

**Nietzsche and his Zarathustra**  
**A Western Poet's Transformation of an Eastern Priest and Prophet**  
by  
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Friedrich Nietzsche wrote *Also sprach Zarathustra* between 1883-1885. That his choice for a new Voice 'to cry in the wilderness' should fall on the Persian prophet Zoroaster (628-551B.C.E.), is, to say the least, curious. For while in other texts Nietzsche openly states that he was inspired, or intellectually mentored, by the Presocratic Heraclitus and Empedocles,<sup>i</sup> it is not immediately evident from any of his own writings, or from the writings of those who have studied Nietzsche, that Nietzsche was likewise inspired either by the historical Zoroaster, or by the religious teachings particular to the Zoroastorian Persians, or by the 'mythological' *toile de fond* of Mazdean metaphysics. Nor does his storification of Zarathustra in *Also sprach Zarathustra* indicate anything more than a very cursory knowledge of, or interest in, the Persian Prophet's religion. Of the *Zend Avesta* there is no indication that Nietzsche had any particular knowledge.<sup>ii</sup> Finally, Nietzsche does not even 'treat', and thereby transform, Zoroaster in a philosophically interesting fashion—as one is accustomed to seeing in studies of the Buddha and his teachings, for example, or in the search for the Jesus of history (*vide* David Strauß, Rudolf Bultmann, Albert Schweitzer and others).

Since the Post-War period it has been quite trendy for Western philosophers and thinkers to 'cut their teeth' on the writings of Nietzsche.<sup>iii</sup> However this may have been, and for whatever reasons they all set out questing after Nietzsche, it has yet been interesting to note that among all the studies and writings on Nietzsche, very little of note has been said about Nietzsche electing a Persian priest to announce to the world his message of Will and Optimism,<sup>iv</sup> as well as to embody that message before the world. Heidegger, Kaufmann, Danto, Nehamas, those of the aesthetic school of Nietzsche interpreters (*e.g.* Stefan George), political interpreters, existentialist interpreters (*e.g.* Jaspers)—many have measured themselves, with varying degrees of success, against the countless themes of Nietzsche's aphoristic thoughts: the *Übermensch*, the *letzter Mensch*, all the various possible *Verwandlungen des Geistes*, and, of course, the *ewige Wiederkehr des Gleichen*, which Nietzsche claims to be *the* central theme of *Also sprach Zarathustra*. All of these themes have been considered and elaborated copiously. Yet on the critical question of Zarathustra—Why Zarathustra instead of Wotan<sup>v</sup> or Prometheus, the Buddha,<sup>vi</sup> Confucius,<sup>vii</sup> the Christ,<sup>viii</sup> or any other of the world's great sages?—the silence in the scholarly record is eloquent. So what, precisely, did the name Zarathustra mean in Nietzsche's mouth? In this paper I would like to reflect on what may have been Nietzsche's motivations in choosing this little known Priest from the East to be the spokesman for his version of the 'brave, new world.'

*I. What Nietzsche may have known about Zoroaster.*

A possible and very reasonable interpretation or identification of Nietzsche's Zarathustra, especially given "Warum ich ein Schicksal bin" §3, would be that among the

sages of the world Nietzsche sought out Zoroaster because he was a great religious reformer. One might therefore reasonably ask whether Nietzsche's reformer-Zarathustra is really modeled after the historical Zoroaster who brought reform to Iranian religion. And whether their reforms are similar? In other words, was Nietzsche's knowledge of Persian religion either accurate or profound?

An interesting detail, although it is unclear just how much weight should be given to it, is that in the nineteenth century scholarly literature in the field of Iranian studies, the name Zarathustra, which name was clearly adopted by Nietzsche, is routinely not rendered as such into either French, English, or German; one finds instead in the literature either Zoroaster or Zarathushtra.<sup>ix</sup> It seems clear, as well, at least in Germany, that scholarly use flowed into literary use; for the romantic poet Kleist (1777-1811), whom Nietzsche calls 'der edle Heinrich von Kleist,'<sup>x</sup> will compose a *Gebet des Zoroaster*. It is not without significance therefore that Nietzsche, alone among the philosophers and poets of his day, adopts the name 'Zarathustra,' and it suggests deliberation and purpose; for in addition to breaking with the 'Zoroaster' of the scholarly literature, 'Zarathustra' represents a break even with poetic use. Jackson's bibliography of Zoroastrian studies (*vide* Note 40), indicates that all, or at least the greatest majority (vgl. Spiegel (1867) for a significant exception), of the translations and studies available to Nietzsche, such as Creuzer whom Nietzsche is said to have consulted,<sup>xi</sup> use the Greek rendering of Zoroaster, instead of the Persian Zarathustra. Köhler, in fact, will claim that, "It was in connection with Pythagoras that the name Zarathustra, in its Greek form, first appears in Nietzsche's works in 1872."<sup>xii</sup> Yet Nietzsche seems to be exceptional in habitually referring to his eponymous hero by his Persian name, Zarathustra, which may indicate a significant intention to break with the scholarly tradition in creating a completely new epic character.

On a trivial level one might argue that Nietzsche was at least aware of one tradition concerning the linguistic significance of Zarathustra's name. Anquetil-Duperron, who was the first Frenchman to learn Avestan, made the first translation of the *Zend-Avesta* into French in 1771 (translated into German by Kleuker (Rigga) in 1776).<sup>xiii</sup> In his discussion on the question of the significance of Zarathushtra's name,<sup>xiv</sup> Anquetil proposed to translate the name: 'Taschter d'or' –or Golden Star. With respect to this study's attempt to reconstruct Nietzsche's thinking in terms of his choice of name, there is also an interesting link with Friedrich Creuzer's 6-volume work, *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker* (the third edition was published in 1837), which, according to Köhler,<sup>xv</sup> Nietzsche consulted. As of yet undecided on the name to give his hero – Nietzsche's first inclination was to name him Paracelsus—Köhler says that, "There is another reason why he chose the name of the Persian prophet [instead of Paracelsus], who otherwise played no part in his works. Zoroaster is an aster, a star... [...]; the name is translated as 'golden star'."<sup>xvi</sup> Having only discovered this "after he had completed the first part of his *Zarathustra*, he wrote to Gast: 'I am very happy about this coincidence. It could give the impression that the whole conception of my book had its origins in this etymological circumstance.'"<sup>xvii</sup> Creuzer is very clear about this translation: "Er heisst Zoroaster, d.i. *Gold-Stern, Stern des Glanzes*", and again: "Zoroaster (Zara-thustra) von zara Gold und thustra Stern, Goldstern."<sup>xviii</sup>

Later and better scholarship, however, would suggest that the ‘star’ translation of Zarathustra’s name follows a problematic linguistic tradition. In the Cumont and Bidez study of the Hellenized Magiens, they suggest that the ‘star’ etymology is erroneous, with the following explanation: “Comme la seconde partie du vocable semblait contenir le mot [aster], il a dans la suite provoqué des étymologies fantaisistes, en rapport avec le caractère d’astrologue qu’on prêtait au prophète.”<sup>xxix</sup> This follows Jackson, who notes that the Frenchman Burnouf “was the first who rightly saw *ushtra*, ‘camel,’ in the name and explained *Zarath-ushtra* as ‘fulvos camelos habens’<sup>xx</sup>; this would have been around 1825 in his *Commentaire sur le Yasna*. Approximately 40 years later, in 1862 in Germany, Fr. Müller “explained *zarath-ushtra* as ‘muthige kamele besitzend,’<sup>xxxi</sup> which has the camel/Zarathushtra link established in German at least 20 years prior to Nietzsche’s composition of *Also sprach Zarathustra*.

