in the community. Each of these individuals was expected to join in the deliberations of the assembly.73 Provision was also made for the participation (and education?) of those adherents of the community who had not yet achieved permanent status within it. Should one of these neophytes have a question or issue to raise before the assembly, they would stand to be recognized by the group before proceeding to speak.74

There may be a parallel to this prescribed mode of propounding questions to the gathered sages in a passage of the Codex wherein Mani expresses his

69 Licht punctuates this passage differently, placing ‘the man who is mebaqger …’ with the following sentence, understanding ‘And when the mebaqger wishes to speak, or anyone else has something to say to the assembly …’ (Megillat Haserakhim, p. 144). I follow here the interpretation of Marcus, JBL 75 (1956), p. 300.

70 Interpreting the word מֵעַמְדָה as an ‘assigned position’ in the community hierarchy (cf. 1QS 2:21–25; CD 20:5), perhaps reflecting the assignment of all Israelites to one of the twenty-four priestly הַמַּשְׁרָת ‘(courses)’ in the time of the Second Temple (see mTa’anit 4:2). Compare Isaiah 22:19; 1 Chronicles 23:28; 2 Chronicles 35:15. מֵעַמְדָה in this sense is perhaps equivalent to מִקְוֶה (CD 13:12).

71 נַחַלְת אל扪 on מֵעַמְדָה as a הַמַּשְׁרָת of the community. Each of these ḥābiq, occupying a place in the community, would have a ḥābiq, and the delegation of the community would speak. Licht punctuates this passage differently, placing ‘the man who is mebaqger …’ with the following sentence, understanding ‘And when the mebaqger wishes to speak, or anyone else has something to say to the assembly …’ (Megillat Haserakhim, p. 144). I follow here the interpretation of Marcus, JBL 75 (1956), p. 300.

72 For the Essenes, compare Josephus, Bellum 2.146: τοῖς δὲ πρεσβυτέροις ὑπακούειν καὶ τοῖς πλείονοι ἐν καλῷ τίθενται; Philo, Quod omnis probus liber sit 81: καθ’ ἡλικίας ἐν τάξεως ὑπὸ πρεσβυτέρων νέοι καθέσταται, μετὰ κόσμον τοῦ προσήκοντος ἔχοντες ἀκρατικὸς.

73 ‘... the descriptions of the moshab seem to imply that all members of the sect took part’ (Rabin, Qumran Studies, p. 107).

74 Compare CD 14:10–11. I do not follow here the interpretation of Licht, who sees in this passage the procedure followed by both the mebaqger and full members when they wish to introduce new matters before the assembly (Megillat Haserakhim, p. 142). Similarly, Weinfield holds that candidates for admission did not possess the right to speak, and refers to 1QS 7:20 (Organizational Pattern, p. 44). However, 1QS 7:20 is not concerned with neophytes, but with persons who transgressed sectarian precepts and the process to be followed for their rehabilitation as full members. I follow the interpretation of G. Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English, 3rd ed. (Harmondsworth, 1987), p. 69.
growing frustration with the Elchasaitic teachings. The text reads: 'I had had enough debating [with] each one in that Law, rising up and que[st]ioning them [concerning the] way of God, [the] commandments of the Saviour, the washing, the vegetables they wash, and their every ordinance and order according to which they walk.' An interesting phrase here is the reference to 'rising up' and que[st]ioning them'. While the Greek has been partially restored by the editors (ἀνα[σ]σον τὸν και ἀνα[κριτόν τοὺς αὐτούς), enough crucial letters are extant to ensure the likelihood of their reconstruction. If we accept their reading, we then have an interesting analogue to the mode of interrogation prescribed by the Serek ha-Yahad for meetings of the Messianic Movement. There too the sectarian adherent who desires instruction in, or clarification of, one of the community precepts 'rises up' (ἐμπρόσθεν) before propounding his question (IQS 6:12–13).

