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MANICHAEISM SHAPES MODERN EUROPE:
THE EXAMPLE OF OUR PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM:

The cases of Eleanor of Aquitania (1124 - 1204),
of Marie de France, born about 1150¹, abbess of the convent of
Shaftesbury from 1181 till about 1216,
of Wolfram from Eschenbach (ca. 1170 - 1220) and his *Parzival*
(and not of the *Perceval* of Chrestien of Troyes)
and also of William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616)

HELMUT WALDMANN
(University of Tübingen)

INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time - fairy tales always begin that way - there was a young Swedish girl (she wasn't blonde, she was a brunette) who visited me at my home in Wendelsheim near Tübingen for a fortnight or so. She had prayed at Mont Ségur and had found her *consolamen*, and be it with her nice blonde Swedish girl-friend - but I tell you *The Truth*, quite like Mr. Labouchère did it some one-hundred and twenty years ago. Well, that girl discussing with me about *The Truth* with respect to Manichaeism when asked what she believes in, told me: "It's quite simple to say. You only have to read what Mary Boyce has written in her '*Reader in Manichaeism*'"². I think that's important for things to follow. Besides she was a rather learned girl, made her licentiate on Lilith some years later and in her thesis I found myself even referred to in my capacity of an Ex-Jesuit. You see, things are becoming rather concrete now. - But enough of the spirits that reign(ed) Aquitania.

WHO WAS ELEANOR?

With respect to her I give you a text originally written in German from "*Meyer's Conversations-Lexikon*" from 1846, vol. 8, given there s.v.: "*Eleonore Nr. 7*", an article whose Yes is still a Yes and whose No a No, as our Lord has called us to do.

Let's then hear what they *did* write in 1846 about *Eleonore Nr. 7* - by the by with reference to one *Is. de Larrey, Histoire de Eléonore de Guyenne, Paris 1692*.

"Eleanor of Guyenne, also Eleanor of Aquitania, was the eldest daughter of the last duke of Guyenne, William IX. She was born in 1124 and was heir of her father's dukedom. At the age of 14 she was married to king Louis VII. of France, who was then 18 years of age. She accompanied him, when he made for the Holy Country, partaking in the Second Crusade (1147/49). In Antioch the shameless young lady knitted an intimate relation with her uncle the count Raimund of Saint-Gilles and refused to follow her husband further on to Jerusalem. He then made her capture and forced her to take her

¹) see Marie de France, *Poetische Erzählungen nach altbretonischen Liebes-Sagen. Übersetzt von Wilhelm Herz. Revidiert und mit einem Nachwort versehen von Günther Schweikle*, Phaidon Verlag, Essen (without year, probably 1987; furtheron: Günther Schweikle ca. 1987) 267.

²) s. Mary Boyce, *A Reader in Manichaean Middle-Persian and Parthian Texts with Notes*, Leiden 1975 (= *Acta Iranica* 9).

way with him. Back to France the king at once thought of divorcing her and after the death of his minister Suger he did so in 1152, pretending his too close relationship to her. She now married the young duke of Normandy, count of Anjou and Maine, who soon after that ascended to the throne of England as Henry II. Out of jealousy, she presumably poisoned his maitresse Rosamunde Clifford, then instigated her sons to mutiny against their father, yet she was captured on her flight to France and sojourned for 16 years in prison, until, after her husband's death, she was set free by her son Richard the Lionhearted. When Richard went abroad on the Crusade on his own, she assumed the regency, yet lived to see her unloved son John Lacland ascend to the throne. She died in 1204 in the convent of Fontevraud, cursed at by her contemporaries and covered by shame by posterity."

What a nice girl, isn't she?

But how did she acquire such habits, and, what made her what she was all through her unlucky lifetime? Eleanor of Aquitania originated from southern France, from the *Midi*, the country of the Troubadours, the country of court-life, love and licence. Her own father, William IX. of Aquitania (1071 - 1127), was quite simply the first of all Troubadours³.

