

# Law and Justice in Jerusalem, Babylon and Hellas

Edited by  
EVANGELIA G. DAFNI

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament*  
475

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**Mohr Siebeck**

# Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

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475





# Law and Justice in Jerusalem, Babylon and Hellas

Studies on the Theology of the Septuagint Volume III

Edited by  
Evangelia G. Dafni

Mohr Siebeck

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Christoph Elsas  
zum 75. Geburtstag

Δικαίων δὲ ψυχὰι ἐν χειρὶ Θεοῦ,  
καὶ οὐ μὴ ἄψηται αὐτῶν βάσανος.

(SapSal 3,1)

## Vorwort

Mit dem vorliegenden Buch, welches den Namen „Recht und Gerechtigkeit in Jerusalem, Babylon und Hellas“ trägt, wird die Trilogie mit den Konferenzbeiträgen zur „Theologie der Septuaginta“ abgerundet. Wie die beiden vorausgehenden Bände ist auch dieser Band vom Grundbemühen gekennzeichnet, Experten, die sich in ihren engeren Forschungsbereichen verdient gemacht haben und deren methodische Reflexion auch in der Liebe zur Septuaginta wurzelt, freien Raum zu lassen, sich zum Triptychon „Vergangenheit – Gegenwart – Zukunft“ der Septuaginta zu äußern und den Weg zur größten Herausforderung, von der Konzeption einer „Theologie der Septuaginta“ zur ihrer Realisierung aus der Feder eines bewährten Autors, zu bahnen.

Mein herzlichster Dank gilt allen verehrten Kollegen und Kolleginnen, die bei den Jahreskonferenzen (2014–2019) „Theologie der Septuaginta“ mitgewirkt haben. Diese Jahreskonferenzen wurden von der Forschungskommission der Aristoteles Universität, Thessaloniki sowie der Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung finanziell unterstützt. Besonders zu nennen sind: Dmitri Afinogenov (Moscow), Hans Ausloos (Louvain la Neuve), Nikolaos Avgelis (Thessaloniki), Gillian Mary Clare Bonney (Rome), Konstantin E. Bozinis (Thessaloniki), Evangelos Chrysos (Athens), †Mario Cimoso (Rome), Johann Cook (Stellenbosch), Helen Efthimiadis-Keith (AKA Keith-van Wyk, Pietermaritzburg), Hans Eideneier (Hamburg), Christoph Elsas (Marburg), Jaco Gericke (Potchefstroom), Reik Heckl (Leipzig), Regine Hunziker Rodewald (Strasbourg), Jan Joosten (Oxford), Nicholas A. E. Kalospyros (Athens), Martina Kepper (Marburg), Gideon Kotzé (Potchefstroom), Julia Krivoruchko (Cambridge), Ekaterina Matusova (Moscow und Tübingen), Martin Meiser (Saarland), Arie van der Kooij (Leiden), Peter Nagel (Stellenbosch), Eckart Otto (Munich), Dimitrios Nikitas (Thessaloniki), Martin Rösel (Rostock), Aaron Schart (Essen), Michail Selesnev (Moscow), Gert J. Steyn (Pretoria und Ewersbach), Michael J. Thate (Princeton), Michael Tilly (Tübingen), Emanuel Tov (Jerusalem), Kristin de Troyer (Salzburg), Gerda de Villiers (Pretoria), Anssi Voitila (Joensuu), Kyle Young (Dublin), Markus Witte (Berlin).

Zu Dank verpflichtet bin ich Herrn Dr. Henning Ziebritzki und den Herausgebern für die Bereitschaft, die Sub-Reihe „Studien zur Theologie der Septuaginta“ in den „Wissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament I“ aufzunehmen.



Zu danken habe ich auch Herrn Dr. Peter Nagel, Frau Barbara Hohmann, Frau Sandra Niemann und Herrn Tobias Stähler für freundliche, unermüdliche sprachliche Manuskriptbetreuung und wertvolle Hinweise.

Der Band ist Christoph Elsas zu seinem 75. Geburtstag gewidmet.

31. Dezember 2020

Evangelia G. Dafni

## Preface

“Law and Justice in Jerusalem, Babylon and Hellas,” rounds off the trilogy with the conference contributions on “Theology of the Septuagint.” Like the two preceding volumes, this one is characterized by a fundamental effort to give experts, who have individually made merit in their particular research areas and whose methodical reflection is also rooted in their love for the Septuagint, free reign to express themselves on the triptych “Past – Present – Future” of the Septuagint and to pave the way to the greatest challenge from the conception of “Theology of the Septuagint” to its realization in a single-authored monograph.

