HOW TO MAKE A VOICE AUDIBLE?
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE OF KURDISH CULTURE AND OF SOCIAL REALITY
IN POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES

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The current 3rd and 4th issue of our bulletin consists of two parts. The first one is devoted to the Yezidi topic and presents papers delivered during the international seminar The Diverse Heritage of Yezidi tradition which was held in Kraków on November 13 2013. The second consists of Kurdish and English articles on other topics that contribute to our research project.

We owe our special thanks to prof. Martin van Bruinessen for his extensive text on The Veneration of Satan among the Ahl-e Haqq community and to Sidqî Hirorî for his will and interest to explore old and almost forgotten Polish texts and newspaper cuttings on the Kurds.

Contents

The Diverse Heritage of Yezidi Tradition

The international seminar Diverse Heritage of Yezidi Tradition, which took place in Kraków on November 13, 2013 was organized in the scope of the research project *How to Make a Voice Audible? Continuity and Change of Kurdish Culture and of Social Reality in Postcolonial Perspectives*, in cooperation with Göttingen University (Germany) and The KRG Representation in Poland.

The seminar was held in memory of Prof. Ordixanê Calîl (1932-2007) who was an outstanding Kurdisch scholar, researcher and a specialist on folklore. He was born in Armenia into a Kurdish Yezidi familly. His parents escaped from the Ottoman Empire after the pogroms of 1914 and 1915. They were brought up in orphanages in Armenia. Ordixan together with his brother (Celîlê Celîl) and two sisters (Cemîla and Zîne) took up the arduous job of collecting Kurdish folk songs, fairy tales, stories and proverbs in Armenia and Georgia then in Iraq, Syria, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan.
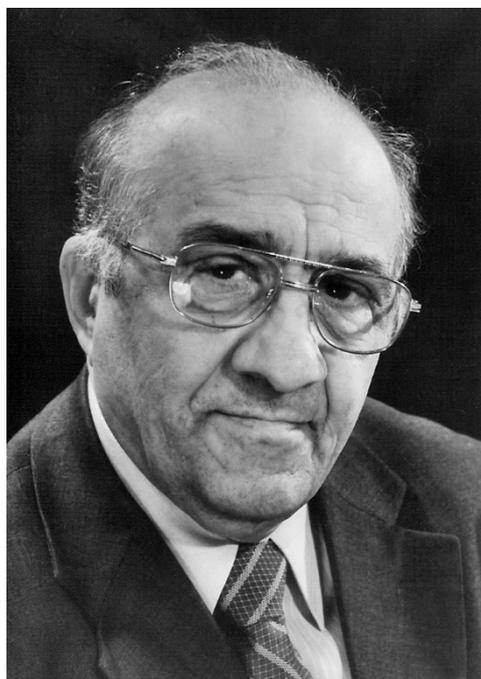
Prof. Ordixanê Calîl (1932-2007)

Today, the Kurdish family archive of the Eichgraben Kurdish Library (Austria) consists of more than 50 kilometres of tape recorded sessions and a 100,000 documents and photographs concerning Kurdish daily life as well as the portraits of storytellers. Ordixan published more than 60 books devoted to the Kurdish oral tradition. He was a professor of the Leningrad University, a member of the Kurdish Institute in Paris and the Iraqi Academy of Science. He deeply believed in the power of culture which he considered to be the only solid foundation for any dialogue. In 2003 he enjoyed a visit to Kraków. That is why the seminar was to dedicated to him.

Yezidis were amongst those inhabitants of the Middle East who for a long time but especially in the 19th and 20th centuries had suffered under the colonial policies of different powers. They were held in contempt as a religious minority, worshippers of the devil, and as the Kurds when a national and chauvinistic policy dominated the region. In spite of this difficulty and forced exile their diverse heritage of beliefs, thoughts, ethic and aesthetic values were hidden in the oral tradition of religious texts and folklore today is one of the richest sources of interest and inspiration not only for Kurdish writers, poets, politicians and activists but foreign non Kurdish scholars too.

The multidimensional heritage of Yezidism is connected to many different religious traditions influencing the region in the past and present. Its links with ancient Iranian beliefs are unquestionable but there are many more connections to be explored such as the ancient Greeks or Anatolia . It is more than just possible that it was Yezidi tradition which inspired Ehmede Khani for constructing his *Mem û Zin* – immortal dastan devoted to the God-Love idea. Yezidi motifs can be traced in many literary works of contemporary Kurdish writers such as Mehmed Uzun, Hesenê Metê or Jan Dost. However, it is no exaggeration if we compare some elements of theYezidi tradition with selected European experiences and works devoted to the idea of "good, faithful and desperate devil". To give some examples, Lermontov and Wróbels' *Demons* or Mikhail Bulhakov's Voland from the novel *Master and Margarita*. Such attitudes offer us new possibilities in considering Yezidi beliefs in the wider comparative context of world cultural heritage.

The aim of the seminar was to present the rich and multiple connections based on the legacy of the Yezidi tradition which is seen both in past and present thoughts, beliefs, works of art and social activity of Kurdish people as well as comparing

them with selected universal motifs of other cultures and traditions. There is no doubt that making the voice of Yezidi tradition audible is one of the most important challenges and tasks for contemporary research especially in the scope of Kurdish and Middle Eastern studies.

PROGRAM OF THE SEMINAR:

Session I

- Prof. Christine Allison (University of Exeter), The Orphanage Generation: Yezidi Cultural Production in the Former Soviet Union
- Prof. Philip Kreyenbroek (University of Göttingen), The links between Yezidism and Zoroastrianism in the light of new evidence.
- Prof. Martin van Bruinessen (Utrecht University), Veneration of Satan among the Ahl-i Haqq (Yarsan) of Dalahu, South Kurdistan
- Dr Artur Rodziewicz (Warsaw University of Life Sciences), Eros and the Pearl. Love as the Cosmogonic Factor in the Yezidi Theology and Some Ancient Cosmogonies.

Session II

- Dr Joanna Bocheńska (Jagiellonian University), Yezidi Inspirations of Contemporary Kurdish Literature.
- Karol Kaczorowski (Jagiellonian University,Yezidism and the complex of Proto-Indo-Iranian religion.
- Dr Marcin Rzepka (Pontifical University of John Paul II) Discovering communities, inventing beliefs. Christian missionary attitudes towards Yezidis in the 19th century.