This discussion about the meaning of Zarathushtra’s name among Iranian scholars in France and Germany over the space of nearly one hundred years, clearly establishes scholarly precedent prior to the period of Nietzsche’s own scholarly education and training; and while there is certainly no hard evidence that Nietzsche had any direct knowledge of the actual scholarly discussion in Iranian studies,<sup>xxii</sup> the link established between camels and Zarathushtra’s name in the scholarly record is unquestionably suggestive, especially for those intrigued by Nietzsche’s use of the Kamele as the first transformation of the mind in the opening Zarathustrian discourse— that the camel carries his burden unknowingly. This, in turn, harks back to Zarathustra’s own transformation in the prologue (§8) where, initially acting the part of the unknowing camel when carrying the body of the dead tightrope walker, he finally sheds that senseless burden in his first true act of freedom from culture (§9).

A further comparison from the Greek tradition finds a trivial connection between Zoroaster and caves on mountains. Nietzsche’s Zarathustra, of course, will issue forth from a cave in the mountain, thus beginning his *Untergang* (*Vorrede* §I, S. 5). According to Jackson, Porphyrius and Dio Chrysostom have it that “[Zoroaster] passed his time upon a mountain in a natural cave which he had symbolically adorned in a manner to represent the world and the heavenly bodies. The mountain is illuminated by a supernatural fire and splendor.” Furthermore, there is some support from the *Avesta* for part of this Greek tradition, because “The *Avesta* (Vd. 22.19) mentions the ‘Forest and the Mountain of the two Holy communing Ones’—Ahura Mazda and Zarathushtra— where intercourse was held between the godhead and his prophetic representative upon earth.”<sup>xxiii</sup> So while the Persian tradition likewise refers to mountains, in this respect calling to mind *inter alia* Mt. Sion of the Hebrews and Mt. Olympus of the Greeks, it would seem that placing Zoroaster in a cave comes down only in the Greek tradition. Again according to Jackson: “Magian worship on the high mountains is familiar from the time of Herodotus (1.131 seq.) onward.”<sup>xxiv</sup> Painting this religion of the ancient Persians in its most primitive light, (“Diese Religion der Parsen, entstanden auf jenen Gebirgen, ist in ihrem Grunde eine einfache, naïve Anschauung der Natur”), Creuzer certainly depicts a type of nature-friendly background that would have been pleasing to Nietzsche, and which is clearly present in Nietzsche’s depictions in his *Zarathustra*: “*Tempel* hatten sie

nicht, sondern auf *Bergen* dienten sie ihren Göttern, und opferten hier denselben bloß das *Leben* der Thiere.”<sup>xxxv</sup>

It would be reasonable to say at this point that there is little or only trivial evidence in Nietzsche’s writings to suggest that he had any significant knowledge about Zoroaster or Persian religions. In this respect it might be argued that Nietzsche is similar to the Greek tragic playwright, Aeschylus, who composed the *Persians* in 472 B.C. (which garnered first prize in the festival in Athens), and whom Nietzsche venerated.<sup>xxvi</sup> Darmesteter says about Aeschylus and his knowledge of the Persians, that “Les Perses ont des dieux et ils prient: voilà au fond tout ce qu’Eschyle connaît de leur religion. Sur leur gouvernement, il n’en sait guère plus: il sait seulement que les Perses sont les sujets d’un maître, tandis que les Grecs sont citoyens libres: c’est assez pour lui, et c’est tout, car c’est l’idée qui pénètre toute son oeuvre.”<sup>xxvii</sup> Darmesteter has overstated his case, however, because the philosophically minded Ionian playwright<sup>xxviii</sup> (525/4-456 B.C.), linked by social standing to the worship of Dionysus,<sup>xxix</sup> “saw service at Marathon in the first great encounter with the Persian invaders,”<sup>xxx</sup> and, if one may judge by information gleaned superficially from the *Persians*, he knew the Persian marshals under Darius by name,<sup>xxxi</sup> he knew the preferred weapons (*i.e.*, chariot, bow, steeds) of the Persian commanders,<sup>xxxii</sup> the fates in battle of specific leaders of the Persian armies,<sup>xxxiii</sup> their flight from the battle field, and the survivors.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Even allowing for dramatic usage, this type of information still does not seem exactly quotidian. So at least in this sense the comparison between these two tragic dramatists does not hold; Aeschylus depicts in the *Persians* a referential world that would have been recognizable to the Persians and the Greeks or to anyone familiar with Persian manners and customs. In Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*, however, we find nothing whatsoever of Zoroaster or of his Persian religion.

## II. *Zarathustra versus Zoroaster.*

It would be historically accurate, as well as relevant to our understanding of Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*, to say that Zoroaster is to Iranian religion as Martin Luther is to Catholicism; and from this we might deduce that Nietzsche was anticipating that his readers would recognize *Zarathustra* as significant because he was a religious reformer. There are, however, significant weaknesses to this theory,<sup>xxxv</sup> which seeks to interpret *Also sprach Zarathustra* as the announcement of a new reformation in religious thought. Such prophets have been looked for throughout the history of the human race. Professor Jackson, in his still authoritative 1898 work, *Zoroaster. The Prophet of Ancient Iran*,<sup>xxxvi</sup> contends that,

*The coming of a prophet or great teacher seems at times in the world's history to be looked for instinctively. We may see the truth of this statement exemplified in our own Gospels when the disciple asks of the Saviour, 'Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?' And when a blessed Master is at last recognized, the generations vie with each other in repeating how his advent was foretold. In the Zoroastrian scriptures, passages are adduced to show that the Sage's coming had been predicted ages before.*<sup>xxxvii</sup>

In an attempt to decode Nietzsche's understanding of the Persian prophet, it has also been suggested that his knowledge of Zoroaster may have been derived from the study of Western, neo-Platonic sources. There is, however, little evidence to support this theory. According to Jackson:

*[Zoroaster's] figure was somewhat indistinct in the eyes of these ancient authors. To the writers of Greece and Rome he was the arch-representative of the Magi; and he sometimes seems to be more famous for the magic arts which are ascribed to his power than for either the depth and breadth of his philosophy and legislation, or for his religious and moral teaching. Nonetheless, he was regarded as a great sage and as a prophet whose name was synonymous with Persian wisdom, or as the founder of the Magian priesthood who are sometimes said to be his pupils and followers.*<sup>xxxviii</sup>

For the sake of clarification, we need to consider Nietzsche's Zarathustra against the backdrop of Iranian studies in Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### *III. Iranian studies in Germany, France and England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.*

To understand what it is that Nietzsche might have or could have known about Zoroaster and the religion of ancient Persia, we must attempt a reconstruction of the intellectual climate of 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Furthermore, to whatever degree Nietzsche's Zarathustra differs from the Zoroaster of history and the *Zend Avesta*, the intellectual contextualization of Nietzsche the poet and philosopher will also inform us as to the other trends and ideas holding academic sway during the time of his life and flourishing.

