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978-1-108-01526-4 - The Religion of the Manichees
Francis Crawford Burkitt
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The Religion of the Manichees

First published in 1924, this volume contains the Donnellan lectures given by Francis Crawford Burkitt (1864–1935) at Trinity College Dublin in June 1923. Their subject is Manichaeism, a dualistic form of Christianity that thrived during the fourth and fifth centuries in Central Asia. Burkitt focuses especially on the discovery of fragments of Manichaean literary texts in Chinese Turkestan, near the Siberian border, early in the twentieth century. The first lecture introduces the history of the Manichees and reviews the sources of information available about them. The second discusses the Manichaean view of Jesus, Manichaean church organisation and Manichaean eschatology. The third analyses the influences behind Manichaean thought and teaching, including the important influences of Marcion and Saint Augustine. Burkitt's lectures were influential in publicising the new finds of Manichaean manuscript fragments, and remain an important resource for those studying heterodox movements in early Christianity.

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Donnellan Lectures for 1924

FRANCIS CRAWFORD BURKITT



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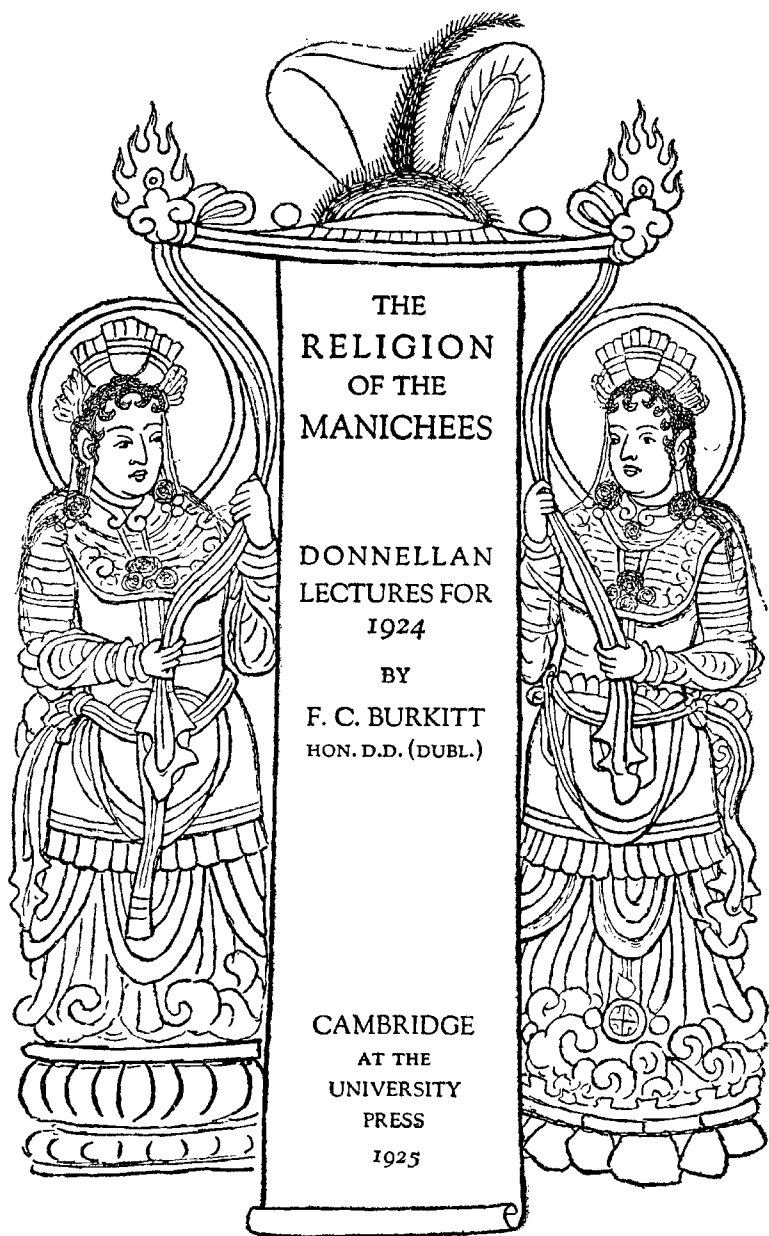
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PREFACE

THE three Lectures here printed were delivered last June in Trinity College, Dublin, as the Donnellan Lectures for 1924. Their main object is to bring the wonderful discoveries of original Manichee Literature from Central Asia before a wider public than at present seems to know of them, and at the same time to suggest that the Christian element in the Religion of the Manichees is larger and more fundamental than the scholars of the last generation were inclined to allow.

I have to express my very grateful thanks to Prof. Dr A. von Le Coq, Custodian of the Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, for his kind permission to me to reproduce two Illustrations from his book *Die Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien* (2nd Part, *The Manichaean Miniatures*), Berlin, 1923, and to make an adaptation of another for a Title-Page. The Illustration facing p. 1 shews a Wall-Fresco found at Khotscho near Turfan (Chinese Turkestan): the large figure is understood to represent Mani himself, because of the details of the curious head-dress and the elaborate costume. As parts of this figure are faint and mutilated I have made a line-drawing of it as faith-

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fully as I could, which will be found facing p. 69. Facing p. 35 is a fragmentary picture, taken from a brightly-coloured illuminated ms., which is believed to represent the Manichaean Sacred Meal or Eucharist, perhaps at the annual Festival of the Chair (*Bema*) of Mani. My Title-Page was the Title-Page of a Manichee Roll: I have attempted to restore the details where they are now torn away in the original. The Uigur script of the original was written in vertical columns down the central Banner, not across. It is not known for certain what the two Genii stand for, but it may be conjectured that they represent Land and Sky (see p. 54, note).

It is my hope that these Illustrations may lead others, both students of Religion and of Art, to study the admirable reproductions of Manichaean writings and drawings in the series which Prof. v. Le Coq is editing: I am quite sure they are not so well known in this country as they deserve to be.

F. C. BURKITT

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WALL-FRESCO FROM KHOTSCHO	<i>to face</i> p. 1
MANICHAEAN 'EUCCHARIST'	„ p. 35
PORTRAIT OF MANI	„ p. 69

I regret that two interesting studies of some Iranian elements in Manichaeism by Prof. A. V. Williams Jackson reached me too late for more than a passing notice here (*J. of Amer. Oriental Soc.*, vol. 43, pp. 15-25; vol. 44, pp. 61-72). In the former Article a fresh parallel to *hamōcāg* (see p. 105) is given on p. 18. In the latter two good emendations in the *Fibrist* are proposed, both about titles of the 'Mother of the Living,' pp. 65, 67. At the same time I feel that though single details in Manichaeism can be illustrated or explained from Zoroastrian sources the fundamental construction of Mani's Religion remains (heretical) Christian.

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MANI, SURROUNDED BY MANICHEE SAINTS.

From a Wall-Fresco found at Khotscho. See p. 7.