MARTIN VAN BRUINESSEN

Veneration of Satan among the Ahl-e Haqq of the Gûrân region

In 1976 I made two visits, of some ten days each, to the Ahl-e Haqq communities of the mountainous districts North of the Kermanshah – Qasr-e Shirin road that used to be the core of the Gûrân emirate. I had heard that these communities hold Satan, whom they know by the name of Malak Tâwûs, in special veneration. Many of the people with whom I conversed during my visits spoke quite freely of Satan or Malak Tâwûs, but I soon also discovered that there was no consensus about his place in Ahl-e Haqq cosmology. I found in fact that in this relatively small region there existed two competing views of Ahl-e Haqq cosmology, one of them more explicitly dualistic than the other. I attempted to analyse this in a lengthy article that I wrote a few years later but never published, fearing that the new Islamic regime might not look kindly on the heterodox beliefs held by these communities.[1] The invitation to present a paper at the Kraków Seminar on the Yezidi tradition provided the opportunity to revisit this old paper, have a fresh look at my old field notes and photographs, and present some old and new reflections on the subject.[2]

It is quite common to describe the Ahl-e Haqq religion, like that of the Yezidis, as a "little-known religion"; in fact, I have in an unguarded moment used these words myself although I am aware that we know in fact a great deal about them. Thanks to such scholars as Minorsky, Ivanow, Mokri and Safîzâde, we know much about the Ahl-i Haqq belief system and have access to a considerable amount of

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[1] The original article, titled "Satan's Psalmists: some heterodox beliefs and practices among the Ahl-e Haqq of the Guran district", remains unpublished but I shared it with some colleagues for whose work it was relevant. I wrote three other articles that are partly based on my 1976 fieldwork: Bruinessen 1991, 1994 and 2009. These can be accessed on academia.edu.

[2] I wish to thank Partow Hooshmandrad, who carried out extensive fieldwork in the same region in the early 2000s, for her comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

Ahl-e Haqq sacred texts.[3] The anthropologist Mir-Hosseini and the ethnomusicologist Hooshmandrad have published valuable accounts of lived religion, based on fieldwork in South Kurdistan. Earlier, the ethnomusicologist During had published important and insightful studies on sacred music in the Iranian religious traditions, most of which also concerned the Ahl-e Haqq (1989, 1993). We know by now more about the religions of the Yezidis and Ahl-e Haqq than about lived Islam in Kurdistan. If nonetheless we continue to feel that we hardly know anything about these religions, this may be because our knowledge does not constitute a single, coherent whole. There are lacunae in our knowledge and apparent internal contradictions. Our most knowledgeable and authoritative interlocutors from within these religious communities may have systematised their understanding of doctrine and sacred history, but they may fiercely disagree with one another over these issues. There is moreover an intimation of secret doctrines, or secret interpretations of public religious lore, that are not shared with outsiders or even most insiders (and some of which may be completely lost).

Faced with a number of different narratives, partly complementary, partly overlapping, and in part mutually contradictory, the scholar is tempted to make his own synthesis, combining elements from different sources, which belong to different periods or different sub-groups of the religious community, and selecting those elements from mutually contradictory sources that can be combined into a consistent and coherent whole. This is what Minorsky (1920-21) and Ivanow (1953) attempted when our knowledge of the Ahl-e Haqq was still very fragmentary, and what more recently Hamzeh'ee did (1990). This is also what, controversially, certain intellectuals from the community itself have done, notably Ne`matollâh Jayhûnâbâdî (1966) and his son Nûr `Alî-Shâh Elâhî (1342/1963, 1966). In fact, many of the more vocal members of the Ahl-e Haqq religious community are speculative theologians in their own way and have developed their private systematizations of doctrine.

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[3] For a detailed overview of the state of the art of Ahl-e Haqq studies, see During 1998.

THREE REPRESENTATIONS OF SATAN
IN AHL-E HAQQ COSMOLOGY

I shall, in this paper, avoid acting as another systematiser myself and emphasise the existence of competing and mutually incompatible cosmological views within the Ahl-e Haqq community and even among the subgroup of the Gûrân Ahl-e Haqq. The beliefs concerning Satan are especially controversial. In what follows I am much indebted to three men who each had their own more or less coherent view of who and what Satan was.

Fig. 1. Ahmad Bâbâ'î at the shrine of Bâbâ Yâdegâr

Ahmad Bâbâ'î was a young man, of my own age, whom I met in the Ahl-e Haqq *jam`khâne* in Kermanshah. He was the first person whom I heard proclaim that, yes, he was a *shaytânparast*, a Satan-worshipper, turning this stigmatizing name given to his community by their Muslim neighbours into a sobriquet proudly worn. Ahmad was convinced that Satan, or the Peacock Angel (Malak Tâwûs) was not the evil spirit that Muslims claimed him to be; he was in fact God's most loyal servant and had been rewarded with control over the material world.

Ahmad accompanied me on my first trip to the Ahl-e Haqq sanctuary of Bâbâ Yâdegâr and introduced me to the dervishes, Sayyeds and ordinary believers. He

was not an especially learned man nor did he belong to a family with religious prestige, but he was a good musician and he knew many of the sacred hymns, which earned him respect wherever we went. He taught me his understanding of doctrine and sacred history through those hymns and his comments on them, and through the discussions in which he engaged with many of the people we encountered on the way.

Not all people we met were willing to concede that they were Satan-worshippers, even after Ahmad had given them his explanation. We respect him, they would say, but we only venerate him in his manifestation as Dâwûd – one of the *haft tan*, the seven luminous angelic beings who incarnate themselves in human (or occasionally animal) form in each new cycle of sacred history, and whose essence may also manifest itself in certain objects of power. The Ahl-e Haqq religion in its present form is associated with the cycle in which the Deity manifested itself as Soltân Sahâk, who may have lived in the 14th or 15th century. Dâwûd was one of Soltân Sahâk's companions; Bâbâ Yâdegâr belongs to the same cycle.