According to James Darmesteter, who publishes his important two volume work on Iranian studies in the same year that Nietzsche begins his composition of *Zarathustra*, the Germany of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was "le grand laboratoire des études orientales, et, si du jour au lendemain ses savants se mettaient en grève, la plupart des branches de l'orientalism, du coup, tomberaient en langueur : d'aucun autre pays on n'en pourrait dire autant."<sup>xxxix</sup> It would seem that oriental studies were all the rage as an intellectual trend among philologists during the time of Nietzsche's education and academic life.

In terms of original sources for the sacred texts of Zoroaster's Persian religion, there was of course Barnabé Brisson's (Barnabae Brissonii) latin edition (Argentorati, 1710, from the original edition of 1590), *De Regio Persarum Principatu Libri Tres*, which would have been available to scholars, as would have been Hyde's Oxonian edition, *Historia Religionis veterum Persarum eorumque Magorum*, which had been available since 1700. In vernaculars, already since 1771 Anguétel du Perron's ground-breaking two-volume translation into French of the *Zend Avesta* was available for study; and it had existed in Kleuker's popular German translation since 1876. Although a little late to be too convincing in an argument for influencing Nietzsche, Darmesteter could have been consulted by Nietzsche in English, since his translation of *The Zend Avesta* was published by Oxford in 1880, in 1883, and vol. iv in its second edition in 1895; however his French translation was not available until 1892-1893. For general studies about Zoroaster in French and German, there was Hölty's *Zoroaster und sein Zeitalter* (Lüneburg, 1836),

Creuzer's 1837 general work *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen* (which there is some evidence that Nietzsche consulted), Ménéant's second edition of *Zoroastre. Essai sur la Philosophie Religieuse de la Perse* (Paris, 1857), and Justi's *Geschichte des alten Persiens* (Berlin, 1879). Although Edward Meyer also seems a little late—he would not publish his authoritative *Geschichte des Alterthums* (Erster Band) until 1884, his popularity was such in the study of early Christian history that Nietzsche must, certainly, have been familiar with it. Professor Jackson provides a more complete bibliography of works that Nietzsche could have known and consulted.<sup>xl</sup>

#### *IV. The Problem of Dualisms.*

It could be argued that one of the central intellectual problems of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from Goethe's Germany to Arnold's England, was that of transcending, "whether through rejection or synthesis, [...] the dualisms with which the Western tradition, especially in Platonism and Christianity, was seen to have burdened man." Partially, of course, "the way for modern "aestheticism," whether German or English, [...] was prepared by the Enlightenment, which had thrown Christian theology on the defensive..."<sup>xli</sup> One of the major stumbling blocks in the interpretation of Zarathustra, is to sort out why Nietzsche elects as his spokesman a priest from a profoundly dualistic Persian religion.

At its core, the Mazdean religion has an almost pure, dualistic metaphysic; and dualistic religions (e.g. Christianity) have the very strong tendency to express themselves in terms of moral asceticism. Reasonably, once one accepts the existence of a really-real World (Nietzsche's disdainful *überirdische Welt*) above and beyond this World in which we live (Nietzsche's *Erde*), then it is only consistent to conform the actions of our life to the values that derive from the ultimate, non-physical really-real world, and not to such values as might originate in this very-transitory, Heraclitan existence of flux. Yet, it is against precisely this dualist metaphysic and its ethical ramifications that Nietzsche has arrayed the discourses of his Zarathustra. Describing this relationship between metaphysical dualism and human action as "Ascetic Supernaturalism," Steinhart writes:

*Since the supernatural world is invested with all positive values and since primitive logic thinks in terms of pairs of opposites, the natural world is divested of all positive values: only negative values are left in it. Primitive logic reasons (erroneously) that opposites have to be lined up with one another, and that the positive cannot emerge from the negative. (HH I:1; GS 111; BGE 2; TI 3:4) The Pythagoreans, for instance, came up with a table of ten opposites: good / evil, male / female, light / dark, left / right, and so on. So the religious mind reasons like this: natural and supernatural are opposites; good and evil are opposites; if supernatural is good, then natural must be evil.*<sup>xlii</sup>

Steinhart concludes his analysis with the statement: "Asceticism is the love of the supernatural world plus the hatred of the natural world. Asceticism hates the earth..."<sup>xliii</sup> Nietzsche violently attacks both the dualist metaphysic and its ascetic response on almost every page that he writes.

The dualism of Mazdean metaphysics is not just a superficial framing in order to harvest the expected ascetic ethical responses, but extends into all the cracks and crevasses of the world of Persian religion. The “Zoroastrian archangels,” themselves, “have... a material nature as well as a spiritual one.”<sup>xliv</sup> Seeking “to trace the evolution of the Zoroastrian archangels from nature-godlings to spiritual abstractions,” Louis Gray quotes the Mazdean text (Dk. IX, 31, 13; cf. IV, 9), which shows that the most distinct explanation of the “transition from the spiritual nature [of the archangel]... to his material aspect,” is, as with all the creatures of Auharmazd, ““first the spiritual achievement, and then the material formation and the mingling of spirit with matter.”<sup>xliv</sup>

Jackson provides a fairly complete history of the personal peregrinations of the historical Zoroaster,<sup>xlvi</sup> which can serve as a basis of comparison against the Zarathustra of Nietzsche’s literary fancy. Zoroaster will begin his ministry when he receives his ‘first inspired revelation’ at age 30. “It is in this year that the archangel of Good Thought, Vohu Manah, appears unto Zarathushtra in a vision and leads his soul in holy trance into the presence of God, Ahura Mazda. The year of this first inspired revelation is known in the Pahlavi texts as ‘the Year of the Religion...’<sup>xlvii</sup> After receiving the Revelation, Zoroaster wanders and struggles 10 years before making his first convert. Says Jackson: “From our various sources of information two facts may be gathered with certainty: one is, that after receiving the Revelation Zoroaster wandered about, as the dervishes of Iran still wander, going from place to place in search of a fruitful soil for his teaching; the other is, that during this period, like the prophets of old, he was inspired from time to time by supernatural visions and manifestations.”<sup>xlviii</sup>