It might also be noted that the issues Mani brought before the authorities of his community were sort one might imagine were discussed in the Qumran scrolls. The phrase 'way of God' (περὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ is reminiscent of the Qumranic expression דָּרֶךְ אַל כָּל מִצְוָה (CD 20:18; cf. 1QS 3:10), a concept probably ultimately based upon an exegesis of Isaiah 40:3a—'prepare in the wilderness the way of the Lord' (cf. 1QS 8:13–16; 9:19–20)—and is to be contrasted with alternate paths such as the 'way(s) of wickedness' (κὸλλος δὶς προκήλοι (1QH 14:26; cf. 1QS 4:19); the 'way of the wicked' (περὶ τῶν ὄντων ὁδὸν ὑπὲρ) (CD 8:8–9)), the 'way of corruption' (περὶ τῆς ἀβύδου (CD 15:7)), or the 'ways of darkness' (περὶ τῶν ἀδικίας (IQS 3:21; 4:11)). The 'commandments of the Saviour' (περὶ τῶν σωτηρίων ἐντολῶν) in the Elchasaitic context refers to the teachings of Jesus, as the Codex itself makes clear in a later passage. The analogues to this species of authoritative guidance within Qumran thought are expressions like מַצָּא מִשָּׁר (CD 2:18; 3:2, 12–13; 5:21; 9:7), 'that which he (God) commanded through Moses and through his servants the prophets' (1QS 1:3; cf. 8:15–16), מַצָּא מִשָּׁר, 'commandments of their lawgivers' (CD 3:7–8), or simply the expression מַצָּא מִשָּׁר, 'the Mosaic Law'. The questions about 'washing' (περὶ τῶν βαπτιστικῶν) and 'purification of

78 Cf. CMC 91:9–11, 20–22; 92:3–9. It is unclear how the reference in 62:12 to 'saviours' is to be understood.
foodstuffs’ (περὶ δὲν βαπτίζουσιν λαχάνων) reflect the recurrent need for instruction in the particular rituals ordained by Elchasaitic tradition. Finally, the concluding statement ‘concerning their every ordinance and rule which they follow’⁷⁹ (περὶ παντὸς θεσμοῦ καὶ τάξεως αὐτῶν καθ’ ἡν πορεύονται) contains an interesting word which suggests a Qumranic concept. It is the term τάξις, which normally in Greek connotes the idea of ‘succession’ or ‘order’, but which here bears the meaning of ‘rule, precept’.⁸⁰

Now Qumranic literature, in contrast with other contemporary Jewish writings, also employs a peculiar expression that covers the same range of meanings; namely, the word סְרָך (serek).⁸¹ The semantic equivalence of סְרָך and τάξις is in fact confirmed by a text which scholars have labelled the ‘Aramaic Testament of Levi’. Fragments of this work have been discovered in the library of Qumran,⁸² but the bulk of its text stems from some medieval copies recovered from the famous Cairo Geniza.⁸³ Interestingly, portions of this same text were subsequently found in a literal Greek translation at a monastery archive on Mount Athos.⁸⁴ The Aramaic and Greek texts overlap at several points, and it is noteworthy that at one of these the term τάξις is rendered in Greek by τάξις.⁸⁵ This particular correspondence would seem to be valuable for our understanding

⁷⁹. The usage here of … καθ’ ἡν πορεύονται, literally ‘according to which they walk’, suggests a philological background in the concept of halakah.

⁸⁰. See LSJ s.v. τάξις, where nevertheless there are several citations for the meaning ‘ordinance’ (Plato, Statesman 294e, 305c; Laws 925b) and ‘constitution’ (Aristotle, Politics 1271b 40).

⁸¹. On סְרָך see especially Schifman, Halakhah at Qumran, pp. 60–68; Weinfeld, Organizational Pattern, pp. 10–13.


⁸⁵. רְחָנוֹן וּבֵית בְּשֵׁיֵרִים וּבֵית בָּלָק וּבֵית בַּתּוֹרָה פֶּן יִקְבּּרֵי לְיַרְשָׁא לִרְבְּשָׁא הָּאִלָּא שָׁרָה מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְבוֹן מְתַחְתָּא וּלְאָל חַרְב
of the use of τὰξις in the Codex to designate a sectarian 'precept'. It also points to a possible Palestinian background for this expression.