Ahmad also accepted another name often given to the Ahl-e Haqq by their Sunni or Shi`i Muslim neighbours, `Alî-ollâhî or `Alî-Elâhî, "Deifiers of `Ali," because `Ali was one of the manifestations of the Deity in an earlier cycle. However, the Gûrân Ahl-e Haqq have no special veneration for `Ali and rather wish to distance themselves from the Twelver Shi`ites and their `Alid devotion. They venerate the Deity primarily in the manifestation of Soltân Sahâk.
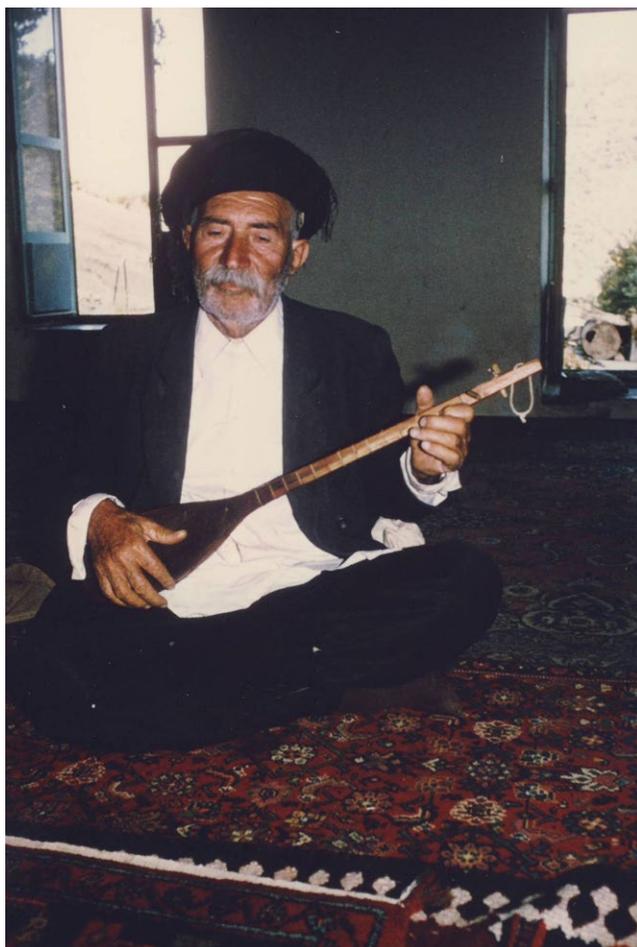
Fig. 2. Kâ Karîm, in Tutshami

Kâ Karîm was a *kalâmkhwân*, expert of the sacred hymns, living in the residence of the spiritual leader of the region, Sayyed Nasreddîn, in the village of Tûtshâmî. He was the grandson of the dervish-poet Karîm Khalîl, who had been part of the entourage of Sayyed Nasreddin's revered ancestor, Sayyed Brâka, and who had composed books of sacred poetry (*daftar*) that were considered as part of the religious canon – at least by the Ahl-e Haqq of this district. I stayed as a guest in Sayyed Nasreddîn's residence for about a week and spent much time with Kâ Karîm, whom the Sayyed had given permission to answer all my questions about religious matters.

Like my friend Ahmad Bâbâ'î, Kâ Karîm was fascinated by the figure of Shaytân, and unlike Ahmad and most other people in the region, he stressed that Satan also had a fearsome aspect and was, in a sense, a rival of God. Kâ Karîm's grandfather, Karîm Khalîl, mentions Satan in several poems, which we read together.

Moreover, Karîm Khalîl is believed to have been *Dâwûd-mehmân*, i.e. the bodily vehicle in which the angel Dâwûd manifested himself, and he had therefore a special, if indirect, bond with Satan.
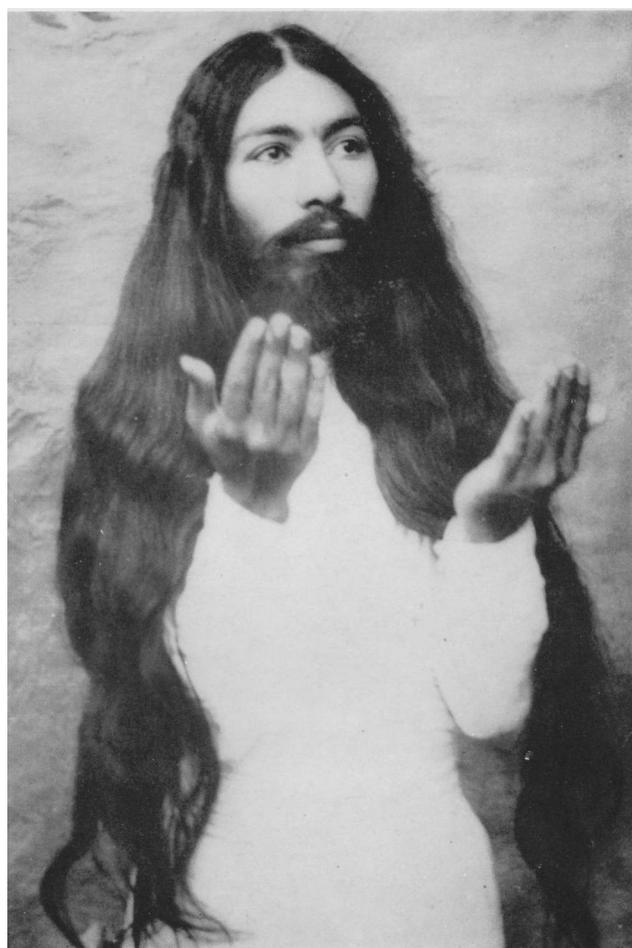
Nûr 'Ali-Shâh en 1920.

Fig. 3. Nûr `Alî Elâhî in his years as an ascetic
[from: Elâhî 1966]

The third systematizer did not belong to the Gûrân Ahl-e Haqq but his synthesizing reformulation of Ahl-e Haqq doctrine was based on his interpretations of the older Gurani sacred texts (besides other materials). The reformer Hâjj Ne`matollâh Jayhûnâbâdî (d. 1920) lived among the Kurdish Ahl-e Haqq of the Sahne district to the Northeast of Kermanshah. He had a more sophisticated knowledge of Islamic esoteric and mystical doctrines than most of the *sayyed* and *kalâmkhwân* of that district; his synthesis met with considerable resistance from the latter. His (unpub-

lished) work *Forqân ol-akhbâr* was already recognized as an important restatement of Ahl-e Haqq doctrine by Minorsky (1936) and was recently the subject of a dissertation by Mojan Ozgoli-Membrado (2007).[4] His major published work is the *Shâhnâme-ye Haqîqat*, which narrates the Ahl-e Haqq sacred history in Persian verse. In this work, Hâjj Ne`matollâh gives the traditional Muslim account of Satan's disobedience and punishment, making him the Lord of Hell and the tempter of mankind (Jayhunabadi 1966, pp. 94-8).