My heartfelt thanks go to all of my honored colleagues who contributed to the annual conferences on the “Theology of the Septuagint” (2014–2019) that were financially supported by the Research Commission of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, especially Dmitri Afinogevof (Moscow), Hans Ausloos (Louvain la Neuve), Nikolaos Avgelis (Thessaloniki), Gillian Mary Clare Bonney (Rome), Constantine A. Bozinis (Thessaloniki), Evangelos Chrysos (Athens), †Mario Cimoso (Rome), Johann Cook (Stellenbosch), Helen Efthimiadis-Keith (AKA Keith-van Wyk, Pietermaritzburg), Hans Eideneier (Hamburg), Christoph Elsas (Marburg), Jaco Gericke (Potchefstroom), Reik Heckl (Leipzig), Regine Hunziker Rodewald (Strasbourg), Jan Joosten (Oxford), Nicholas A. E. Kalospyros (Athens), Martina Kepper (Marburg), Gideon Kotzé (Potchefstroom), Julia Krivoruchko (Cambridge), Ekaterina Matusova (Moscow and Tübingen), Martin Meiser (Saarland), Arie van der Kooij (Leiden), Peter Nagel (Stellenbosch), Eckart Otto (Munich), Dimitrios Nikitas (Thessaloniki), Martin Rösel (Rostock), Aaron Schart (Essen), Michail Selesnev (Moscow), Gert J. Steyn (Pretoria and Ewersbach), Michael J. Thate (Princeton), Michael Tilly (Tübingen), Emanuel Tov (Jerusalem), Kristin de Troyer (Salzburg), Gerda de Villiers (Pretoria), Anssi Voitila (Joensuu), Kyle Young (Dublin), Markus Witte (Berlin).

I am indebted to Dr. Henning Ziebritzki and the editors for their willingness to include the sub-series “Studies on Theology of the Septuagint” in the series “Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament I.”

I must also thank Dr. Peter Nagel, Ms. Barbara Hohman, Ms. Sandra Niemann and Mr. Tobias Stäbler for friendly, tireless linguistic manuscript support and valuable advice.

The volume is dedicated to Christoph Elsas on the occasion of his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.

31 December 2020

Evangelia G. Dafni

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## Abbreviations

AASF	Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae
ABG	Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJP	The American Journal of Philology
ALW	Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft
Amsterdam Arch. Stud.	Amsterdam Archaeological Studies
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
AnBib Diss	Analecta Biblica Dissertationes
AncB	Anchor Bible
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ARG	Archiv für Religionsgeschichte
ATA	Alttestamentliche Abhandlungen
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
ATD.A	Das Alte Testament Deutsch. Apokryphen
ATS	Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament
AugStud	Augustinian Studies
BBB	Bonner Biblische Beiträge
BdA	Bible d'Alexandrie
BDB	The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum Lovaniensium
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BHQ	Biblia Hebraica Quinta
BI	Biblical Interpretation
Bib	Biblica
BICS	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London
BI S	Biblical Interpretation Series
BIOSCS	Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies
BiOr	Biblica et Orientalia
BK	Biblischer Kommentar
BThS	Biblich-Theologische Studien
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZAR	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft



CAL	Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project
CAP	A. E. Cowley (ed. and transl.), <i>Aramaic Papyri from the fifth century B. C.</i> , Oxford 1923.
CB	The Classical Bulletin
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBOT	Coniectanea Biblica. Old Testament Series
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CBQ MS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly. Monograph Series
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
CD	Codex Damascus
CEJL	Commentary on Early Jewish Literature
Classica et Or	Classica et Orientalia
CM	Cuneiform Monographs
COT	Commentary of the Old Testament
CPh	Classical Philology
CPJ	V. A. Tcherikover, A. Fuks & M. Stern (eds.), <i>Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum</i> , 3 vols., London 1957, Cambridge, MA 1960 & 1964.
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CSLI	Center for the Study of Language and Information
DCLS	Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies
DK	H. Diels & W. Kranz (eds.), <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , 3 Vols., Berlin <sup>6</sup> 1951–1952.
DSD	Dead Sea Discoveries
EBC	The Expositor's Bible Commentary
EKK	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar
EKL	Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon
ESV	English Standard Version
EÜ	Einheitsübersetzung
EvT	Evangelische Theologie
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FC	Fontes Christiani
FOTL	The Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FzB	Forschung zur Bibel
GAT	Grundrisse zum Alten Testament
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller
Ges <sup>17</sup>	W. Gesenius, <i>Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament</i> , bearbeitet von F. Buhl, unveränderter Neudruck der 1915 erschienenen 17. Auflage, Berlin – Göttingen – Heidelberg 1962.
Gö	Göttingen Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum (VTG) auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Göttingensis editum
HALOT	Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament
HB	Hebrew Bible
HBM	Hebrew Bible Monographs
HCOT	Historical Commentary on the Old Testament