However, it was in her British kingdom, starting with her sons, that kingship rapidly began to break down, and where from about 1380 onward freethinking reformators like Wyclif entered the cultural scene disseminating their dissident ideas that renewed the olden preaching of Jewish resistance against kingship in a suborn search of the gone by times when charismatic Judges rose up to lead the People Elected whenever the political situation called for it⁴.

In England the development that started with the coming of Eleanor found its logical conclusion in 1689 with the constitutionally (and before all theologically) valid extinction of kingship by the proclamation of the *Bill Of Rights*. Yet on the continent the erosion of imperial power was set in motion with Eleanor's son-in-law, the Saxonian Duke Heinrich der Löwe and his intransigent Guelfian confrontation with the emperors, a confrontation generation after generation held up by the Welfs and that - quite like in Britain - ended with the installation of the parliamentary system in both the Hapsburg and the Prussian Empires. This process was essentially fostered by transferring Wyclif's ideas *via* Hussitism and Luther's Protestantism (eventually also a Saxon) into the Reich (both of them in due time causing thereby the 30-years-war⁵), then by the foundation of the Prussian Kingdom, by which on the continent the vanquishing of imperial glory was finally achieved by World War I.

IS THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM MANICHAEAN?

Yet the parliamentary system, today the more or less realised ideal of government the world over, had its beginnings with the the entrance of the libertarian Eleanor of Aquitania into politics, shocking the monarchical system in her husband's kingdom as well as in the country of her son-in-law, Heinrich the Lion, *i.e.* in both, England and Germany⁶. However, this is insufficient evidence to prove that the parliamentary system as something Manichaeian.

Let me just summarise the following explanations in this way:

Firstly: The same suppression of certain scriptural texts, as practiced in the spiritual ambience of Cluny to install both the Crusades and the libertarian world-view of the Troubadours, was used to inaugurate

³) see in greater detail my just appeared *Pro-Athanasius*, Tübingen 2002, 76-90. - Especially on William IX., also: William of Poitou, as the first Troubadour see *l.c.* 84 with reference to: Günther Schweikle *ca.* 1987 (as in note 1), cover.

⁴) see my '*Rede an die Juden*', Tübingen 2000, 10ss., where I refer mostly to F. Crüsemann: *Der Widerstand gegen das Königtum. Die antiköniglichen Texte des Alten Testaments und der Kampf um den frühen israelitischen Staat*, Neukirchen/Vluyn 1978.

⁵) It is a most interesting fact that a tendency to Protestantism was already introduced into the Reich by Wolfram of Eschenbach and his *Parzival* - surprisingly at work under the influence of the same Heinrich the Lion, the son-in-law of Eleanor of Aquitania and instigator of the just mentioned disastrous 'Guelfian' anti-Reichian movement. We will come back to this observation later on in our text.

⁶) Hence her designation even today as a *femme fatale*, see Günther Schweikle *ca.* 1987 (as in note 1), *l.c.*

the parliamentary system. In this special case it was the suppression of the well established scriptural givings, on which the monarchical system depends⁷.

Secondly: The Manichaeic character of the said developments persists in the circumstance, that they are based on misinterpretations of the Holy Script, although they had only partly been introduced by Manichaeism in the Christian world and were typical of it.

In conclusion: The main impact of Manichaeism in the developments which I summarise here as Manichaeistic is, that in the process of destroying monarchy the Church seems to have made use of the Gnostic/Manichaeic habit of misinterpreting Scripture, a practice which from time immemorial was so skillfully practiced in southern France: Having pressed through in the said southern France (more precisely in Cluny) her misinterpretation of the Holy Bible on behalf of the use of weapons in order to spread the Christian belief *without employing any Manichaeic teaching*, she now not only proclaimed the new misinterpretation, that monarchy is not imperiously demanded in the Holy Scriptures, she even openly took over the proper Manichaeic understanding of the abasement of human nature (the result of Manichaeism's cosmological concepts) in order to acquaint the public not only with that new misinterpretation but also to acquaint it to the fact that for a debased intelligence and a determined will it is possible that from time to time certain items openly expressed in the Holy Script lose their value, quite simply get out of use.