Jayhûnâbâdî's reformulations brought Ahl-e Haqq doctrine closer to the esoteric Shi`i tradition and did away with the belief in divine incarnation that was a central tenet of the traditional belief system. His ideas remained controversial and were rejected by the various communities of South Kurdistan, but were to become influential in Tehran, where his son and successor, Nûr `Alî Elâhî, and his grandson Bahrâm Elâhî later gathered a group of more highly educated followers around them.

Nûr `Alî Elâhî, as far as we can gather, held the same religious views as his father but he went further and divulged his synthesis of Ahl-e Haqq teachings, which had previously only been taught to initiates, to the general public by publishing them in a book, *Borhân ol-haqq*, that was widely disseminated (Elâhî 1342/1963; cf. Weightman 1964). Even more explicitly than his father, he presented Ahl-e Haqq doctrine as a form of esoteric Shi`ism. Another text by Nûr `Alî Elâhî was not much later published in an annotated French translation by Mohammad Mokri, who was to become the most prolific scholar of Ahl-e Haqq scripture (Elâhî 1966).[5]

The books by these reformers represent an important step in the scripturalization of the Ahl-e Haqq religion. Previously, the sacred texts had existed in written form, as manuscripts used by the *daftardân* and *kalâmkhwân*, but they were handed down orally, in face-to-face contact, and the manuscripts were used as memory aids but not as reading materials. Most of the hymns were, moreover, in the Gurani language, which few people understood perfectly. Hâjj Ne`matollâh and his son presented the teachings in Persian, in a new and more systematic form. Their

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[4] Mrs Ozgoli-Membrado has announced her forthcoming French translation of this text.

[5] In the same year, Mokri also published a major Persian text by Hâjj Ne`matollâh, the *Shâhnâme-ye Haqîqat* (Jayhûnâbâdî 1966), and this was followed by his edition and translation of numerous Gurani texts.

books moreover had proper indexes, which enabled different styles of reading. Due to these qualities they have loomed large over Ahl-e Haqq studies, and most if not all scholars working on other Ahl-e Haqq communities than Elâhî's followers have also had recourse to these texts as somehow authoritative, although they are firmly rejected by traditionalist authorities.

FIRST CONTACTS: THE TEHRAN GROUP

By the time I began my research in Kurdistan, Nûr `Alî Elâhî (d. 1974) had passed away and the Tehran congregation, which included some Western foreigners, was led by his son Bahrâm Elâhî. It was from a member of this congregation, who had made the pilgrimage to Bâbâ Yâdegâr, that I first heard about the Satan-worshippers living in the region around the shrine. A sophisticated, middle-class towns-man, he described his pilgrimage as an adventurous and perilous journey; the mountains were, he said, infested with robbers and hostile tribesmen, who allowed no strangers to pass except Ahl-e Haqq pilgrims. His contacts with the local population had been minimal, and he looked upon them as ignorant folk without proper understanding of the religion to which they claimed to belong. (In his understanding, only some of the locals were Satan-worshippers; others were Ahl-e Haqq but these too were ignorant of the true teachings of this religion.)[6]

I later found that most members of the Tehran congregation shared these negative views about the Kurdish and Gûrân Ahl-e Haqq. In my one interview with Bahrâm Elâhî, the master insisted that the Ahl-e Haqq of Kurdistan, and especially those of the Gûrân districts around Kerend and Sar-e Pol-e Zohab, had deviated far from the true teachings. He condemned especially their lenient views of Satan, and told me he had witnessed tribesmen making a vow at the shrine of Dâwûd,

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[6] In an early study of Nûr `Alî Shâh's *Borhân ol-haqq*, the author mentions having visited the same region and interviewed local Ahl-e Haqq about their beliefs concerning Satan, which he found 'inconsistent with anything we know of the A.H.' He thought these views could have been introduced into the region by a pocket of Yezidis he found to be living to the Northwest of Kerend (Weightman 1964: 84n). None of my local informants had ever heard of Yezidis living there, and Weightman probably assumed that people called *Shaytânparast* by their neighbours must be Yezidis.

asking Satan for support in a raiding party and promising him a share of the booty as offering.

Paradoxically, the writings of Hâjj Ne`matollâh and his successors are based on the oldest *kalâm* in Gurani, which have been preserved by, and are most closely associated with, the communities of South Kurdistan. Before these reformers became influential in Tehran, the Ahl-e Haqq communities of the capital and of Northern Iran in general were affiliated with another branch of the Ahl-e Haqq religion known as Âteshbegî, which represented a later stage of its development and had sacred texts in Azerbaijani Turkish and Persian. The reformers reconnected these communities with the earlier, Kurdish phase of development but reinterpreted the older texts to make them compatible with esoteric Shi`a doctrine. The *sayyed* and *kalâmkhwân* of Sahne and especially of the Gûrân districts, who hold on to what in their own view is the old tradition, have in the view of the reformers deviated from the true path of their religion.

In their few references to Shaytân, Nûr `Alî and Bahrâm Elâhî distance themselves from even the faintest hint of dualism. In *Borhân ol-haqq*, Nûr `Alî mentions Shaytân or Eblîs a few times, but the references are drawn from standard Shi`i theological texts. Once he also mentions the name of Malak Tâwûs, but only to state that this is the title (*laqab*) by which the Yezidis know him (Elâhî 1354/1975: 416-7). In a book written for his French followers, Bahrâm emphasizes that Satan is not a dark force opposing God:

> The one whom people call the Devil has in reality no power to work evil. His name "Satan" means: he who rebelled and whom God the one Creator has thrown out. (…) Creatures thrown out by God are immediately imprisoned in a defined and limited location, they lose all power and have no freedom. (…) Many people [nonetheless] attribute all sorts of bad things to an invisible and omnipresent being named Devil or Satan. Without being aware of it, they believe in a god of evil opposed to the one God, which is blasphemy, a relapse into polytheism (…) The idea of the Devil is nothing but an echo of the struggle [in ourselves] between the carnal soul and the angelic soul. There is no evil outside us; evil only exists because of us. (Elâhî 1976: 58-62, my translation)

Satan is, in other words, not Ahriman in disguise but a powerless and irrelevant spirit, whom only ignorant people may fear of worship. Elâhî does not reject dualism entirely, for he recognizes that there is a struggle between light and darkness but this struggle takes place entirely inside ourselves, between what the Sufis call the *nafs `ammâra* and the *nafs lawwâma* and *nafs mutma`inna*.