HdO	Handbuch der Orientalistik
HrwG	Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe
HS	Hebrew Studies
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HSMP	Harvard Semitic Museum Publications
HThKAT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
HThKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTS	Hervormde Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
HZ	Historische Zeitschrift
IE	Indo-European
ICC	International Critical Commentary
ICS	Illinois Classical Studies
IOSCS	International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies
IVP	InterVarsity Press
JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism. Supplements
JANES	The Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism. Supplements
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBS	Jerusalem Biblical Studies
JBSCE	Jewish and Biblical Studies in Central Europe
JBTh	Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie
JCP	Jewish and Christian Perspectives
JEOL	Jaarbericht Ex Oriente Lux
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Seminary
JFA	Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts
JHS	Journal of Hebrew Scriptures
JNSL	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
JSB	Jewish Study Bible
JSem	Journal for Semitics
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods. Supplements
JSNL	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOT SS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSPseud	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
JThS	Journal of Theological Studies
JTT	Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
KJV	King James Version
KT	Kröner Taschenbücher
KTU	Keilschrifttexte aus Ugarit
LCL	Loeb Classical Library

LHB/OTS	Library of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LSTS	The Library of Second Temple Studies
LU	Lutherübersetzung (1984)
LXX	Septuaginta
LXX.D	Septuaginta Deutsch
LXX.E	Septuaginta Deutsch: Erläuterungen und Kommentare
LXX.H	Handbuch zur Septuaginta / Handbook of the Septuagint
LXXSA	Association for the Study of the Septuagint in South Africa
MethTheorStudRelig	Method & Theory in the Study of Religion
MVEOL	Mededelingen en Verhandelingen Ex Oriente Lux
MJS	Münsteraner judaistische Studien
MSU	Mittlungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens
MT	Masoretischer Text/Masoretic Text
NAC	The New American Commentary
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NEB AT	Die Neue Echter Bibel: Kommentar zum Alten Testament
NeoT	Neotestamentica
NET	New English Translation
NETS	New English Translation of the Septuagint
NF	Neue Folge
NICOT	The New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIGNTC	The New International Greek Testament Commentary
NKJV	New King James Version
NovT	Novum Testamentum
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplementum
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NRT	Nouvelle revue théologique
NTT	Norsk teologisk Tidsskrift
OBC	Orientalia Biblica et Christiana
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
OG	Old Greek
OJA	Oxford Journal of Archaeology
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analect
OLZ	Orientalistische Literaturzeitung
Or NS	Orientalia New Series
OTE	Old Testament Essays
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studiën – Old Testament Studies
PBSR	Papers of the British School at Rome
PG	Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca, edited by J.-P. Migne, 162 Vols., Paris 1857–1886.
PhB	Philosophische Bibliothek
PL	Patrologiae cursus completus. Series latina, edited by J.-P. Migne, 221 Vols., Paris 1841–1865.
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
QD	Questiones Disputatae
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum

RB	Revue Biblique
RE	Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft
RHR	Revue de l'Histoire des Religions
RGG	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
RIMAP	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia Assyrian Periods
RINAP	The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period
RivBi	Rivista Biblica
RThP	Revue de theologie et de philosophie
RUB	Reclams Universal-Bibliothek
SANER	Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBL AIL	Society of Biblical Literature Ancient Israel and Its Literature
SBL DS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBL SCS	Society of Biblical Literature. Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBL SS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBL WAW	Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Ancient World
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SEÅ	Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok
SEC	Semitica et classica
SGLG	Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia
SJOT	Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament
SOFS	Symbolae Osloenses, Fasciculus Suppletus
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum
STDJ	Studies on the Text of the Desert of Judah
STL	Studia theologica Lundensia
SVigChr	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
SVF	Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta
SVTG	Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
TCT	Textual Criticism and the Translator
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, edited by G. Kittel & G. Friedrich, translated by G. W. Bromiley <i>et al.</i> , 10 Vols., Grand Rapids, MI 1964–1976.
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, edited by G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, H.-J. Fabry & H. Gzella, 16 Vols., Grand Rapids, MI 1974–2021.
THAT	Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament, edited by E. Jenni & C. Westermann, 2 Vols, München 1971–1973.
THB	Textual History of the Bible
ThSt	Theologische Studien
ThW	Theologische Wissenschaft
ThZ	Theologische Zeitschrift (Basel)
ThWAT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament, herausgegeben von G. J. Botterweck und H. Ringgren, 10 Bde., Stuttgart u. a. 1973–2000.