It is helpful to the Zarathustra/Zoroaster comparison, as well, to note both the context (especially the recipients) of Zoroaster’s message, and the content of his message. Very specifically, “Zoroaster preaches the Mazda-worshipping religion, and the necessity of anathematizing of the Demons, of glorifying the Archangels, and practicing the next-of-kin marriage [Dk. 7.4.1-5].”<sup>xliv</sup> In Creuzer’s presentation of the ‘Religion des Zoroaster’, however, one can see how Nietzsche might have been bewitched by the idea of a Zarathustra who stands against the gods (i.e., demons): “Vendidad enthält die Fragen, welche Zoroaster dem Ormuzd vorlegt, und dessen Antworten darauf. Daher hat man dieses Buch gennant: ‘Zarathustra gegeben gegen die Dêva’s’ und von der abgekürzten Bezeichnung: [...] gegen die Dêva’s, oder bösen Geister, gegeben, ist der Parsische Name des Buchs *Vendidad* entstanden.”<sup>li</sup> One can even almost hear Nietzsche trumpeting: “Ich rufe an, ich preisse den, der in diese Welt gegeben ist, gegeben gegen die Dêva’s. Zoroaster, rein, Meister (Herr) der Reinheit.”<sup>li</sup>

Likewise, in a very general comparison, as the spokesman of what Creuzer defines<sup>lii</sup> as a nature religion: “Persia’s Sage is ... cognizant of the existence of woe, but it is no world-woe without hope of triumphant domination. The misery which Zoroaster acknowledges to exist is due to an Evil Principle against whom man must struggle all his life and fight the good fight which will bring final victory and will win joys eternal at the resurrection.”<sup>liii</sup> Likewise, despite the obvious dualism of Mazdean metaphysics, “All accounts of the Religion indicate that the necessity of ministering to the wants of the body [medical knowledge], as well as to the needs of the soul, was fully

comprehended.”<sup>liv</sup> This commitment to nature and the life of nature is seen repeatedly reflected in the Nietzschean Zarathustra’s call to be true to the life of the earth.

In another respect Nietzsche’s Zarathustra is similar to the Zoroaster of history, and that is in, at least partially, what motivates both prophets to action. When Zarathustra comes down out of his mountain after ten years, he encounters the Holy Man in the Wood to whom he justifies his *Untergang* among ‘den Schlafenden’ with the unexpected explanation: “Ich liebe die Menschen” (*Vorrede*, §2, 6). Love is a rather curious motivation, all in all, for a monist interested in preaching the Transvaluation of all Values, which must include love. Yet, in this, Nietzsche’s Zarathustra finally finds kinship with Zoroaster, for according to Jackson, Zoroaster’s “compassionate nature and sympathy for the aged is quoted in the Selections of *Zat-sparam*, and another is cited to illustrate his generous disposition by his dealing out fodder, from his father’s supply, to the beasts of burden of others in a time of famine. The Zartusht Namah substantiates this reputation given to him for tender-heartedness and for goodness [ZtN. P. 490, II. 11-25].”<sup>lv</sup>

The scholarly record on Iranian studies is very clear that Zoroaster was a religious reformer. De Harlez argues that: “Les souvenirs des mythes aryques que le zoroastrisme a conservés n’influent en rien sur l’ensemble et l’essence du système; au contraire, le zoroastrisme les a refaits à son image, et cette transformation même démontre qu’un changement radical s’est opéré dans les croyances éraniennes.”<sup>lvi</sup> Professor Jackson states likewise that, “Among the Iranian sources of information the *Avesta*, of course, stands foremost in importance as the material with which to begin; and in the Avestan Gathas, or Psalms, Zoroaster is personally presented as preaching reform or teaching a new faith. The entire Pahlavi literature serves directly to supplement the Avesta, somewhat as the patristic literature of the Church Fathers serves to supplement the New Testament.”<sup>lvii</sup>

Tracing the Persian Zarathushtra through his Greek lineage as Zoroaster, Jackson concludes that “As Zoroaster is one of the great religious teachers of the East, his life as well as his work is worthy of study from its historical importance. [...] It must also be remembered that fiction as well as fact has doubtless gathered about the name of this religious reformer. This latter fact is all the more a proof of his great personality.”<sup>lviii</sup> Jackson also tells us precisely in what manner Zoroaster was a reformer of Iranian religion. The passage is worth quoting *in toto* if we are tempted to argue that somehow Nietzsche’s reforming Zarathustra becomes clear *by analogy* to historical Persia’s reforming Zoroaster. According to Jackson, the view of the world one gains from reading the

*traditions in Pahlavi literature is not altogether a bright one, if we are to interpret, as one might interpret, the allusions to devil-worship and Daevas (which recall the present Yezidis) and the references to the slaughter and maltreatment of the kine, a lack of morality, falsehood, oath-breaking, and personal impurity. These are among the many things to which Zoroaster turned his attention when his reformatory work began.*

*Tradition goes on to say that even when the lad had attained his seventh year [B.C. 653*



*according to West], the inimical Durasrobo and Bratrok-resh still continue to connive against him, to harass and assail him. By magic practices they endeavor to daunt his spirit, and they even attempt to destroy his body by poison [Dk. 7. 3. 32-33; ZtN. pp. 488-9; Dab. i. pp. 226-7]. It is evident that the real opposition and struggle which was later to arise in the Prophet's life between his own faith and the existing religion which it supplanted or reformed, is projected into the past and conceived of as a case of personal enmity and hatred already developed between the two representatives of the creed and the youthful Zoroaster. If we are to judge at least from the later literature of the Pahlavi, black art and magic practices, occult science and necromancy were the order of the time. We seem to have a sort of background of Doctor Faustus and the Europe of the Dark Ages. Even Pourushaspo (Pourushaspa) himself is not free from the influence of the two sorcerers Durasrobo and Bratrok-resh, with whom he not infrequently associates [Dk. 7.3.32-35]. All these misguided persons, especially Durasrobo, are openly rebuked by Zaratusht for their heresy, and are put to confusion by the young reformer when they endeavor to argue with him, much as Christ at the age of twelve disputes with the doctors in the temple, refutes their doctrines and vanquishes his opponents [Dk. 7.3.34-43; Zsp. 17. 1-6; 18. 5-7; 19. 8; ZtN. pp. 489-90; Dab. I. pp. 228-9].<sup>lix</sup>*

Franz Cumont, in his 1905 lectures held at the *Collège de France* on the subject: *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*, introduces yet other aspects that separate the Chaldean teachings of Zoroaster and his followers (le parsisme) from those of later Mithracism.