A corollary is that, seeing all this, one may observe that the church proceeding thus did nothing but follow the lead of St Augustin who, was already called *semper Manichaeus*⁸ by his contemporaries and who had long ago practiced Manichaeism-inspired re-interpretations of the Bible, that were of the highest importance for the Church to install itself as a mundane power⁹.

With these preliminary explanations in our mind let us now have a closer look at the astonishingly effective developments which began in the 10th century and which - starting from the territory of southern France - spread all over the world:

In 909, exactly two hundred years before the birth of Eleanor of Aquitania, her ancestor duke William the Pious founded the convent of Cluny, which during the two centuries until its factual loss of political importance in 1109¹⁰ brought about the official installation of the Crusades by Rome, namely in 1095 by the former Clunian prior Urban II at the occasion of the Synod of Clermont Ferrant. Up to that time Crusades were an inconceivable institution for any Christian, because they were against all scriptural teachings¹¹. However they eventually not only brought about the end of the Byzantine Empire, but seriously weakened the political stability of the western monarchies as well. - The soil of the *Midi* seems especially apt for the acceptance of such re-interpretations of the Bible. When at the beginning of my text I referred to the Cathar-Manichaeic substratum, till now alive in the *Midi* as it was all through ancient and mediaeval times, so the *Midi* also now was a hotbed to bring forth other flowers of unorthodox teachings. So it also nurtured the Troubadours and their lifestyle, which exercised an attractiveness unequalled by anything else, for instance on a British people till now unacquainted with something like that - a lifestyle that by then was frankly declared as unorthodox by such a spiritual authority as Ignatius of Loyola, who incidentally

⁷) see before all Christ's "Give to Caesar, what is Caesar's ..." (Matt 22.21).

⁸) lastly see Johannes van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study in Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities*, Leiden 1991 *passim*.

⁹) For ample coverage, see my *Petrus und die Kirche*, Tübingen 1999 *passim*, especially on Augustine's role played in this respect pp. 103-127.

¹⁰) see for instance: Joachim Wollasch, *Cluny. Licht der Welt. Aufstieg und Niedergang der klösterlichen Gemeinschaft*, Düsseldorf etc. 2001 *passim*.

¹¹) see *Pro-Athanasius* 76-90 with reference e.g. to: Carl Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens*, Stuttgart 1935, 21955, 311, where the bewilderment of the contemporaries is largely described and commented at. Theologically the use of weapons can simply not be justified, as it is in the meantime even officially accepted by the Vatican itself: About the Popes ceremoniously pronounced excuses at the occasion of his meeting with the Patriarch Christodoulos of Athens and his Synod in May 4th 2001 see the authentic report in Michael Hesemann, *Das Fatima-Geheimnis. Marienerscheinungen, der Papst und die Zukunft der Menschheit. Mit einem Vorwort von Joachim Kardinal Meisner*, Rottenburg 2002, 264-266.

commented on it a few years before his death in his autobiography '*The Pilgrim's Narrative*', and described it as coming from "*the devils spirit*"¹².

MARIE DE FRANCE

But let us have a still closer look at the Manichaeic character of the above mentioned unorthodox teachings and movements.