ThWNT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by G. Kittel & G. Friedrich, 9 Bd. und Supplement, Stuttgart 1933–1973.
TST	Toronto Studies in Religion
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
TUAT	Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments
UTB	Universitätsaschenbücher
VoxLat	Vox Latina
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VTG	Göttingen Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Göttingensis editum
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
VWGTh	Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WdF	Wege der Forschung
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
W&W	Word & World
ZABR	Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft

## Natural and Moral Evil



# Iranian and Greek dualistic concepts of physical and moral evil

Towards the religious historical background  
of the Septuagint-Theology

CHRISTOPH ELSAS

In Israel's monotheism, God's justice gets a double face: on the one side, the "law" is concerned about the purity of God's people, and in this respect about particular exclusiveness. On the other side, there is a cosmic universal orientation in the prophetic announcement and in the apocalyptic hope – that the God of the people will reveal himself as the God of the world in powerful judgement (Isa 41:1–4), with king Cyrus of Iran as his instrument.<sup>1</sup> In Zoroastrianism as the religion of the Iranian Empire, the divine world order, called *asha/arta*, is completely an outflow of the order of Ahura Mazda's creation, and realized by this Wise Lord exclusively according goodness and justice. It is the special character of this basic order that is in a dualistic contrast to the Lie (*druj*), being the world order created by the devil (Ahriman). This means that every experience of suffering goes back, if not to the "damaging works" (*vinas*) of humans, then to the penetration of Ahriman's evil world order into the good creation, or to human "partisanship for Ahriman" (*ahrimanakh*).<sup>2</sup>

## 1. Western European categories of dualism

It was the specialist in Middle Eastern and oriental studies, Thomas Hyde, who in his *History of the Religion of Ancient Persia*, published in Latin in 1700 at Oxford, coined the term "dualism" for its characteristic juxtaposition of opposite forces, "good" and "evil." From that Persian Zoroastrianism, the term "dualism"

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<sup>1</sup> O. Kaiser, *Der Gott des Alten Testaments 3: Jahwes Gerechtigkeit, Wesen und Wirken* (UTB 2392), Göttingen 2003, 376.

<sup>2</sup> H.-J. Klimkeit, "Der leidende Gerechte in der Religionsgeschichte. Ein Beitrag zur problemorientierten 'Religionsphänomenologie,'" in: H. Zinser (ed.), *Religionswissenschaft. Eine Einführung*, Berlin 1988, 164–184, esp. 169 and 175 f.



was also applied to the Iranian Gnostic Manichaeism and further on to Christian Gnostic heresies.<sup>3</sup>

In a more general way in Western Europe today, an attempt is made to understand dualism against the background of psychosocial conditions leading persons to believe in demonic forces and the devil. Sometimes such a belief in demonic forces results in problematic rituals of exorcism. A possible counterpart is the conviction that, for example, God in Christ is looking after the inner realities which lead to possession and obsession, putting an end to the dualistic fight. In secular terminology this means a dialogical deconstruction of the construction to be possessed by evil influences which are an interpretation of dissociative disorder.<sup>4</sup>

Socially, a dualistic worldview may legitimize cultural demonization. This worldview may generally darken the possibilities you can find in plurality with the many possibilities of peace being relational, open in terms of content and in that respect, unconditional for the subject.<sup>5</sup>

So far, Manichean in political discourse had become a negative term for the most radical dualism that readers understood recent journalistic characterizations of George W. Bush as a Manichean president.<sup>6</sup> Bush was referring – not to conform to the great churches – to a special evangelical interpretation of the Bible when he was calling upon the Western world for his “Crusade” against the “Axis of Evil.”<sup>7</sup>

It is necessary, however, to differentiate between several dualisms to accept some as useful and indispensable, and to criticize others on principle. So ethics takes for granted the dual of “good” in the sense of “useful” – “just” and “responsible” – and “bad” in the sense of “non-good.” On the other side, gender differences are an example of anthropological dualistic thinking, which will be appropriate to deconstruct.<sup>8</sup> One might want to add the construct character of the saint – witch opposition. The case put forward by Jean d’Arc shows the

<sup>3</sup> G. G. Stroumsa, “Dualismus I. Religionswissenschaftlich,” RGG<sup>4</sup> 2 (1999) 1004 f.

<sup>4</sup> R. Sommer, “Jesus ist Sieger! Dämonenaustreibung und Krankenheilung aus evangelischer Sicht,” in: C. Schwöbel (ed.), Gott – Götter – Götzen, XIV. Europäischer Kongress für Theologie, Leipzig 2013, 866–879.

<sup>5</sup> W. Dietrich, Variationen über die vielen Frieden, Vol. 1: Deutungen, Wiesbaden 2008, 123.

<sup>6</sup> W. Sundermann, “What has come down to us from Manichaeism?” in: A. Lange, E. M. Meyers, B. H. Reynolds III and R. Styers (eds.), Light Against Darkness: Dualism in Ancient Mediterranean Religion and the Contemporary World, Göttingen 2011, 229.