*Sans doute, le parsisme est, de toutes les religions païennes, celle qui se rapproche le plus du monothéisme : Ahoura-Mazda y est élevé beaucoup au-dessus de tous les autres esprits célestes. Mais les dogmes du mithriacisme ne sont pas ceux de Zoroastre. Ce qu'il reçut de l'Iran, ce sont surtout ses mythes et ses rites ; sa théologie, toute pénétrée de l'érudition chaldéenne, ne devait pas différer sensiblement de celle des prêtres syriens." [...] Mais la Perse introduisit dans la religion un principe capital : le dualisme. Ce dualisme distingua le mithriacisme des autres sects et inspira sa dogmatique comme sa morale, leur donnant une rigueur et une fermeté ignores jusqu'alors dans le paganisme romain. Il présenta l'univers sous un aspect auparavant inconnu et assigna en même temps un but nouveau à l'existence.<sup>lx</sup>*

Likewise, J. B. Russell argues that, "The dualism introduced by Zarathustra was a revolutionary step in the development of the Devil, for it posited, for the first time, an absolute principle of evil, whose personification, Angra Mainyu or Ahriman, is the first clearly defined Devil."<sup>lxi</sup>

Perhaps, have argued some, we might more nearly approach clarity on this question of Zarathustra/Zoroaster when we recognize the Nietzschean prophet Zarathustra as the great modern revolutionary & reformer who will finally and irremediably overthrow...

what exactly? Christianity? Platonism? Both of which are dualist philosophies. In support of this idea, does not Nietzsche (*UW*, 79, S. 38) himself state: “Meine Philosophie umgedrehter Platonismus”? Yet, all irony aside, if we think that the naturalist<sup>lxii</sup> Nietzsche chooses the Persian Zoroaster in order to escape association with the material/immaterial dualism that so permeates the West as a result of the influence of Greek and Hellenistic philosophy, we err historically.<sup>lxiii</sup> Louis Rougier makes a compelling argument for precisely the opposite effect in *Celse contre les chrétiens. La réaction païenne sous l’Empire romain*. “L’ététernité du monde et sa nécessité furent un dogme de l’hellénisme. Les grandes écoles philosophiques, pythagoriciens, platoniciens, péripatéticiens, stoïciens, néo-platoniciens, admirent le retour éternel de tous les événements, ceux-ci formant un cercle qui met une grande année à se fermer.”<sup>lxiv</sup> The Greek world in the West was full of gods because the Persian world of the East<sup>lxv</sup> was full of gods. As a result of the co-mingling of East and West, concludes Rougier,

*A partir du second siècle, la croyance en un Dieu supreme et unique est un des postulats de la pensée religieuse du paganisme. Les dieux de la mythologie sont assimilés à des puissances intermediaries, constituées en dignité et en fonction par le Dieu supreme, pour servir de messagers et d’exécuteurs de ses volontés. Cette théorie qui se lit chez Plutarque, chez Maxime de Tyr, chez Apulée, chez Celse, est la même qu’expose au Vième siècle, dans sa letter à saint Augustin, le grammairien Maximus de Madaure.*<sup>lxvi</sup>

The nature of Hellenism is such that it is born of the co-mingling of Greek philosophy with Persian religious thought; it would be unreasonable to assume that Nietzsche, the classical philologist, could ignore this distinction, and that he would deliberately choose as hero for his epic a dualist Persian who is no different than a dualist Greek or Christian hero.<sup>lxvii</sup> And yet, inexplicably, Martin Heidegger argues precisely this point: that by choosing a Persian prophet Nietzsche has given himself the freedom to break with the Greek (*i.e.*, the Platonic and Hellenistic) tradition. In his lectures on Nietzsche, in the section on *Der Übermensch*, Heidegger provides a significant clarification for an interpretation of the ‘super’ in superman, but then he couches the concept of the *Übermensch* in an untenable straw-man dichotomy between Greek and Persian dualist metaphysics.

*“Über” in dem Namen “Übermensch” enthält eine Verneinung und bedeutet das Hinweg- und Hinausgehen “über” den bisherigen Menschen. Das Nein dieser Verneinung ist unbedingt, indem es aus dem Ja des Willens zur Macht kommt und die platonische, christlich-moralische Weltauslegung in allen ihren offenen und versteckten Abwandlungen schlechthin trifft. Die verneinende Bejahung entscheidet, metaphysisch denkend, die Geschichte des Menschentums zu einer neuen Geschichte. Der allgemeine, aber nicht erschöpfende Begriff des “Übermenschlichen” meint zunächst dieses nihilistisch-geschichtliche Wesen des sich selbst neu denden, d.h. hier: sich wollenden Menschentums. Deshalb trägt der Verkünder der Lehre vom “Übermenschlichen” den Namen Zarathustra. “Ich mußte Zarathustra, einem Perser, die Ehre geben: Perser haben zuerst Geschichte im Ganzen, Großen gedacht.” (XIV, 303) [...] Der Übermensch*

*ist die eigens in einen Willen genommene unbedingte Verneinung des bisherigen Wesens des Menschen.*<sup>lxviii</sup>

Even Walter Kaufmann stumbles on this incongruity when he says: “The choice of Zarathustra as his great protagonist may have been suggested to Nietzsche by his own dualistic tendencies. [...] Nietzsche, however, repudiated his earlier dualism through the very mouth of his Zarathustra.”<sup>lxix</sup> And in his note on this point, Kaufmann refers back again to the *Ecce Homo* passage where “Nietzsche himself remarked that his Zarathustra proclaimed a view that was the opposite of the real Zarathustra’s.”<sup>lxx</sup> Likewise, Gooding-Williams claims that, “In Zarathustra, Nietzsche elaborates a post-Christian-Platonic theory of the sensible or ‘untrue’ world in order to make intelligible the possibility of creating new values. Thus, he proposes to characterize the nature of this world, but without relying on any version of the received Christian-Platonic distinction between truth (or being) and appearance.”<sup>lxxi</sup> Köhler, as well, claims that in his vision of Zarathustra, Nietzsche allows to appear “das Idealbild des platonisch-hölderlinschen Knabenliebhabers and –erziehers,” which, at least in the context of Köhler’s psychologically-oriented biography, “wurde nun um den Bibelton des toten Vaters berichtet.”<sup>lxxii</sup>

These interpreters notwithstanding, however, perhaps it would be more helpful to the comprehension of Nietzsche’s apparent East/West dilemma, if, instead of ‘dualism,’ which seems to have been somewhat harmonized in Western religious and philosophical thinking, we deferred to Nietzsche’s discordant notion of ‘oppositions.’ The advantage in the Orient, says Nietzsche (*UW* II, #1107, S. 403), is that the people lived under the domination of one moral law, while here in the West we remain under the domination of “zwei entgegengesetzten.” In Nietzsche’s analysis of this domination of contradictions, this “honest diagnosis of the decay of the West,”<sup>lxxiii</sup> –it seems obvious that the reformer must not come from the East, for “Not only is [Zarathustra] antecedent to the Western religious tradition, but there is no subordination of Zarathustra to a creator god.”<sup>lxxiv</sup>

In considering possible interpretations for Nietzsche’s Zarathustra, it would seem reasonable that we should not accept the identification of Zarathustra either as German nationalist or as reformer in any meaningful religious sense, notwithstanding “Warum ich ein Schicksal bin” §3. Historically, Zoroaster was indeed a reformer; but there is little evidence in Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra* that in his adaptation he was trying to reform the dualistic premises of either Greek or of Christian thought. He simply breaks cleanly with both worlds of thought. Nietzsche’s concern was not primarily with metaphysics; empirical evidence for an evolutionary-grounded metaphysic was simply overwhelming. Nor was his concern with ethics; moral hypocrisy in the dualist West is painfully obvious. Rather, Zarathustra’s mission was to pronounce a new message harmonizing a natural biological metaphysic with a natural, empirical, this-worldly ethic. The next evolution—the *Übermensch* (*UW* II, #1217, 446), is not biological à la Darwin, but beyond Reason, into the Aesthetic.