Yet there remains an even more telling correlation between the structure and operation of the Qumranic Elchasaite and the posited Elchasaite assembly wherein authoritative instruction was imparted to the earnest enquirer. In a passage of the Codex which quotes from Mani's 'Epistle to Edessa', 86 the author describes the authority upon which his own religious message rests. While recounting the sequence of revelatory events that constituted his 'call', Mani makes the following interesting statement: 'then by his [i.e. the Father's] grace, he severed me from the assembly of the many who are ignorant of the truth ...'. 87 One is immediately struck by the expression 'from the assembly of the many', in Greek ἀπὸ τοῦ συνεδρίου τοῦ πλήθους, for it is practically a literal rendering of the Hebrew phrase מָשָׂא חָבֵרִים! The context of Mani's statement makes it plain that he was referring here to his former life in the Elchasaite community. This would seem to be evidence that the Elchasaite group among whom Mani was reared termed their general assembly ὁ συνεδρίον τοῦ πλήθους, a title philologically equivalent to that of the Qumranic מָשָׂא חָבֵרִים.88 One must reckon with the possibility that this Elchasaite community inherited some of its distinctive organizational concepts from Qumranic Judaism.

This possibility leads us now to a consideration of the course of events culminating in Mani's departure from the baptism sect. The story of the formal conflict is sequentially narrated in the Codex by three sources: those of Baraios (CMC 79:13–93:23), Zachias (94:1–99:9), and Timotheus (99:10–106:23). The initial editors of the Codex constructed an outline of the events based on their perception of the narrative progression of the sources, dividing the Baraios and Zachias sources into a general introduction and six principal parts.89 We have already briefly noticed the passage which the editors have labelled an 'introduction': it is the interesting pericope wherein Mani describes his 'standing up and questioning' the baptist authorities regarding the mores of the sectarian community (CMC 79:14–80:5). The editors interpret this passage as a synopsis of Mani's informal questioning of various individual Baptists about their beliefs and practices.90 After his apparent success in these arguments with 'individuals' (CMC 80:6–11), the editors suggest that Mani subsequently engages groups in debates, one of

86 CMC 64:3–7: καθὼς καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν φησάν ἐν τοῖς συγγράμμασιν οἷς ἀπέστειλεν εἰς Ἑδεσσαν, then quoted in 64:8–65:22. For another possible reference to this work, see al-Nadīm, Fīhrīst (Flügel, Mani, p. 74, l. 9): رساءلة آل الرها ... . . . . noted by Henrichs–Koenen, ZPE 5 (1970), p. 109.
87 καὶ τότε τῇ αὐτοῦ χαρτί ἀπεσπάσας ἔχε ἀπὸ τοῦ συνεδρίου τοῦ πλήθους τοῦ τὴν ἀλήθειαν μὴ γνωσκόντος (CMC 65:3–8).
88 Compare B. Visotzky, 'Rabbinic Randglossen to the Cologne Mani Codex', ZPE 52 (1983), p. 299.
90 Ibid., p. 132.
which was the locus for Mani’s extended refutation of the purification customs observed by the community (CMC 80:22–85:12). This discourse produces schisms within the ‘group’ with regard to Mani and his teachings. Some are prepared to recognize the young prodigy as an authoritative leader, but others are repelled by his rejection of the community’s basic teachings (CMC 85:13–88:15). These latter, among whom are apparently the most influential members of the community, convene a synod before which Mani is brought and further interrogated (CMC 88:15–91:18).

Mani is charged with four serious transgressions: (1) rejection of the purification rites (CMC 91:4–9); (2) opposition to ‘the commandments of the Saviour’ (CMC 91:9–11); (3) violation of the dietary regulations (CMC 91:11–14); and (4) refusal to engage in agricultural labour (CMC 91:14–18).

Mani responds to these charges by appealing to the community’s basic teachings (CMC 94:1–100:1). He concludes by expressing his conviction that he is only bringing to fruition what earlier baptism luminaries had taught upon the basis of their visions.