There are for instance the writings of Marie de France that are most useful for it. It was this abbess presiding over the convent of Shaftesbury from 1181 till at least 1216, who was not only the very first Anglo-Normanian and even French poetess known to us by name¹³, but during Eleanor's lifetime she promoted in her *lais* and in her versified romances the libertarian tendencies by the *medium* of her writings, that, as we have seen, the Aquitanian princess patronized through the exorbitant manner of her lifestyle¹⁴. It quite looks as if Marie de France was, like Eleanor, sent to Britain to join the latter in her (only to be compared with the crusades) effort to destroy monarchy (now the western one), this time not by means of a theologically, or better: biblically unjustifiable '*call to the weapons*', but by instigating in her books to theologically equally unjustifiable licentiousness.

Now, how does this relate to the parliamentary system we are speaking of? Not directly! But the work of the abbess Marie de France did loosen public opinion with regards to the political and spiritual binding of society, especially from the rather stern biblical demands concerning marriage, family life, divorce and sexual liberties in general.

Also, Marie de France's work (task) seems to have been nothing less than to ease equally the impending attempt to loosen another spiritual binding, up to that time taken as a given fact by every British subject whatsoever, namely its binding to the monarchy as the divinely instituted foundation of social order, the effort that will rather harshly be pushed forward in a near future by the dissident movement, John Wyclif for instance having died already in 1384.

And this libertarian poetess was not only a '*pious abbess*', she was of greatest public influence, being herself of royal stock, John Lacland, son of Eleanor and Henry II., greeted her in a letter of 1205 as *Carissima amita mea*: My very beloved Aunt¹⁵.

WOLFRAM OF ESCHENBACH AND HIS PARZIVAL

Let us now enter still more profoundly into the question in what respect the Manichaeic spiritual movement has generated in its last consequence our parliamentary system.

Above, in note 5, I mentioned that a certain tendency to a Protestant worldview was already introduced into the Reich by Wolfram of Eschenbach's *Parzival*, and that he was surprisingly enough at work under the influence of the same Heinrich the Lion, the son-in-law of Eleanor of Aquitania, who was the instigator of the '*Guelfian*' movement.

Thus we are able to follow the chain of institutionalising Manichaeic/protestant views from Aquitania itself to England and from there to Germany, which set in motion their most powerful achievement, namely the breaking asunder of the Reich by Guelfianism, Protestantism, and after that by the Prussian kingdom/empire,

¹²) see Ignatius von Loyola, *Der Bericht des Pilgers, übersetzt und erläutert von Burkhart Schneider S.J.*, Freiburg 1955, 43-46 (= nr. 5-8), where he writes expressively on the "*Ritterromane*", the Troubadourian "*Knight's Romances*", to meet "*the devils spirit*" in them. He writes authoritatively, having made substantial use of this literature in the years before his conversion. See in greater detail my '*Pro-Athanasius*' p. 90.

¹³) It was the English historian John Ch. Fox, who in 1910 hinted to it that she was abbess of the convent of Shaftesbury: See Günther Schweikle *ca.* 1987 (as in note 1), 266s. As for her Anglo-Normanian dialect see *l.c.* 263.

¹⁴) see in greater detail again my '*Pro-Athanasius*', p. 84-86.

¹⁵) The details are given in Günther Schweikle *ca.* 1987 (as in note 1), 266s.

finally creating the division into several '*German Republics*' which we had to suffer for several decennia - part of the Reich being torn away still now.

The utmost diligence with which those instruments - as in our case the introduction of a protestant worldview by the works of Wolfram of Eschenbach - were applied, can be seen if we look at Wolfram's cue-giver Chrestien of Troyes and his *Perceval*: When I was told by a Tübingen professor with greatest intensity, and even pride, that the understanding of salvation without the necessity of good works was already formulated in Eschenbach's *Parzival*, book 9, as told in the context of Parzival's second journey to the Grail, my daughter, then studying German Literature in Freiburg/Brig., told me about a teacher of hers, who with still greater emphasis in his lectures had hinted to the same observation. He confirmed that not only the concept of salvation without good works was to be found in Eschenbach's *Parzival*, but also 'modern' feminism, Sigune being Parzival's spiritual guide. Also the priesthood of laymen is proclaimed, Trevrizent, who conferred absolution to Parzival, being a layman. And even 'modern' free-church thinking can be seen frankly promoted in Eschenbach's *Parzival*, as all the salvatory work as described by him is performed without any reference to or participation of a clergyman whosoever. And he proclaimed Eschenbach as „A first Luther“: „Ein erster Luther“ – also with regard to the mightiness of his oratory.