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> “Meine Vorfahren Heraklit, Empedokles...” *Die Unschuld des Werdens II* (1965, S. 447).
- <sup>ii</sup> Nietzsche himself provides us with an outline of what he knew about Zoroaster in the first draft of his Great Plan (in Baeumler’s 1965 Nachwort to the Kröner edition, *Götzendämmerung* S. 520): “Zarathustra, born on Lake Urmi, left his homeland in his 30<sup>th</sup> year, went into the province of Aria and composed in the ten years of his solitude in the mountain the Zend-Avesta.
- <sup>iii</sup> Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche. Life as Literature*, Cambridge, 1985, S. vii f. Vgl. Joachim Köhler, *Zarathustra’s Secret*, New Haven, 2002, S. x.
- <sup>iv</sup> Aaron Ridley, *Nietzsche’s Conscience. Six Character Studies from the Genealogy*, Ithaca, 1998, S. 149-152, would have us read *Zarathustra* as a study in general pessimism in which Nietzsche identifies Himself and Us with Last Men, thereby reducing *Zarathustra* to a philosophical guilt trip. Similarly Walter Kaufmann, in *Nietzsche. Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, Princeton, 1974, S. 149, writes that Nietzsche “explicitly disagrees with the optimism of the contemporary Hegelians and Darwinists. Empirical facts do not seem to him to warrant the belief that history is a story of progress, that ever greater values are developed, and that whatever is later in the evolutionary scale is also *eo ipso* more valuable. ‘The goal of humanity cannot lie in the end [Ende] but only in its highest specimens’” Yet this pessimistic ‘read’ neglects the clear ‘teaching’ of the Nietzschean text itself: that Zarathustra represents a Great Man who has become free from culture, that Zarathustra is singing among men his song of freedom, which is his call to us to become Great Men, and that freedom from culture—true intellectual freedom, is within hearing!
- <sup>v</sup> In his Préface to the bilingual edition of Wagner’s *Siegfried*, Marcel Doisy (in Richard Wagner, *Siegfried*, Paris, 1971, S. 16-17) argues that the identity of the hero in Wagner’s epic version of the *Ring* undergoes a transformation. At the beginning, “En 1848, le personnage qui fascine Wagner, c’est Siegfried, pour la jeunesse et l’héroïsme qu’il incarne. Quatre ans plus tard, la vraie tragédie, c’est celle de Wotan, le dieu trop humain.” In fact, Doisy goes so far as to say that Wotan is and remains “le center spirituel de la Tétalogie,” and even: “Dès la composition de l’*Or du Rhin*, Wotan était devenu pour Wagner, le personnage central du drame, le symbole même de l’homme en lutte avec son destin et surtout avec lui-même” (Ebd., S. 18). Yet even more astonishingly, Doisy (Ebd., S. 19) compares Wotan to Nietzsche’s Zarathustra: “c’est librement et de sa propre volonté que Wotan s’acheminera vers sa fin.” While I think the comparison between Wotan and Zarathustra stops short of being compelling, there is yet at least one persuasive similarity between the two protagonists. Again Doisy (Ebd., 18): “Au stade où nous le retrouvons dans *Siegfried*, [Wotan] est entré dans cette phase décisive où l’homme fait retour sur lui-même, pèse et mesure la véritable valeur de ses actes.” In the final analysis, however, Doisy’s argument fails, because even for Wagner (let alone Nietzsche) the god himself has already begun his descent into the crepuscule of his own impotence (cf. *Siegfried*, Acte I-2, (36) S. 93-95).
- <sup>vi</sup> A comparison between the Buddha and Zoroaster is profitable to establishing the argument that Nietzsche could, reasonably, have chosen the Buddha as his prophet. The interpretive dilemma is the same in either event. This would have allowed Solomon and Higgins, for example, to avoid their absurd reading of Zarathustra as ‘ironic’ hero (in Robert Solomon & Kathleen Higgins, *What Nietzsche Really Said*, New York, 2000.) A.V. Williams Jackson (in *Zoroaster. The Prophet of Ancient Iran*, New York, (1898)-1965, S.1-2) enumerates the following comparisons and contrasts. “Between India and Iran ... a natural connection and kinship is acknowledged; and owing to the importance of Buddhism as a contrasted faith, a brief parallel between the teachings of Zoroaster and the doctrines of Buddha may be drawn by way of introduction. [...] Both these prophets were filled with a spiritual zeal for relieving a people and ameliorating their condition; both of them were inspired with a righteous hope of bettering their peoples’ lives and of redeeming them from misery and sin; and both men became founders of religious faiths. The end and aim in both cases was in general alike; but the nature of the two minds and of the creeds that were developed shows some marked and characteristic, if not radical, differences. [...] The faith of Buddha is the more philosophical; the faith of Zoroaster, the more theological. Buddha’s doctrine is a creed rather of renunciation, quietism, and repose; Zoroaster’s creed is a law of struggle, action, and reform. India’s so-called Prophet Prince is overwhelmed with the wretchedness of human existence, an existence from which the sole release is absorption into Nirvana; Persia’s Sage is equally cognizant of the existence of woe, but it is no world-woe without hope of triumphant domination. The misery which

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Zoroaster acknowledges to exist is due to an Evil Principle against whom man must struggle all his life and fight the good fight which will bring final victory and will win joys eternal at the resurrection. Nevertheless, as a faith in reality, Buddha's belief had in it more of the elements of a universal religion; Zoroaster's faith ... possessed rather the elements of a national religion. Millions of human souls still take refuge in Buddha; the faithful followers that bear the name of Zoroaster to-day do not number a hundred thousand."