<sup>7</sup> Y. Ariel, “You must choose! The Prince of Peace or the Prince of Darkness: Evangelical Beliefs and American Dualism at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century,” in: Lange, Meyers, Reynolds III and Styers (eds.), Light Against Darkness, 316; introduction of the editors, 16.

<sup>8</sup> H. Kuhlmann, “Dualismen im Verhältnis von Gott und dem Bösen – eine gendertheologische Frage?” in: H. Kuhlmann and S. Schäfer-Bossert (eds.), Hat das Böse ein Geschlecht? Theologische und religionswissenschaftliche Verhältnisbestimmungen, Stuttgart 2006, 31–42.

ambivalence to interpret the same unusual behavior as works by God, or to the contrary, by the devil.<sup>9</sup>

Peace and conflict studies can refer to the dangers, if a definition of peace – which is first interpreted in an undualistic energetic way as a relatively satisfying life – gets a binary fighting either-or of justice and injustice.<sup>10</sup> But ideas of two antagonistic principles forming the basis of existence is important for the reflection of existential experiences (e. g. individual inability and suffering as well as social irrationalities affecting a group of people).<sup>11</sup>

In comparative religion, Ugo Bianchi defines “dualism” in religion “as a doctrine that posits the existence of two fundamental causal principles underlying the existence (or, as in the case of the Indian notion of *māyā* as opposed to *ātman*, the painful appearance of existence) of the world. In addition, dualistic doctrines, worldviews, or myths represent the basic components of the world and of man as participating in the ontological opposition and disparity of value.”<sup>12</sup>

According to this definition, we speak of an ethical dualism in the strict sense only, if “good” and “evil” are understood as antithetical ontological principles, as in Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism. Moreover, that dualism of Zoroaster can be classified as radical and cosmic, but the dualism of Mani as radical and anti-cosmic.

## 2. The eschatological monotheistic tendency of dualism in Iranian tradition

The Iranians reached the Mediterranean region with their Achaemenid Empire in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. The message of the Iranian prophet Zoroaster that there is only one god – with his companions – to be venerated, Ahura Mazda, seems to have seized upon a basic distinction in Old Iranian religion between truth and falsehood. He developed it into a dualistic cosmology. Good and evil supernatural powers are conceptualized in the frame of a particular society or group defining their functions as useful or harmful. This definition depends on historical developments.<sup>13</sup> In the conflicts of Iranian society before the Achaemenid Empire, Zoroaster’s starting point was the worship of Ahura Mazda, “the Wise Lord.” Ahura Mazda knew in his wisdom that if he became Creator and fashion-

<sup>9</sup> A. Berlis, “Historische Konstruktionen der Bösen,” in: Kuhlmann and Schäfer-Bossert (eds.), *Hat das Böse ein Geschlecht?* 140–150, here 143.

<sup>10</sup> Dietrich, *Variationen*, 214.

<sup>11</sup> H. G. Kippenberg, “Dualismus,” *EKL*<sup>3</sup> I (1986) 948–950.

<sup>12</sup> U. Bianchi, “Dualism,” *RE* 4 (1987) 506–512, here 506; cf. *idem*, “Il dualismo come categoria storico-religiosa,” in: *idem*, *Selected Essays on Gnosticism, Dualism and Mysteriosophy*, Leiden 1978, 49–62.

<sup>13</sup> C. Colpe, “Geister (Dämonen), d. Iran,” *RAC* IX (1976) 585–599, here 586, 590.

ed this world, then the Hostile Spirit, Angra Mainyu, would attack it, because it was good.<sup>14</sup> With Zoroaster's own words we hear in Yasna 30:5 of the Avestan collection: "Of these two spirits the evil one preferred to do evil, the good was chosen by the good spirit." In this process of choice, the until then most divine Daevas became synonymous with idols as well as with devils and confounded with demons as known from the pagan background. Therefore, religious practice involved the greater bountiful beneficent powers against the lesser harmful evil ones, and also sought to appease the latter.<sup>15</sup> But as Yasht 3:17 and 19:96 of the Avestan collection state: "Drug (Falseness, Lie) will disappear ... shall not be able to destroy the corporeal world of Asha (Order, Truth)" and "Truth will triumph over Bad Lie, over the obscure one from whom all darkness comes."<sup>16</sup>

But even in the present time, the good Ahurian principles and concepts represent cosmic powers pervading both the spiritual (*menok*) and the material (*getik*) worlds. Therefore, *asha*, or "truth", denotes its realization as a moral quality of Ahura Mazda, his truthful worshippers, and also its materialisation in the good things of the world, called "material truth" (*astvat ashem*). So the picture of the end of this material world drawn by Zoroaster is purely monotheistic in restoring paradise on earth and securing Ahura Mazda's rule forever. But becoming a physical separation of good and evil, the dualistic picture of world's present time opposes the corresponding Daevic concepts such as Falsehood (*Druj*), Evil Spirit (Angra Mainyu) or Wrath (*Aeshma*).