Enumerating these points, my proper argument is to show that, as the said Freiburg authority vividly stressed, none of the modernistic ideas of Eschenbach's *Parzival* occurs in Chrestien's *Perceval* - a view confirmed by my Tübingen collocutor. In Chrestien's *Perceval* for instance Trevrizent seems to be an ordained priest. So Eschenbach's 'Protestantism', evidently was meant to be spread only in Germany in order to weaken the Reich - and not somewhere else!¹⁶ To stabilise this understanding of the substantial differences between Eschenbach and Chrestien of Troyes I simply remind you of the above mentioned fact that Wolfram was actually '*placed*' by Eleanor's son-in-law, Heinrich der Löwe¹⁷.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

The section on Eschenbach and Chrestien being nothing but an amplification of things already given in my Pro-Athanasius, that what follows now concerning Shakespeare is '*brand-new*'. Starting from the results of Ian Wilson's Shakespeare, London 1993, the relevant facts were published a few months ago by Hildegard Hammerschidt-Hummel in her: *Die verborgene Existenz des William Shakespeare. Dichter und Rebell im katholischen Untergrund*, Freiburg etc. 2001. This book seems to establish some of the strongest possible proofs that not only did Rome promote in Britain monachy-destroying Protestantism (*i.e.* real Manichaeism), but that Rome implanted it there in the proper sense of the word, Shakespeare's work being nothing but a continuation of the '*Special Training for England*' that characterised Marie de Frane's activities, according to the title the chapter dealing with that abbess in my Pro-Athanasius¹⁸.

I simply cannot help but confront you with the facts presented by Prof. Hummel - without any hint to her elaborated proofs. She makes it quite clear that the 14 years old William Shakespeare between 1578 and 1580, was trained in the Jesuit *collegium Anglicum* of Douai as also in Reims¹⁹. It is significant here that the nearby Jesuit college of St-Omer had **two** theaters at his disposal²⁰, evidently intended to form the pupils in a high degree by the achievements of the then world-wide admired *Jesuit-Theatre*. Mrs. Hummel told me that in a soon forthcoming book she will publish a sample of a typical *Jesuit-Theatre*-stage which clearly shows the elements of scenery-installation that were subsequently introduced by Shakespeare on the British islands.

With regard to the further seven-years gap that up to now occurs in Shakespeare's biography, namely the years from 1585 to 1592, Mrs. Hummel seems to have been able to fix the very traces of several sojourns

¹⁶) My collocutors were Akad. ORat Dr. Arne Holtorf and Akad. ORat Dr. Klaus Mittermüller of the *Germanistisches Institut* of the Tübingen and of the Freiburg University respectively.

¹⁷) see again Günther Schweikle *ca.* 1987 (as in note 1), 271, and my *Pro-Athanasius*, p. 76-90 - which however lacks to hint to the differences between the theology of Chrestien and that of Wolfram from Eschenbach.

¹⁸) see *Pro-Athanasius* p. 84.

¹⁹) See Hammerschmidt-Hummel 2001, 71-90.

²⁰) See Hammerschmidt-Hummel 2001, 79.

abroad, during which his real individuality was only scarcely hidden by pseudonyms slightly varying his proper name. The said sojourns led him before all to the *Venerable English College* of Rome - but also to northern Italy, a circumstance demonstrated by the host of local names from northern Italy that occur in his plays²¹.