- vii According to Baskin (in *Classics in Chinese Philosophy*, edited by Wade Baskin, New York, 1972, S. 178) Confucius was all the rage in the French *salons* of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. "It was Mencius who restored the authority of Confucius and recorded in a book which bears his name, and which was canonized during the Sung era (960-1279), thoughts gleaned from a lifetime of extensive travels and keen observations of people of all classes. Extracts from his book became favorite reading in Europe early in the eighteenth century and have continued in their popularity. Voltaire and Rousseau quoted his thoughts. In this way he influenced, at least indirectly, leaders of the French Revolution."
- viii Nietzsche certainly envisions the possibility that Jesus, had he simply lived long enough, would have come to the same wisdom as his Zarathustra (*Also sprach Zarathustra Vom freien Tode*, S. 78: "Wahrlich, zu früh starb jener Hebräer...") Kaufmann (in *Nietzsche*) is correct in arguing that Nietzsche had great respect for this Hebrew (Vgl. esp. S. 37, 42, 43).
- ix The following discussion on Iranian scholarship is from Jackson, *Zoroaster*, S. 148.
- x *UWI*, S. 170.
- xi Köhler, *Zarathustra's Secret*, S. 240.
- xii Ebd., referencing volume 1, S. 806 of the Colli/Mazzino critical edition.
- xiii Vgl. James Darmesteter, *Essais orientaux*. Paris, 1883, S. 8 ff.
- xiv *The Zend Avesta*, in *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 4, *The Vendidad*, edited by F. Max Mueller, trans. James Darmesteter. Delhi, 1998, S. xvii ff.
- xv Köhler, *Secret*, S. 240.
- xvi Ebd.
- xvii Ebd., quoting from *Sämtliche Briefe, Kritische Studienausgabe*, edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, Munich/Berlin, S. 6, 366.
- xviii Georg Friedrich Creuzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*, Hildesheim, 1990/1837, S. 184, 308.
- xix Joseph Bidez & Franz Cumont, *Les mages hellénisés. Zoroastre, Ostanès et Hystaspe d'après la tradition grecque*, en deux tomes, Paris, 1938, S. 6.
- xx Jackson, *Zoroaster*, S. 148.
- xxi Ebd.
- xxii Köhler (in Joachim Köhler, *Zarathustras Geheimnis*, Nördlingen, 1989, S. 395, 408, 414) certainly sees parallels between Nietzsche's development of his Zarathustra and Friedrich Creuzer's rather sketchy information on the Persian prophet, but he does not provide any hard evidence of a link, such as direct citations. It is also interesting to note that, according to DeLaura (in David J. DeLaura, *Hebrew and Hellene in Victorian England*, Austin, 1969, S. 182), Creuzer's *Symbolik und Mythologie der Alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*, was also on Matthew Arnold's reading list from the mid 1840s.
- xxiii Jackson, *Zoroaster*, S. 34.
- xxiv Ebd., S. 35.
- xxv Creuzer, *Symbolik*, S. 180.
- xxvi Vgl. *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, S. 109, esp. 355, *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*, S. 320, 343: "Ä, die einzig vollkommene Erscheinung des dithyrambischen Dramatikers vor Wagner," *Geburt*, S. 148, 368;

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*Menschliches Allzumenschliches*, Band I, S. 114, 143, 213; *Morgenröte*, S. 146; *Die Unschuld des Werdens I*, S. 119.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Darmesteter, *Essais*, Vol. II, S. 26.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Vgl. Smyth's Introduction in Aeschylus, Vol. I: *Suppliant Maidens, Persians, Prometheus, Seven Against Thebes*, London, 1973, S. xii.

<sup>xxix</sup> Ebd., xvi.

<sup>xxx</sup> Ebd., xix.

<sup>xxxi</sup> *Persians*, lns. 20-24.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Ebd., lns. 25ff.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Ebd., lns. 303ff.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Ebd., lns. 480ff.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Darmesteter contributes significantly to our understanding of the relationship between early Christianity and Persian religion. In *Zend Avesta*, S. xii-xiii, Darmesteter states that "[the religion of ancient Persia] was never more eagerly studied than in the first centuries of the Christian era," but that "upon the whole it may be said that in the first centuries of Christianity, the religion of Persia was more studied and less understood than it had ever been before. The real object aimed at, in studying the old religion, was to form a new one." So if we were to imply that Nietzsche chose his reforming prophet, Zarathustra, because of Mazdeism's early opposition to Christianity, we would be suggesting that Nietzsche had followed perhaps the tendency of the German 19<sup>th</sup> century scholar Haug (there is no evidence Nietzsche was aware of Haug), who incorrectly (according to Darmesteter), converted Mazdeism into a religious revolution against Vedic polytheism. This, warns Darmesteter (Ebd., S. xxvii, xxix) is a typical weakness of comparative schools of religion: "[T]he comparative method starts from an hypothesis, moves in a vacuum, and builds up a fanciful religion and a fanciful language."

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Reprinted in 1965 by the AMS Press Inc. in New York.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Jackson, *Zoroaster*, S. 23-24, Jackson continues: "In the Avestan Gathas and in Pahlavi literature the soul of the mythical, primeval bull, three thousand years before the revelation of the religion, beholds a vision in heaven of the fravasi or ideal image of the prophet Zarathushtra, Zaratusht, that is to be [cf. Ys. 29.8; Bd. 4. 4-5; cf. Dk. 7.2.67]. Again, in the golden age of the world, King Yim (Jemshed) forewarns the demons of their destined defeat and overthrow at the birth of the glorious manchild [Dk. 7.2.59-61]. Lastly, in the reign of the patriarch ruler, Kai Us, three centuries before the actual appearance of the hallowed saint, a splendid ox is gifted with the power of speech, so as to foretell the promised revelation which the future shall receive from the lips of Zaratusht [Dk. 7.2.62-69; Zsp. 12. 7-25]."

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Ebd., S. 6.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Ebd., S. 4.

<sup>xl</sup> In *Zoroaster*, S. xi-xv, Jackson provides a "list of works connected with subject or most often consulted." Nietzsche could have known and consulted any or all of the following:

Anguétel du Perron. *Zend-Avesta, Ouvrage de Zoroastre*. Tome I. 1, 2 et Tome II. Paris, 1771. German translation by Kleuker, *Zend-Avesta*, Thl. 3, pp.1-48; excerpts in English by K. E. Kauga. Bombay, 1876.

Brisson, Barnabé. *Barnabae Brissonii, De Regio Persarum Principatu Libri Tres*. Argentorati, 1710 (orig. ed. 1590).

Dabistan. *The Dabistan, or School of Manners*. Translated from the Original Persian. By Shea and Troyer. 3 vols. Paris, 1843.

Darmesteter, James. *The Zend Avesta*. Translated. Sacred Books of the East, vols. iv., xxiii. Oxford, 1880, 1883, and vol. iv in second ed., 1895. [his French translation will not be available until 1892-1893]

Dasatir. *The Dasatir, or Sacred Writings of the Ancient Persian Prophets in the Original Tongue; together with the Ancient Persian Version and Commentary of the Fifth Sasan*. Published by Mulla Firuz Bin Kaus. An English Translation. 2 vols. Bombay, 1818.