That is Zoroaster's cosmogonic dualism. In the Zoroastrian tradition of the Achaemenid Empire, especially Young Avestan Yasna 57:17 = Yasht 13:76, we also have references to the two spirits as setting in place their "creations." Here, evil takes the form of pollution by various kinds of dead matter like blood and corpses, which must be cleansed following strict rituals. The Light shining in the material world and the darkness are created by God, according to Zoroaster's ninth Gatha in Yasna 44:5. But in the Videvdat (old: Vendidad) – "Law against the Demons," another Zoroastrian tradition of Achaemenid era – there is on the one side, a "good," paradisiac light, and on the other side, a "bad" light, both shining in this created world, with "bad" light in need of purification.<sup>17</sup> For the world of thought, like Ahura Mazda's creation of the world of corporeal existence, was subsequently infiltrated by evil. This does not mean that spirit is necessarily good and body necessarily bad. In this Iranian concept of primarily not physical, but moral evil, the domain of the prophet and his pious adherents is

<sup>14</sup> M. Boyce, *Zoroastrians. Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, London 1979, 20 f.

<sup>15</sup> M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, Vol 1: The Early Period (HdO 1.8.1), Leiden 1989, 85–88.

<sup>16</sup> P. F. M. Fontaine, *The Light and the Dark*, Vol. 4: Dualism in the Ancient Middle East, Amsterdam 1989, 286–295.

<sup>17</sup> C. Colpe, *Iranier – Aramäer – Hebräer – Hellenen: Iranische Religionen und ihre Westbeziehungen. Einzelstudien und Versuch einer Zusammenschau* (WUNT 154), Tübingen 2003, 82, 93.

good in this world, combined with the opposition between “life” and “death.” In the prophet’s opinion, a living body is good, but after death it becomes a corpse. As a corpse the body is bad, the property of the devil, and profaning everything that comes in contact with it.<sup>18</sup> Polluted, even the elements are ambivalent, and the evil powers (e. g. water) have to be fought by the heroes and in daily life by support of the Zoroastrian cult (e. g. by invoking the goddess of water, Anahita, as a power to achieve).<sup>19</sup> From that fear, the Median Magi, becoming the Zoroastrian priests, develop a comprehensive dualistic concept of pure and impure.<sup>20</sup>

A gradual transformation occurred from the dynamic asymmetry of ethics in the Gathas to the rigid cosmic dualism first visible in the Videvdāt. That meant a growing importance of physical purity and the preoccupation with purification rites: Ahura Mazda created the spiritual and material worlds completely pure, but the afflictions produced by Angra Mainyu were believed to pollute the creation. As a result, matter is said to be in a state of mixture (*gumezishn*) of good and evil. According to the 9<sup>th</sup> century Bundahishn (Book of Primal Creation 3:23 f.) Ahura Mazda taught all humankind: “Which seems more useful to you, that I should create you into corporeal form, so that incarnate you will battle the Lie and vanquish it, and that I should resurrect you perfect and immortal in the end, and re-create you in corporeal form ... without enemies forever.”<sup>21</sup> That struggle between good and evil, purity and pollution, and life and death is fundamentally a spiritual conflict. According to the medieval tradition (Denkard 383,22 ff.), the attack of the “evil spirit” through impurity in the material world “is upon an individual’s essence, which is the soul, and upon the soul’s weapon and garment: the body.”<sup>22</sup>

In offering the hope of heaven to everyone who would follow him and seek righteousness, Zoroaster was diverting from an aristocratic and priestly tradition which consigned all lesser mortals to a subterranean life after death. Moreover, for the first time in history, he threatened the mighty with hell and ultimate extinction if they acted unjustly.<sup>23</sup> Zoroastrians believe a dying person’s soul (*urvan*) leaves the body and sets out on a journey into the world of thought, accompanied by the person’s vision-soul (*daena*). Besides the Fravashi, the ancestor spirits in the air, the vision-soul helps the person’s soul “see” in the

<sup>18</sup> Fontaine, Light, 295 f.; H. Koch, “Leben, Tod und Jenseitsvorstellungen in Iran,” in: C. Elsas (ed.), *Sterben, Tod und Trauer in den Religionen und Kulturen der Welt*, Vol. 1: *Gemeinsamkeiten und Besonderheiten in Theorie und Praxis*, Berlin, <sup>3</sup>2010, 169–187.