The reaction of the synod to Mani’s assertions is predictably swift and severe. A group of baptists set upon Mani with the intent of putting him to death, but he is spared by the intervention of the oikodespota. Understandably depressed by the sect’s hostility, Mani retreats to solitude and prays for guidance. He is granted a vision of the ‘Twin’, the mediator of his earlier revelations, and the ‘Twin’ exhorts him to abandon the sect and to go into the world in order to proclaim his new message (CMC 99:11–100:1).

91 Labelled by the editors ‘Manis neuplatonisch-gnostische Widerlegung der Reinigungspratiken der Täufer in Diskussionen mit Gruppen’ (ibid.).
92 Ibid., p. 133.
94 ἀγνόει ἡ δὲ ταύτι ἐφασών πρὸς αὐτοῖς ἀναλόγων αὐτῶν τοὺς λόγους, αὐτάθι πάντες ἐκκλησίων ὕπο ὕφηξ ὡς καὶ ἀναστήθη τινα ἐξ αὐτῶν καὶ τόπαι με. κατέγινα δὲ με μεταξύ πάντων καὶ ἔφεσον ἠπαταζομένος δὲ καὶ τῶν τοιχῶν μου ὡς ἐχθρὸν των· κατέβας δὲ μοι διὰ μεγάλης φωτιῆς ωθεὶ κατὰ διδακτιῶν πυρκανίζουσαν καὶ ἀγνόει ἡ δὲ ἐφάνοντο φθόνον ἀπόσταξας με. διὰ δὲ Πατρὶκίου τῶν ὁικοδεσποτῶν διήφηθατα αὐτῶν [. . .] μὴ ἐδιδάξατε πρὸς τοὺς μεταξὺ αὐτῶν, αἰδοθνίστε ἀπολαύσας με (CMC 100:1–101:3).
101:11–106:14). Mani thereupon leaves the community, accompanied by two converts\(^96\) from the sect \((CMC\ 106:15–23)\).

Having rehearsed the entire conflict-pericope which climaxes with Mani’s departure from the sect, it is necessary to return and re-examine the structure of the narrative. It will be recalled that the initial editors propose a sequence of actions which might be summarized in the following manner: (1) Mani disputes with individual baptized; (2) Mani disputes with groups of baptized; (3) Mani disputes before a synod of baptized; and (4) Mani leaves the sect.\(^97\) The final two stages of this sequence are not in question. It is clear that a synod was convened and that Mani left the sect as a result of the proceedings of this synod. What remains debatable in this writer’s mind is the distinction suggested between Mani’s arguments with individuals and his subsequent disputes with groups in the context of the narrative. Given our previous discussion of several parallels between the organization of Mani’s Elchasaite community and that of the Qumran sect, it seems possible to propose an alternative reconstruction of Mani’s disputes with his Elchasaite brethren.

Instead of labelling the passage where Mani mentions his ‘standing up and questioning’ the authorities as an ‘introduction’ which refers to debates with ‘individuals’, one might be equally justified in viewing it as an actual description of a meeting of the Elchasaite sanhedrin \((=\) מֹשֶה הַרְבִּי)\(\). It is possible that at a session of the Elchasaite assembly, just as at a meeting of the Qumranic messaḥ ha-rifin, one who desired an explanation for some obscure sectarian precept would ‘stand up’ to be recognized by the assembled sages before proceeding to speak. The text may thus be alluding to one (or more?) sessions of the Elchasaite sanhedrin as the setting for Mani’s questions about community prescriptions. Some support for this hypothesis might be gathered from the immediately preceding pericope, where we read: ‘I therefore resolved to declare to Sitiatos and those of his sanhedrin what my most blessed Father revealed to me …’.\(^98\) One might thus conclude that the proper arena for the questioning and exposition of sectarian teachings was the Elchasaite sanhedrin.

If such is the case, then an alternative outline for the sequence of events leading to Mani’s ‘trial’ might be proposed. Emboldened by his distinctive revelations, Mani disrupts the normally staid atmosphere of a meeting\(^99\) of the Elchasaite sanhedrin. He propounds questions to the learned in accordance with the usual procedure, but, instead of accepting their rulings,

\(^96\) Compare al-Nadim, Fihrist \((\text{Flügel, } Mani,\ p. 51, \text{ ll. } 6-7)\).