Elâhî's view of Satan differs from that of many prominent Sufis, who perceived in Iblis' refusal to prostrate himself before Adam not simple disobedience but a radical monotheism and loyalty to God alone.[7] I encountered echoes of the Sufi view, combined with the belief that Satan, contrary to Bahrâm Elâhî's claims, is in fact a very powerful entity, among the Ahl-e Haqq of the Gûrân district.

SATAN IN KERMANSHAH

I may owe my first contact with the Gûrân Ahl-e Haqq to the unkempt moustache I had at that time. It was January 1976, coinciding that year with Moharram, and I was spending some time in Kermanshah in order to witness how the Kurdish Shi`is of that city celebrated the martyrdom of Hoseyn. In my hotel, I overheard the staff commenting on my moustache and speculating whether I was a *shaytânî* – reminding me that I might be able to find out more about the alleged Satan-worship among the Gûrân. After a visit to the Khâksâr *khânaqâh* of Kermanshah, where I chatted with the few dervishes who were present and enquired about the connections between the Khâksâr Sufi order and the Ahl-e Haqq, I was addressed by two men with long moustaches, who had been listening to the conversation and asked me in a whisper if I belonged to their religion ("*tu tâyfe'î?*"; *tâ'ife* being one of the names for the Ahl-e Haqq community). I denied but added that I had a strong interest in the *tâ'ife* and should like to meet members whom I could interview. They took me to a *jam`khâne*, and it was there that I met Ahmad Bâbâ'î, who volunteered to be my guide.

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[7] The theme of Satan as the true lover of God is found, from Hallaj onwards, with many Sufis. See: Awn 1983 and Nurbakhsh 1986.

Fig. 4. The author and Ahmad Bâbâî taking a rest on their hike to Bâbâ Yâdegâr

I had been aware that the Ahl-e Haqq, like the Yezidis, the Bektashis and other minority religious communities in the region, distinguished themselves from their neighbours by not trimming the moustache, but not of the crucial importance they attach to this facial hair. In the *Borhan ol-haqq*, Nûr `Alî Elâhî devotes an entire chapter to the moustache, referring to a wide range of Muslim authorities in support of either shaving it or allowing it to grow long. He cites a hadith in which the Prophet enjoins the trimming of the moustache "because Satan hides there and makes it his residence." Another tradition has it that "to shave the moustache is to protect oneself from Satan, and it is part of the *sunna*." (Elâhî 1354/1975: 164-165). These hadith are followed by many other authoritative sources that make facial hair style a matter of personal choice, but it is remarkable that he explicitly cites the Muslim association of the moustache with Satan.[8]

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[8] Elâhî had himself refrained from shaving and hair-cutting during the twelve years he spent in ascetic retreat and meditation, and later photographs show him with a long moustache. In 1991, his son Bahram proclaimed that a message had come from the master (who after his death communicated through his blind sister, Sheykh Janî) ordering the community to shave their moustaches, which caused a radical break with the traditionalist Ahl-e Haqq communities (Mir-Hosseini 1994b: 223).

Of all the Gûrân whom I met, Ahmad was perhaps the most consistent and explicit in his apology of Satan. His story of Satan's fall echoed the Sufi version but was more radical in its consequences.

Satan, or Malak Tâwûs, was one of God's most beloved angels, created from God's own light before God created the world and its inhabitants. When God had completed the action of creation by blowing His own breath into Adam, whom He had moulded from clay, He ordered all His creatures to prostrate themselves before Adam. Malak Tâwûs was the only one to refuse, protesting that "it is not right that one created from God's own light should kneel before a creature of mere clay; I only prostrate myself before God Himself." So far, this does not differ from the narrative of the Sufis, but Ahmad gave a different twist to the end of the story. By giving this order, God had in fact been testing the angels and other creatures, and Malak Tâwûs was the only one who proved to be a true monotheist. Rather than punishing him, as human slander has it, God rewarded Satan by giving him power over the affairs of the world. Adam and his descendants never forgave Satan for not showing him the same respect that he showed God. Adam once tried to oblige Satan to bow his head by inviting him to a house with a very low door, but the angel noticed this of course and raised the top beam of the opening so that he could enter without bending. Ever since, many humans have made it a habit to curse him, as the Muslims do. But people of knowledge and understanding are aware that he is the lord of this world. In matters of this world, it is wise to invoke Satan's support; he will help, whereas God is too distant and does not directly intervene.

Malak Tâwûs, Ahmad told me, was a manifestation of the spirit that in the period (*dowre*) of Soltân Sahâk was embodied in Dâwûd. In the shorthand used by Ahmad and most of the Gûrân with whom I spoke, Malak Tâwûs *was* Dâwûd. The same spirit had manifested itself numerous times: as `Ali's loyal servant Qanbar, as the poet Nesîmî and as Haji Bektash, as Majnûn's beloved Leylâ.[9] But for the Gûrân, Dâwûd was the primary manifestation and Dâwûd's simple shrine or altar at Zarda, on the way from Sar-e Pol-e Zohab to Bâbâ Yâdegâr, was the main place

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[9] For a long list of (minor) incarnations of Dâwûd, culled from old Gurani texts, see Mokri 1974: 63-4.

where this spirit was venerated.[10] Some other Gûrân informants, who were less eager to speak of Satan-worship than my guide Ahmad, told me that they respected Satan but only worshipped him in his incarnation (*dûn*) as Dâwûd.