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- Duncker, N. *History of Antiquity*. English translation by E. Abbott. Vol. 5. London, 1881.
- Hölty, A. *Zoroaster und sein Zeitalter*. Lüneburg, 1836.
- Hovelacque, A. *L'Avesta, Zoroastre et le Mazdéisme*. Paris, 1880.
- Hyde, T. *Historia Religionis veterum Persarum eorumque Magorum*. Oxon. 1700.
- Justi, Ferdinand. 1879. *Geschichte des alten Persiens*. Berlin: G. Grote. Source furnished by Darmesteter .
- Kleuker, J.F. *Zend-Avesta, Zoroasters Lebendiges Wort*. 1 Bd., 3 Thle., und 2 Bde., 5 Thle. Riga, 1776-1783. Translated from the French of Anquetil du Perron. The 'Anhänge' contain valuable material from the classics and other sources. Often consulted.
- Ménant, Joachim. *Zoroastre. Essai sur la Philosophie Religieuse de la Perse*. 2me éd. Paris, 1857. General in character.
- Meyer, Ed. *Geschichte des Alterthums*. Erster Band. Stuttgart, 1884.
- Pastoret, M. de. *Zoroastre, Confucius, et Mahomet*. Seconde éd. Paris, 1788. Like Brisson, Hyde, and other old writers, this briefly notes some of the material accessible at the time. Seldom consulted.
- Rapp. *Die Religion und Sitte der Perser und übrigen Iranier nach den griechischen und römischen Quellen*. ZDMG. xix. 1-89; xx. 49-204. Translated into English by K.R. Cama. Bombay, 1876-1879.
- Spiegel, Fr. *Avesta, die heiligen Schriften der Parsen*. Uebersetzt. 3 Bde. Leipzig, 1852-1863. According to Darmesteter, Spiegel will finish the third volume of this set in 1883, the year Nietzsche begins to write his *Zarathustra*.
- . "Ueber das Leben Zarathustra's", in *Sitzb. der kgl. bayer. Akad. der Wiss. zu München*, 5, January, 1867, pp. 1-92. München, 1867.
- . *Eranische Alterthumskunde*. 3 vols. Leipzig, 1871-1878.
- Windischmann, Fr. *Zoroastrische Studien*. Abhandlungen, hrsg. von Fr. Spiegel. Berlin, 1863. [...] Often consulted."
- For a similar, but earlier, bibliographical compilation of Iranian studies, compare Creuzer (1990/1837, 181ff).
- <sup>xli</sup> DeLaura, *Hebrew and Hellene*, S. 166-167.
- <sup>xlii</sup> Eric Steinhart, *On Nietzsche*, California, 2000, S. 13.
- <sup>xliii</sup> Ebd.
- <sup>xliv</sup> Louis H. Gray, "The Double Nature of the Iranian Archangels." in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, 1904, VII, S. 344-372. Vgl. Darmesteter, *Zend Avesta*, Vol. 23 (Part II), S. 307-322, and Plutarch, *Is. et Os.*, 47.
- <sup>xlv</sup> Ebd., S. 372.
- <sup>xlvi</sup> Jackson *Zoroaster*, S. 36-38.
- <sup>xlvii</sup> Ebd., S. 41.
- <sup>xlviii</sup> Ebd.
- <sup>xlix</sup> Ebd., S. 43.
- <sup>1</sup> Creuzer, *Symbolik*, S. 308.
- <sup>li</sup> Ebd., S. 317, quoting from his translation of Burnouf's French translation of the *Commentaire sur le Yaçna*.
- <sup>lii</sup> Ebd., S. 180.
- <sup>liii</sup> Ebd., S. 2.

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<sup>liv</sup> Ebd., S. 95.

<sup>lv</sup> Jackson *Zoroaster*, S. 32.

<sup>lvi</sup> M. C. de Harlez, in “Des origines du Zoroastrisme” in *Journal Asiatique*, Paris, août-septembre 1879, S. 99. De Harlez (Ebd., S. 125) goes into more specific and detailed argument on this point. He says, for example, that “Ce qui a inspiré à l’auteur du zoroastrisme la conception dualistique, ce n’est point la vue d’une lutte d’éléments matériels, mais c’est le spectacle des maux tant physiques que moraux qui accablent l’humanité. [cf. le Gâtha 30].” Likewise (Ebd., S. 130): “Un autre trait caractéristique et distinctif du zoroastrisme, c’est le caractère abstrait et la sévérité morale de toutes ses conceptions; c’est aussi la disparition des mythes.” And again (Ebd., S. 137): “Peut-on raisonnablement soutenir qu’un système tout d’abstraction et de moralité est sorti de mythes exclusivement naturels et pleins de figures licencieuses? Non, sans aucun doute.”

<sup>lvii</sup> Jackson *Zoroaster*, S. 5.

<sup>lviii</sup> Ebd., S. 9.

<sup>lix</sup> Ebd., S. 31.

<sup>lx</sup> Franz Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*. Conférences faites au Collège de France en 1905, Paris, 1929, S. 139-141.

<sup>lxi</sup> Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Devil. Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*, Ithaca, 1977, S. 99.

<sup>lxii</sup> Henry D. Aiken (quoted in *The Great Ages of Western Philosophy The Great Ages of Western Philosophy*, Vol. 2, Boston, 1962, S. 382; vgl. S. 384.): “Both [Nietzsche and Marx] are naturalists, and both are committed, up to a point, to the scientific description of the natural world and of man’s place in nature.”

<sup>lxiii</sup> Vgl. Louis H. Gray (quoted in Jackson, *Zoroaster*, §51, S. 259): “The wonderful eschatology of the Persian religion made a deep impression on the Hellenic mind at an early date, and this was to bring forth fruit in the development of Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism.”

<sup>lxiv</sup> Louis Rougier, *Celse contre les chrétiens. La réaction païenne sous l’Empire romain*, Paris, 1977, S. 35.

<sup>lxv</sup> Vgl. Cumont, *Paganisme Romain*, S. 141.

<sup>lxvi</sup> Rougier, *Celse*, S. 245.

<sup>lxvii</sup> Nietzsche certainly understood that metaphysical Christianity was born out of a Platonic or neo-Platonic metaphysic. Vgl. Arkady Plotnitsky, “Zarathustra’s Ladders: Hebraism, Hellenism, and Practical Philosophy in Nietzsche,” in *Nietzsche-Studien*, Vol. 30, Berlin, 2001, S. 202: “What distinguishes Nietzsche’s thought is that, arguably for the first time ever, he sees Christianity and Western philosophy as fundamentally complicit by virtue of a certain specific common grounding.” In an interesting discussion, Kaufmann (*Nietzsche*, S. 156) argues that Nietzsche, perhaps attempting to abandon one sort of dualism, recreates in the Apollonian/Dionysian simply another dualistic dilemma: “The Dionysian... is not yet contrasted with the romantic at this juncture [in the Second Meditation], but with the Apollonian; and the question arises as to whether the two Greek gods represent essentially separate principles, like form and matter, in which case a development of—if not a break with—Nietzsche’s earlier naturalism would be necessary. For what Nietzsche now endorses is clearly not biological nature but “culture as another and improved physis [nature].” Nature must be transformed, and man must become like a work of art. Apollo must triumph over Dionysus—and if these gods represent truly separate forces, and culture originates only when nature is subdued, then we are led back to an unnaturalistic dualism, not unlike that maintained by Kant and the Christian tradition.”

<sup>lxviii</sup> Martin Heidegger, “Der Übermensch” in *Nietzsche II*, Pfullingen, 1961, S. 292-293.

<sup>lxix</sup> Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 1974, S. 198-199.

<sup>lxx</sup> Ebd., S. 199, nt. 9.

<sup>lxxi</sup> Robert Gooding-Williams, *Zarathustra’s Dionysian Modernism*, California, 2001, S. 48.

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<sup>lxxii</sup> Köhler, *Geheimnis*, S. 432.

<sup>lxxiii</sup> Stanley Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment. Nietzsche's Zarathustra*, New York, 1995. S. 6.

<sup>lxxiv</sup> Ebd., 20.