\(^97\) See notes 89–90 above.

\(^98\) ἐβουλεύσατον αὐτὸς τῷ τῇ Σιταί κάκεινος τὸς ἐκ τοῦ συνεδρίου αὐτοῦ ἐξ ὀν ἀπεκάλυφεν μοι ὁ μακαριώτατος μου πατήρ ἐξεταίρων αὐτοῖς \((CMC\ 77:5–10)\).

\(^99\) Compare Josephus on the communal life of the Essenes: οὗτος δὲ κραυγὴ ποτὲ τῶν ὦκον ὦ τεθάρυβος μι λαῖς, τῶς δὲ λαλιὰς ἐν τάξει παραχωροῦσαν ἀλλήλοις \((\text{Bellum } 2.132)\).
he brazenly contradicts and refutes them. 100 His unseemly behaviour produces an initial discomfort among the assembled leaders: ‘some of them were amazed at me, but others grew angry and heatedly rejoined: Does he not want to go to the Greeks?’ 101 Only slightly daunted by the murmuring, Mani continues to expound before the sanhedrin, presenting his radical reinterpretation of the sectarian purity precepts (CMC 80:21–85:12). A tumultuous uproar ensues within the assembly. While some are prepared to recognize Mani as an authoritative teacher or prophet, others are appalled by his flagrant rejection of cherished community prescriptions (CMC 85:13–88:15). The sanhedrin apparently concludes its meeting amidst this uproar. However, dissension within the community is so rife that the elders decide to convene a special synod for the purpose of ‘trying’ Mani (CMC 88:15 ff.).

Therefore, rather than adhering to an artificial distinction between Mani’s arguments with individual baptists and subsequent disputes with groups of baptists (as the initial editors suggest), it seems just as plausible that the entire section of CMC 79:14–88:15 represents a single setting, that of a session of the Elchasaitic sanhedrin. Some time after the dissolution of this meeting, Sitaos and his fellow elders resolve to confront Mani as an apostate who rejects the fundamental principles of the community. 102 They convene a formal court and consult the οἰκοδεσπότης regarding the gravity of Mani’s offences. Mani is then summoned before this tribunal. 103

As stated above, Mani was charged with four grave misdeeds: rejection of purification rites, opposition to ‘the commandments of the Saviour’, violation of dietary regulations, and refusal to join his fellow brethren in agricultural labour. These were serious transgressions against the community ethos which, if tolerated, would undermine the very foundation of the


101 τινές μὲν ἐξ αὐτῶν ἔθαγμαζον με, ἄλλοι δὲ ἀφρίζοντο καὶ ψυχομείκελον ἐλεγον μήτι εἰς τούς Ἑλληνας ἔβουλεται ποιηθήναι; (CMC 80:12–18).


103 ἐκάλεσαν δὲ καὶ τοῦ οἰκοδεσπότην Παττίκιον καὶ ἐπέστρεψαν αὐτῷ ὁ υἱὸς σου ἑκείνης τοῦ νόμου ἡμῶν καὶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον βούλεται ποιηθήναι[: καὶ αὐτὸν ἐρωτον καὶ ἐπόραν καὶ λάγχαν [ἀ ἀδοφίζομεν ἤμεις καὶ οὐκ ἔθαμβομεν, τοῦτοι [πάσαι] οὐκ ἔσκαλονκε [καὶ] φήσι δὲν εἶναι κυήσαν ραμα. ἀλλα[μ]ι τῷ βάπτισμα δυν τράπανο ἡμῖν βαπτίζεται. [Ἐλληνικό] δὲ ἢρων βουλεύτει ἐπίθεσι. Παττίκιος δὲ διὰ τὸ τετευρηκέναι αὐτῶν τοῦ μέγιστον θύραμβον ἐμοὶ πρὸς αὐτούς· καλεσατ ἢμεις αὐτῶν καὶ πέσατε. καὶ τότε καλέσαντες με πρὸς αὐτοὺς συνήθωσασε οὖν ἑσαμεν πρὸς ἐμέ ... (CMC 89:9–90:10).
sect’s existence. As the elders informed Pattikios, ‘your son has turned away from our Law and desires to conduct himself in conformity with (the ways of) the world.’