The major centres of the Gûrân Ahl-e Haqq are located to the North of the road from Kermanshah to the Iraqi border at Qasr-e Shirin. The towns of Kerend and Sar-e Pol-e Zohab, on this road, have large Ahl-e Haqq populations. Gahwara, to the Northeast of Kerend, was the central town of the Gûrân emirate and it is still a major cultural centre for the Ahl-e Haqq, where some of the best *kalâmkhwân* reside. The Haydarî family, the leading sayyeds of the Gûrân, have their residence in the village of Tutshami, in the district of Gahwara. Kerend has two major Ahl-e Haqq shrines, of Benyamîn and Pîr Mûsî. The shrines of Dâwûd and Bâbâ Yâde-gâr, the latter of which is considered the most important Ahl-e Haqq sanctuary, are located further West and have to be approached from Sar-e Pol-e Zohab.
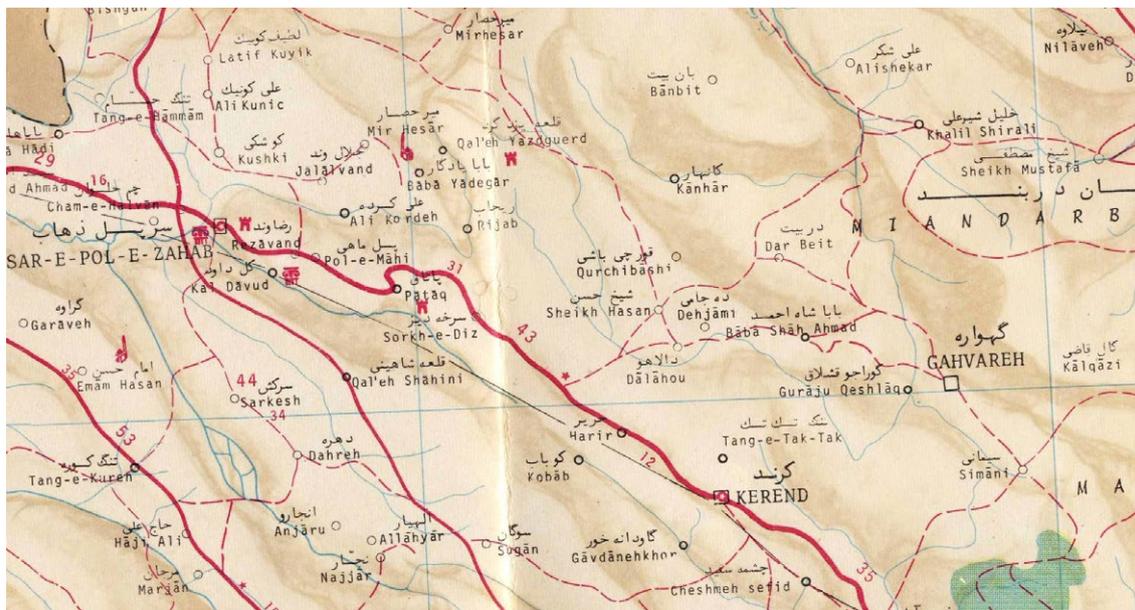
Before reaching the town of Sar-e Pol-e Zohab, the road from Kermanshah passes by an impressive rock-cut tomb from Achaemenid times, known locally as

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[10] Partow Hooshmandrad informs me that there are sacred points identified with Dâwûd near other major shrines, such as that of Soltân Sahâk in the village of Sheykhan further North in Haw-ramân. Pilgrims on the way to the main shrine will ask Dâwûd's permission to proceed, symboli-cally kissing (*ziyârat*) the Dâwûd point by kissing their own hands (personal communication, 10 January 2014). In Zarda, people kissed the rock altar called Dâwûd; my guide Ahmad believed it to be the main site where Dâwûd's essence was present.
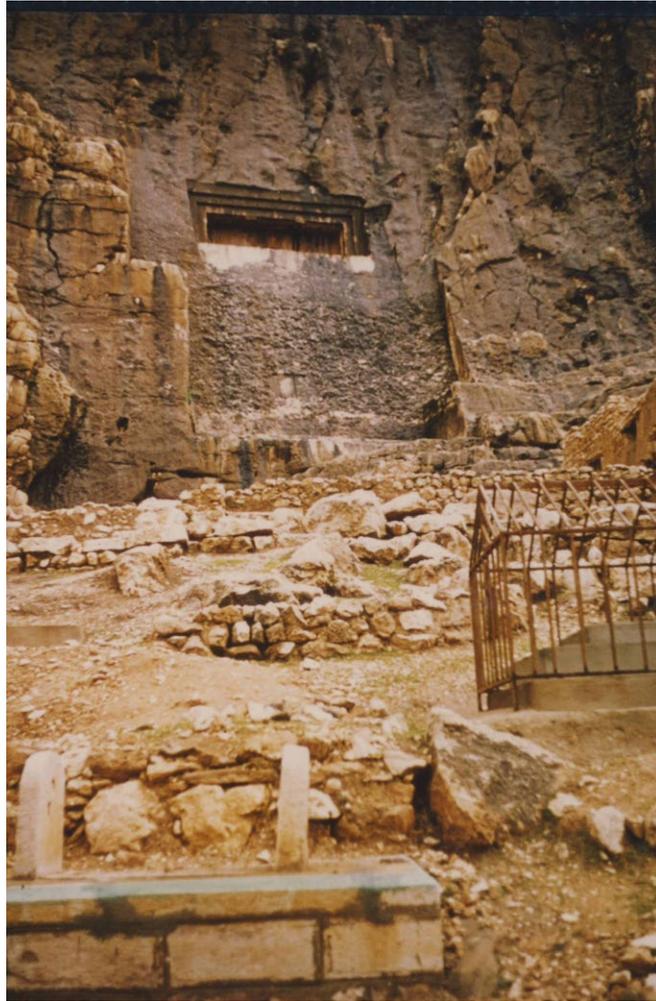
Fig. 5. Dokkân-e Dâwûd

Dokkân-e Dâwûd, "Dâwûd's shop" or rather "Dâwûd's workshop." According to one local tradition, Dâwûd was a blacksmith and this was his workshop.[11] It was clear that the place was held in veneration: I noticed that numerous candles had been lighted here, and there were remnants of *niyaz* offerings. At the foot of the rock in which the tomb was cut there were many relatively recent graves, another indication that this location was considered sacred.[12]

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[11] Appropriately, the blacksmith Kâwa, the famed slayer of the dragon-king Zahhâk in the *Shâhnâma* and Kurdish oral tradition, is said to be an incarnation of Dâwûd (comment by Partow Hooshmandrad).

[12] See also the archaeological descriptions of the tomb, with a few comments on surviving cults around the site, in Gabriel 1971: 17, 35-6, 126 and, based on new investigations of the site, von Gall 1995.