Mrs. Hummel, as to be seen in the sub-title of her book, tries to style Shakespeare as a clandestine rebel (key-word: *Blackfriars-Gatehouse*) against the new protestant reign, but she herself agreed, when I formulated in the course of our conversation: "What Shakespeare did was poison for the then Catholics." "Kann sein" she answered: "May be."

My thesis is that Shakespeare in his writings, plays as well as lyrics, did not factually proclaim any protestant-manichaeic thoughts; however, by proclaiming (determinism-based) *tolerance*, as Mrs. Hummel stressed, he eased/fostered the new manners that were officially spread in the country, and thus he was of paramount importance in promoting the acceptance of the new, and this time original protestant-manichaeic, creed: Rome evidently had not forgotten the revolution so dear to her that she herself had instigated - and eventually had sent further support. That, as I see it, is the only possible way to explain those exorbitant labours the *Jesuit-trained* and with all probability *in Rome itself* strategically directed Shakespeare undertook in favour of the newly installed British Protestantism.

CONCLUSION

So it seems that we have to keep in our mind that the Church being good at influencing the public opinion, and lurking, as she is, for power, developed a quite natural *penchant* for democracy, because monarchy on account of Christ's "*Give to Caesar, what is Caesar's ...*" (Matt 22.21) is for her an absolutely '*closed shop*'. From the beginning onward the Church could only get on with her power-seeking by loosening one time this, one time another directive authoritatively given to her by the Lord²². By chance, or simply just by following the lead of St Augustin, she time and again took to instrumentalizing Manichaeic concepts in order to get on with her intentions; as for example Manichaeism's deterministic or predestinarian views or also its cosmological concepts. Before all when she began openly to preach Protestantism most of the new believers were drenched with the said fundamentally Manichaeic elements. So Protestantism ventured out to be the most important instrument she served herself of in her strife and that beginning with England finally brought about the general collapse of the monarchial system and that eventually gifted us with the dire experiences of so called *demo*-cracy. So the means to break monarchy brought from southern France were first proven in England, then exported into the rest of the world²³.

²¹) See Hammerschmidt-Hummel 2001, 108-115. See also 153-163 where she describes her visit in the said Roman institute and also in greatest detail the deciphering and identifying of the several pseudonyms that were applied for the then already much renowned actor and play-writer.

²²) Note the stress on the decisive role that already St Peter played in this respect in my *Petrus und die Kirche* as well as in my *Pro-Athanasius*, in the latter book especially pp. 2-6. - With regard for instance to the argumentative ductus of the *Pro-Athanasius* I may add: From the two living authorities to which I mostly refer when interpreting Aquitania/Cluny and the role of Eleanor and of Marie de France, one of them, Joachim Wollach, Münster, immediately sent me a copy of his '*Cluny*' joined by a letter that discussed minor items, but not the book's general view, whereas the other one, Günther Schweikle, simply invited me to see him in his home at Stuttgart where he joyfully commented on the results of my book.

²³) An astonishing review of Troubadourian practice in the homestead of Manichaeism with traits of a genuine French-Troubadourian self-understanding ("*feasting and revelry at court*" runs one of their characterisations) is to be found in Mary Boyce's article: *The Parthian gosan and Iranian Minstrel Tradition*, JRAS 1957, 10-45 *passim*. - As for the general question, whether or not protestant principles are to be regarded as Manichaeic, I simply refer you to my *Heilsgeschichtlich verfaßte Theologie und Männerbünde. Die Grundlagen des gnostischen Weltbildes*, Tübingen 1994 *passim*. If Amazon.com labels the book as „out of print“, it is not *The Truth*. The book is available. Besides its full-text is to be found in the *internet* under URL: <http://w210.uni-tuebingen.de/dbt/volltexte/2002/517>, my time and again alleged *Pro-Athanasius* under URL: <http://w210.uni-tuebingen.de/dbt/volltexte/2002/518> and *Petrus und die Kirche* and *Rede an die Juden* under the ending-ciphers **516** and **515** respectively.