An interesting analogue to this assessment by the elders occurs in the Serek ha-Yahad: ‘Anyone who has been a member of the community for more than ten years whose spirit turns away so that he despises the community and departs from the (mores of the) congregation to conduct himself in conformity with his own stubbornness shall never again return to the community.’

The nature of this ‘turning away’ is further illumined a few lines prior to this ruling, where we read: ‘Anyone whose spirit moves away from the principle of the community so that he despises truth and conducts himself in conformity with his own stubbornness ...’

This latter offence however can be expiated by submission to a rehabilitation period of two years. Despite the disparate penalties, the correspondences in phraseology between these two Qumran cases suggests that the transgression depicted was the same in both instances: namely, a member’s open rejection of one or more of the fundamental precepts by which the community distinguished itself from the surrounding world. The difference between the two formulations apparently lies in the phrase ‘more than ten years’.

A rebellious member who had spent ten years or less among the sect was granted an opportunity to repent of his errors and to reform his behaviour. By contrast, those who apostasized after having lived more than ten years with the community were to be permanently expelled from the sect.

According to the text of the Codex, Mani dwelt among the Elchasaites from his fourth to his twenty-fifth year. This sojourn easily satisfies the Qumranic ten-year requirement for a maturing appreciation of that sect’s prescriptions, but we have little indication that tenure was a consideration in Mani’s case, nor does the prescribed penalty of expulsion appear in the text of the Codex. In fact, no verdict at all is recorded in the text. The Codex simply states that when Mani completed his defence, the judges physically assaulted him with the intention of putting him to death.

104 ὁ υἱὸς ἔξετραγη τοῦ νόμου ἡμῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν κόσμον βούλεται πορευθῆναι] (CMC 89:11–14).
105 ὁκόλο αὐτὸς ἀσίρι ζωὴν ὑπέστη ἐνεκτεὶν στέφεσθαι ἱερὸν ἐντεκτεῖν ἱερὸν ἐντεκτεῖν (IQS 7:22–24).
106 ὁκόλο αὐτὸς ἀσίρι ζωὴν ὑπέστη ἐνεκτεὶν στέφεσθαι ἱερὸν ἐντεκτεῖν ἱερὸν Μανῶν Μανῶν Μανῶν (IQS 7:18–19).
108 IQS 7:22 reads ... Λείπεται ἀπὸ τῆς καθολικῆς ... , an awkward expression which has invited emendation, particularly since another manuscript of the Serek that preserves this passage (4QSe) reads ὡς ὠντος in place of Λέον, see J. T. Milik, RB 67 (1960), p. 413; Licht, Megillat Haserakhim, p. 166. For retention of the reading with ὡς, see Schiffman, Sectarian Law, p. 182, n. 106.
Was this attack simply a psychological reaction provoked by Mani's blasphemies? Could the verdict have been a sentence of death? Or was the verdict in fact expulsion, a penalty which the sources of the *Codex* have suppressed in the interests of apologetic so as to emphasize Mani's voluntary departure from the community?

The initial editors have pointed out that there are some striking similarities between the *Codex*’s account of the physical indignities suffered by Mani at the hands of his persecutors and the Gospel narratives recounting the mocking of Jesus by the Roman guards.111 These verbal echoes contribute to the development of a hagiographic image of the martyr enduring misfortunes for the sake of his message.112 A 'Jesus typology' was probably instrumented by the ancient compiler(s) of the *Codex* to solicit sympathy for the sufferings of Mani from a Christian or Manichaean reader, the two primary affiliations for whom the *Codex* was intended. Nevertheless, we need not view the account of Mani's physical ordeal solely as rhetorical flourish. There remains an intriguing possibility that the attack of the elders was in fact an attempt to implement a sentence of death pronounced by the court.