The first European to mention Dokkân-e Dâwûd was Major Rawlinson of the Bombay army, who served in this region for three years in the 1830s, commanding a regiment of Gûrân soldiers. Rawlinson notes that the Gûrân and a section of the Kalhur tribe are Ahl-e Haqq (he calls them `Ali-Elahi) and believe in numerous successive incarnations of the Godhead, which include the Haft Tan who lived in this region. All incarnations are in reality one; only the bodily manifestation changes; "but the most perfect development is supposed to have taken place in the persons of Benjamin, David and `Alí".[13] He mentions especially the Ahl-e Haqq veneration of Dâwûd, their conviction that he was a blacksmith and that the rock-tomb was his workshop. He writes:

> David is really believed by the `Alí-Iláhís to dwell here, although invisible, and the smithy is consequently regarded by them as a place of extreme sanctity. I never passed by the tomb without seeing the remains of a bleeding sacrifice, and the Alí-Iláhí, who come here on pilgrimage from all parts of Kurdistán, will prostrate themselves on the ground, and make the most profound reverence immediately that they come in sight of the holy spot. (Rawlinson 1839: 39).

Rawlinson does not mention the identification of Dâwûd with Malak Tâwûs or Satan. The first outsider to refer to this was the American missionary F.M. Stead, who was based in the Kermanshah region for two decades in the early 20th century and who had many contacts with the various Ahl-e Haqq communities. He notes that "one section of the `Ali Ilahis is more attached to David than the others, and invokes his aid on all occasions" (Stead 1932: 184). Moreover,

> One of the branches of the `Ali Ilahi cult, known as the Tausi, or Peacock sect, goes still further afield, and venerates the devil. While these people do not actually worship Satan, they fear and placate him, and nobody in their presence ventures to say anything

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[13] Rawlinson 1839: 36. Rawlinson was at pains to show a Jewish influence in the Ahl-e Haqq belief system, to be explained by the presence of a significant Jewish community of considerable age, which had already been visited by the 12th-century traveler Benjamin of Tudela. Rawlinson identifies Dawud with the Jewish king and prophet David.

disrespectful of his Satanic majesty (…) There are three principal divisions of the `Ali Ilahi sect, viz., the Davudi, the Tausi and the Nosairi" (ibid.: 185-6).

The last sentence is confusing, but suggests that there were Dâwûd-worshippers who identified him with Malak Tâwûs and Satan (the Tâwûsî), and others who did not make this identification. Stead does not mention the name of Malak Tâwûs and explains the name of Tâwûsî by relating the well-known tradition that the Peacock was the guardian of Paradise, who let Satan in so that he could seduce Adam and Eve (cf. Awn 1983: 42-3).

I never heard the names Tâwûsî or Dâwûdî during my visits to the Gûrân. The name of Malak Tâwûs was known, however, and Satan was acknowledged as a basically benign spirit, or even the highest of God's angels, by all my Gûrân interlocutors, as well as many of the Qalkhani, Sanjabi and Kalhur tribesmen with whom I spoke.[14] No one, however, referred to either themselves or others as Tâwûsî or even Dâwûdî. The association with Dâwûd or Malak Tâwûs appeared not to be as important to their social identities as other affiliations. In spite of his proud proclamation of being a Shaytânparast, my friend Ahmad did not show the devotional attitude at Dokkân-e Dâwûd and at Dâwûd's shrine that he later showed at Bâbâ Yâdegâr and the various sacred springs, trees and graves around it.

Rather than division over the nature of Satan, I found among the Gûrân a serious division in their view of another spiritual being, who according to some was one of the *haft tan*, the seven luminous divine emanations and according to others the Prince of Darkness. This was Shâh Ebrâhîm, who is in many respects the closest counterpart to Bâbâ Yâdegâr – either as his brother, resembling him as the left eye resembles the right eye, or as his opponent, persecutor and murderer. Related to this, there are conflicting beliefs concerning the second heptad of spiritual beings,

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[14] Some of my Ahl-e Haqq informants of the Sanjabi and Kalhur tribes, however, regarded Satan as the Evil One, who always attempts to lead mankind astray. Five educated persons from the Sanjabi tribe who were visiting Baba Yadegar, schoolteachers with a modern outlook, laid a different emphasis again. Shaytân, they explained, is not only very powerful but also appears to intervene in the world more directly than God ever does. Therefore it is only logical that one directs prayers for help and support in worldly affairs to him. Whenever people have to carry out an important, difficult or dangerous task, they make a pilgrimage to Dâwûd's grave near Zarde and invoke his support.

the *haftawâne*. Some consider them as complimentary to the *haft tan*, though more this-worldly in character, but for others they are not just a dark and material counterpart to the luminous and purely spiritual *haft tan* but their cosmic opponents. The *haftawâne* are sons (in some sense) of Soltân Sahâk, born through ordinary human procreation unlike the *haft tan*.

Shâh Ebrâhîm, the son of one of the *haftawâne* and therefore a grandson of Soltân Sahâk, is the ancestor of the prominent Shâh Ebrâhîmî *khânadân* of sayyeds. This *khânadân* used to be very influential among the Gûrân but has lost its dominant position. It remains probably the most influential of the *khânadân* in the Sahne district as well as among the Kaka'i, the Ahl-e Haqq of Iraqi Kurdistan (Mir-Hosseini 1994a; Edmonds 1969).

At the shrine of Bâbâ Yâdegâr, there was a small community of resident sayyids and dervishes, whom Ahmad appeared to know well. The dervishes were men who had dedicated their lives to serving the saint; the sayyeds were needed to perform ritual functions; every *niyaz* offering has to be consecrated by a sayyed. None of these men were particularly knowledgeable about doctrine, but they had their favourite myths that they would tell visitors. All of them appeared to share Ahmad's beliefs about Satan's benign nature. Most also shared his view of the *haftawâne* and especially Shâh Ebrâhîm as dark forces, although this was a subject on which they would only speak in whispers, fearing to be overheard by pilgrims who happened to be affiliated with the Shâh Ebrâhîmî *khânadân*. It appeared that it was the Shâh Ebrâhîmî who claim that their ancestor belonged to the *haft tan*, and the followers of the other main *khânadân* in the region, Khâmûshî and Yâdegârî, who held the more strongly dualist view.