<sup>19</sup> A. Piras, “Serse e la flagellazione dell’Ellesponto,” in: A. Panaino and A. Piras (eds.), *Studi Iranici Ravennati*, Milano 2011, 118–133.

<sup>20</sup> *Colpe*, Iranier, 528; J. K. Choksy, *Purity and Pollution in Zoroastrianism. Triumph over Evil*, Austin, TX 1989.

<sup>21</sup> Choksy, *Purity*, 3–5.

<sup>22</sup> Choksy, *Purity*, 126.

<sup>23</sup> Fontaine, Light, 30; cf. M. Stausberg, “Hell in Zoroastrian History,” *Numen* 56 (2009) 217–253.

world of thought, but also represents the totality of the person's thoughts, words and deeds – good and evil – in corporeal life. These are weighed on a balance and then the soul will pass the bridge to the Best Existence in the light of paradise, or fall down into the Worst Existence of hell.<sup>24</sup>

According to tradition (Bundahishn 14,30 f.), at the end of the ongoing battle on earth, Zoroastrian eschatology expects the final savior to separate the righteous individuals from the evil ones. Each Zoroastrian sinner, having already suffered in hell after death, will be purified by means of an ordeal with molten metal and be granted immortality of body and soul by consuming a mythical elixir. Hell will then be sealed shut with molten metal, saving the spiritual and corporeal worlds forever.<sup>25</sup>

Truth, justice, practice of the prescribed ritual behavior, and attendance at the Zoroastrian feasts belong to an ethical life. But matrimony and descendants also belong to this in spite of the many rules for purity. The male priests represent purity, while women, until 19<sup>th</sup> century, have been perceived as more susceptible to evil through their sexuality, menstruation, and birth. Also until 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were practices entailing bloody animal sacrifices to ward off evil influences – otherwise regarded as belonging to the “evil spirit.”<sup>26</sup> But in the philosophical discourse found in the 9<sup>th</sup> century's Zoroastrian treatise *Skand-Gumanik Vizar*, there is a clear distinction for Zoroastrian dualism: males and females, though they have separate functions, are of one essence because in their common humanity they are substantially the same. But the “Lie” representing the principle of evil – first moral and then also physical – is not merely functionally different from “wisdom,” the “good,” but is substantially opposite, incompatible, antagonistic, and destructive.<sup>27</sup>

According to the ethnological studies of Mary Douglas, purity and pollution in a religious system are usually not based on physical cleanliness, but on ritual purity and the loss of this purity through transgressions. Reflections on pollution involve a reflection on the relation of order to disorder, being to nonbeing, form to formlessness, and life to death. If pollution is severe enough, it usually is equated with moral disorder caused by the forces of evil.<sup>28</sup> Because an act of pollution breaks the relationship with the divine, and furthers the cause of evil, it becomes a sin. According to Zoroastrian belief, in the cosmic struggle

<sup>24</sup> P. O. Skjaervo, “Zoroastrian Dualism,” in: Lange, Meyers, Reynolds III and Styers (eds.), *Light against Darkness*, 55–89, here 74; Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 117–119.

<sup>25</sup> Choksy, *Purity*, 130 f.

<sup>26</sup> M. Stausberg, *Die Religion Zarathushtras: Geschichte – Gegenwart – Rituale*, Vol. 1, Stuttgart 2002, 841.

<sup>27</sup> J. W. Boyd and R. G. Williams, “Nature and Problem of Evil in Zoroastrianism: Some Theological, Philosophical and Ritual Perspectives,” in: J. K. Choksy and J. Dubeansky (eds.), *Gifts to a Magus. Indo-Iranian Studies Honoring Firoze Kotwal (TST 23)*, New York 2013, 77–97, here 83.

<sup>28</sup> Choksy, *Purity*, XXIV.

between good and evil in the material world, purity and purification can be used to negate impurity and defilement. Zoroastrian rites of purification do not serve to expiate personal sins, but rather function as a means of ensuring personal and communal purity.<sup>29</sup>

Truthful worshippers have to seek the presence of the “fire of victory” in the fire temples, understood as epiphanies of the “Lord of Wisdom,” and exemplifies the cosmic principle of “righteousness” that counters the darkness of the abode of “Lie.” The officiating priests invoke the entire Avestan Yasna and perform the ritual actions as material exemplification of aspects of the invisible spiritual order which are conceived as weapons of purification against the “evil one.” In this time of cosmic mixture (*gomezishn*) of good and bad powers, the reality of evil in both the material (*getik*) and spiritual (*menok*) worlds affords such rituals in the morning hours each and every day. The fire commands one’s attention to its animating movement and light, the metal implements used in the ritual reflect points of light. The pure wood burning in the fire emits a good scent, and the ringing of the *haoma mortar* with pestle produces a bell-like rhythmic sound – with symbolic blows against Ahriman’s forces in all directions.<sup>30</sup>