In their discussion of the series of charges pressed against Mani by his fellow sectarians, the initial editors present a strong case for the likelihood that Mani’s deviant interpretations of the community precepts might be construed as a species of ‘false prophecy’.113 They cite in particular one passage of the *Codex* which apparently preserves an early sectarian oracle predicting the advent of a young teacher who would ‘overturn’ the traditional doctrines of the sect.114 External sources inform us that the Elchasaites adhered to a belief in the recurrent manifestation upon earth of what other sectarian traditions term a ‘True Prophet’,115 of whom Elchasai himself was presumably the latest incarnation,116 but whether the sect anticipated further appearances of this True Prophet, or of a corresponding

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114 ἀλλ᾽ ἐν άγγελος μετί ὁνήματι ἐστιν περί οὗ ἐγραμμένον οἱ διδάσκαι ήμῶν ἀγαθοί· ... διανίσκεται τις ἀγάθος ἐπὶ μέσῳ ἡμῶν καὶ διδάσκαις νέος προσκελεύτηται ὡς καὶ κυρίου ἡμῶν τὸ πάν δῶμα, δὲ τρίσχων οἱ πρόγονοι ἡμῶν πατέρες ἐθέθησαν περὶ τῆς ἀναπάυσης τοῦ ἐνδήματος (CMC 86:17-87:6).
'False Prophet', remains uncertain. Since the oracle states that the expected teacher would demolish the teachings of the sect, and because Mani was engaged in such destructive behaviour, it seems probable that Mani was branded a 'false prophet' by the students of this oracle.

Two interesting features of the assault scene lend support to the hypothesis that Mani was actually convicted of false prophecy. The final clause of the pericope concludes: '... and wanting on account of their jealousy to *ἀναστηλώσω* me'. The crucial infinitive, aside from the initial two letters, is wanting. The editors suggest the restoration of *ἀναστηλώσω*, thus producing the translation 'to hang, strangle'. They provide no justification for their lexical choice, but some affirmation for their reconstruction can be supplied from rabbinic sources. According to the Mishnah—a compilation whose final shaping only slightly predates the birth of Mani—those classes of 'false prophets' who were subject to human punishment incurred the capital penalty of 'strangulation' (*חטאת*). Thus by retaining the proposed reading of the Greek infinitive, hypothetical as it is, unexpected light is shed upon the likely charge levelled against Mani. Perhaps the elders wanted to 'strangle' Mani because this was a traditional means of ridding the community of a 'false prophet' or *nabi sheqer*.

Only one Qumranic passage seems to have a bearing upon the issue of 'false prophecy', but interestingly it too can possibly be applied to Mani's situation within the sect. This prescription states: 'Anyone over whom the spirits of Belial gain mastery so that he speaks rebellion (against the community precepts) shall be judged according to the ordinance for the

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118 καὶ βουλὴ μεταφέρει διὰ τοῦ προσώπου τοῦ ὁσιότητος θεοῦ ἀναστηλώσω με (CMC 100:17–20).

119 Compare Matthew 27:5b with reference to the fate of Judas Iscariot: καὶ ἀπεκδήμων ἀπήγαγον. This verb reflects an ambiguous Semitic substrate that is well illustrated in the Old Syriac Sinaiac version of Matthew 27:5b: *wēzi til' īh w'tqang*, 'he departed, he hung himself and (so) was strangled'. The Hebrew verb הִange, particularly when used in the phrase לְאֵל הָעָם, 'hang upon wood', is often interpreted to mean 'crucifixion' in texts stemming from the late Hellenistic or Roman eras. Cf. 4QpNahum I 4–8; 11Q Temple 64:6–13.