### 3. Imperialistic dualism and religious anti-imperialistic dualism in Mesopotamia, Iran, Israel

Regarding the Babylonian Empire the first sentences of Codex Hammurabi proclaimed against moral evil: “At that time (the great Sumerian gods) Anum and Illil for the prosperity of the people called me by my name Hammurabi, the reverent god-fearing prince, to make justice to appear in the land, to destroy the evil and the wicked that the strong may not oppose the weak, to rise indeed like (the sungod) Shamash over the darkheaded folk to give light to the land.”<sup>31</sup>

In the neighbouring Old Hittite Empire of Anatolia, the king by victory in Syria was equal to the Pharaoh and could proclaim: “The goddess, my lady, always held me by the hand; and since I was a divinely favoured man, and walked in the favour of the gods, I never committed the evil deeds of mankind.” This dualistic attitude, with regard to the king’s subjects, was strengthened by an elaborate ritual, for the king, as the intermediary between god and humankind, which had to be pure, as shown by Mary Douglas’ ethnological studies.<sup>32</sup>

Zoroaster’s Gatha in Yasna 44 on the creative powers of the Godhead in fathering justice and right thought, ordering heaven and earth and forming light and darkness seems to be adapted to the biblical version in Isaiah 40 and 45 of Cyrus’

<sup>29</sup> Choksy, Purity, XXVII.

<sup>30</sup> Boyd and Williams, “Nature,” 81 f., 89 f.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Fontaine, Light, 204 f., 209–215.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Fontaine, Light, 220 f., 235.

new Iranian kingdom. Israel's god was angry with his people because of their past covenant misdeeds and therefore gave them over to the neo-Babylonians as punishment. The neo-Babylonians, however, went too far, and Israel's god became angry with them, hence, appointed a just ruler to punish them and set the Israelites free. Such new interpretation of the dualism of the universal state will be an argument for the Zoroastrian religion of Cyrus and his followers, as well as the Achaemenid Darius the Great placed at the head of four inscriptions: "A great god is the Wise Lord, who created this earth, who created that sky, who created mankind, who created happiness for mankind, who made Darius king: one king over many, one commander over many." Unity and harmony were essential to the "happiness" God created for mankind. This original state of perfection got lost. Other inscriptions are telling, how "the Lie" (*drauga*, Old Persian for *druj*) – source of all confusion, conflict, and evil – entered existence, shattered unity, and spread rapidly in the years before Darius became king. But the Wise Lord made Darius king in response to this crisis, charging him to restore tranquillity, harmony, and happiness by overcoming the Lie.<sup>33</sup>

Therefore, in his Behistun Inscription (IV:62–65) Darius declares to live according to "Truth" (*arta*, Old Persian for *asha*): "Ahura Mazda bore me aid, and the other gods who are ... Neither to the weak nor to the powerful I did wrong." There could be no tolerance for further opposition of Lie against Truth, as shown by the so called Daivadana Inscription (Persepolis H, 35–41) of Darius' son Xerxes who followed the Zoroastrian demonisation of the Daevas for his politics, degrading the divinities of rebellious people to demons and destroyed a sanctuary of the "Bad Gods" (*daiva*, Old Persian for *daeva*).<sup>34</sup>

Zoroaster's very original concept of an end of history was embodied in the doctrine of the Three times – Creation, Mixture and Separation. The sacerdotal Median Magi had also become familiar with Babylonian speculations about history being divided in cycles of time. Contrasting them with Zarathustra's teachings, they developed, it seems, in the late Achaemenid period. Zurvanism interpreting Zurvan, Eternal Time, as father of the twins in Zarathustra's famous Gathic verse Y 30.3, the good twin spirit, the Beneficent Spenta Mainyu, now identified with Ahura Mazda himself in opposition to the bad spirit, Angra Mainyu.<sup>35</sup>

Another interpretation of the twin myth is discussed for Iranian influences on dualism in the Jewish community of Qumran near Jerusalem. According to the *Treatise on the Two Spirits* (1QS III 13–IV 26) in the Qumran Library, evil is not the beginning of creation but is only secondary to mankind. The two spirits appear only after man has been set to rule over the world. But the psychological

<sup>33</sup> B. Lincoln, "The One and the Many in Iranian Creation Myths: Rethinking 'Nostalgia for Paradise,'" ARG 13 (2011) 15–30, here 17 f.

<sup>34</sup> Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 54–65.

<sup>35</sup> Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 67–70; cf. Skjaervo, *Zoroastrian Dualism*, 67–70.

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