120 msanah. 11:1; 5 msanah. 14:13–16; Sifre Deuteronomy §175–178. msanah. 7.3 describes how the 'strangulation' was accomplished: 'Ordinance for those to be strangled: they sink him in manure up to his knees and place a scarf of coarse weave within one of soft weave, and wrap it around his neck. One (witness) pulls (one end of the scarf) toward himself, and another (witness) pulls (the other end) toward himself, until he expires.' For an interesting discussion of the relationship between crucifixion and strangulation, see D. J. Halperin, 'Crucifixion, the Nahum Pesher, and the Rabbinic Penalty of Strangulation', Journal of Jewish Studies 32 (1981), pp. 32–46.
necromancer and the medium.’\footnote{121} While the terms ‘spirits of Belial’, ‘necromancer’ and ‘medium’ suggest the practice of sorcery or commerce with demons, the employment of the phrase ‘so that he speaks rebellion’ (דרב תדר) makes it clear that the ordinance is in fact directed against false prophecy. The same expression appears in Deuteronomy 13:6 where it depicts the activity of the ‘false prophet’: ‘That prophet or that visionary shall be put to death, for he has spoken rebellion (דרב תדר) against the Lord your God ….’\footnote{122} The Deuteronomic text does not impart the mode of execution, but the Damascus Covenant lawgivers resolve this ambiguity by classifying the ‘false prophet’ within the same category as one who practises necromancy or who controls spirits, offences which carry a punishment of death by stoning.\footnote{123}

Is it possible that Mani’s Elchasaite community similarly equated the state of being ‘controlled by spirits of Belial’ and the phenomenon of ‘false prophecy’? A curious passage within the assault narrative states that the elders shouted loudly at Mani 两个维护 katá δειαδαιμονος.\footnote{124} The term δειαδαιμον is normally used to signify either the quality of ‘religious’ in a favourable sense or ‘superstitious’ in a derogatory context.\footnote{125} Neither meaning seems appropriate for this portion of the assault narrative. The initial editors suggest the translation ‘as a heretic’\footnote{126} for the problematic Greek phrase, but cautiously propose in their accompanying note that the term may actually connote here ‘demon-possessed’.\footnote{127} If they are correct in their surmise, we then have possible evidence that the exegetical correlation between ‘demon-possession’ and ‘false prophecy’ expressed in the Damascus Covenant lies behind the Elchasaite perception of Mani as a ‘false prophet’.

However, the expected mandate of death, if such it was, does not materialize. Mani was not executed by the elders. The Codex does not mention preparations for ‘stoning’, and even the attempted ‘strangulation’ was thwarted by the intervention of Pattikios, who warns the attackers against bringing sin upon the community (CMC 100:20–101:3). It thus seems unlikely that the court pronounced a verdict of death. The attack

\footnote{121} Cf. Bauer and Lampe s.v. δειαδαιμον.
\footnote{123} Ibid., p. 233, n. 310.
upon Mani may have been the spontaneous act of certain overzealous elders, perhaps prompted in part by the memory of ancestral rulings analogous to those we have examined. If a judgement was rendered, the more likely penalty for Mani’s transgressions would have been expulsion from the group. As we have seen, the Qumran documents prescribe banishment for those who do not respect the authorities and precepts of that community. Moreover, we also possess later testimony that Mani was forcibly ejected from a baptist sect. Theodore bar Konai’s synopsis of the life of Mani explicitly states that the baptist community who raised him ‘expelled him from their group’ (pqwhy mn lwthwn).128 There is no reference to a physical threat in Theodore’s account. His testimony apparently reflects the actual historical event,129 which is furthermore precisely the penalty that we would expect on the basis of the Qumranic evidence: ‘Anyone who has been a member of the community for more than ten years whose spirit turns away so that he despises the community and departs from the (mores of the) congregation to conduct himself in conformity with his own stubbornness shall never again return to the community’ (IQS 7:22–24).

This essay has proposed that certain features of the organizational structure and juridical operation of Mani’s Elchasaites are illuminated by an examination of Second Temple Jewish sectarian literature. Demonstration of an ideological nexus between a Mesopotamian baptist group and a Palestinian Jewish sect forces us to reappraise the influences judged to be instrumental in the genesis of both Elchasaites and Manicheanism. The impact of heterodox Jewish thought upon Mani must occupy a central place in future studies of the origins of Manicheanism.

129 Henrichs, HSCP 77 (1973), p. 43.