MALAK TÂWÛS IN *KALÂM*

Ahmad sang many *kalâm*, in the *jam`khâne* of Kermanshah and Sar-e Pol-e Zohab, for the dervishes and sayyeds at Bâbâ Yâdegâr or for me privately, as a way of explaining the Ahl-e Haqq worldview. I once asked him – we were sitting with a group of local people in the *jam`khâne* of Sar-e Pol-e Zohab – if he know of any *kalâm* mentioning Malak Tâwûs or Satan. Ahmad did not, nor did any of the

kalâmkhwân I later met. But one of the men in the *jam`khâne* told me to look up Mâshâ'allâh Sûrî's book, for he had seen the name there. It was the first time I became aware that there were educated Ahl-e Haqq for whom the oral tradition embodied in the *kalâmkhwân* of their own district was complemented by written and published sources. I later also met Gûrân who claimed to have read Hâjj Ne`matollâh's and Nûr `Alî Elâhî's books (and fiercely disagreed with them). Sûrî's book, which I later found in Tehran, is a collection of *kalâm*, edited without explanatory comments. The mention of Malak Tâwûs occurs in a *kalâm* that enumerates various manifestations of the Deity and angels:

Nâwaš Nâwûs bî * Zâta Šâh Xôšîn nâwaš Nâwûs bî

`Alî Mortazâ ham Kay Kâwûs bî * Xâja `Alâ'adîn Malak Tâwûs bî

He was named Nâwûs, the essence of Shâh Khôshîn was named Nâwûs; [the Imam] `Ali was also Kay Kawus, and Khwaja `Ala' al-Din was Malak Tâwûs (Sûrî 1344/1965: 175).

Nâwûs or Nâ'uth was minor manifestation of the Deity (chronologically between Shâh Khôshîn and Soltân Sahâk); so was the legendary Persian king Kay Kâwus. `Ali and Shâh Khôshîn are two of the major manifestations. The last part no longer concerns the Deity: Malak Tâwûs is said to have been incarnated in a Khwâja `Alâ' al-Dîn. I have not come across the latter name in any other Ahl-e Haqq text.[15] This seems to confirm the marginality of Malak Tâwûs in the corpus of sacred poetry.[16]

Mokri mentions that a manuscript in his possession, titled *`Âlam-e Haqîqat*, identifies Dâwûd with Malak Tâwûs (Mokri 1974: 90). This appears, however, to be a comment of the copyist preceding the Gurani text proper, which discusses other qualities of Dâwûd (ibid.: 90-2).

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[15] There is a medieval Central Asian Naqshbandi of that name, Khwâja `Alâ' al-dîn `Attâr (d. 802/1400) but I cannot see a reason why he would be mentioned in a Gurani *kalâm*.

[16] Partow Hooshmandrad informs me that the Peacock, Tâwûs, is mentioned repeatedly in the Gurani *daftar*, and that he is associated with Dâwûd, but that to her knowledge he is never referred to as *Malak* Tâwûs, 'Peacock *Angel*.'

There is, finally, another mention of Malak Tâwûs in a brief Ahl-e Haqq prose text in Persian that was published by Ivanow (1948). This *risâla* was part of a bundle of manuscript papers that Ivanow had acquired in 1914 in Shiraz, where there was then still a recognizable community of descendants of Gûrân who had come there in the mid-18th century in the retinue of Karim Khan Zand. Most of the texts were in Gurani or Kurdish, which none of Ivanow's informants could read. The Persian text narrates various Ahl-e Haqq cosmological myths, the last of which, unfortunately incomplete, is reminiscent of the Muslim tale of Satan's fall:

> There was a reign of Fire (*saltanat-e nâr*), when fiery beings like the jinn dominated the world. It lasted five thousand years, until the appearance of Adam, who was made from earth. Adam came forth from earth, the Peacock was resurrected in fire (*nashr-e Âdam bûd az khâk, hashr-e Tâ'us bûd dar nâr*). The Divine Essence (*jawhar ke noqte-ye awwal bâshad*) called out to the jinns, 'I am the soul of all souls, the spirit of all spirits, who created you all on the first day. Come to the reckoning!' Those created from Fire and from Water believed themselves to be equal to the Essence and said, 'we are just like you.' The Essence called Mostafâ-e Dâwûdân [one of the *haft tan*, who is the angel of death] and ordered him to bring all these creatures to the *jam`*. Mostafâ brought forty sorts of painful calamities upon the jinn until they were weakened. They turned to their king, Malak Tâ'us and said, 'O King, it is clear that the Day of Resurrection has arrived.' Malak Tâ'us looked into the box of trust (*sandûq-e amânat*), saw that the Day of Resurrection had arrived and said to Mostafâ, 'take me to the King of Love.' (Ivanow 1948: 177 (trl), 183-4 (Persian text)).

Ivanow believed that the reference to Malak Tâwûs in this text had to be a borrowing from the Yezidis, for his Ahl-e Haqq informants were not aware of this name and insisted that the evil spirit was known instead as Dâ'ûd-e Rash, i.e. "Black Dâwûd" (in Kurdish).[17] That again is a term I never heard or saw while

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[17] Ivanow 1948: 167n. Ivanow mentioned that most of the descendants of the Gûrân living in Shiraz no longer were Ahl-e Haqq, and most of his Ahl-e Haqq informants belonged to the Ateshbegi tradition, a later phase of development (cf. Ivanow 1953). This Persian *risâla* may, however, represent an older Guran tradition.

among the Gûrân,[18] but it would fit the image of Dâwûd as a blacksmith; and the blacksmith's mastery of fire logically connects him with hell and the jinn.

LOOKING FOR SATAN IN THE 'HOUSE OF THE LORD' (*MÂL-A ÂGHÂ*), TUTSHAMI

Ivanow reports that he was often told by Ahl-e Haqq informants "that the heads of the sect, whose headquarters are in the hills near Kerind (…) possess a library of Saranjâm literature, the books of which are stored in rows (*qatâr ba qatâr*)" – a claim that he was quite sceptical about (Ivanow 1948: 151). In my conversations at Bâbâ Yâdegâr, especially when I asked something to which my interlocutors did not have a satisfactory answer, their response was similar to that of Ivanow's respondents. They would point me to the *mâla âghâ*, the House of the Lord where, they said, all sacred knowledge – embodied in *daftar*, manuscript volumes of religious poetry – was kept. The *mâl-a Âghâ* is the residence of the Haydarî family of sayyeds in the village of Tutshami, which some people referred to as the capital of their religious community (*pâyetakht-e tâyefe*). This family has for a century and a half been the spiritual and worldly leaders of the Gûrân Ahl-e Haqq, and the incumbent head of the family was commonly believed to be an incarnation of one of the *haft tan*. In 1976, Sayyed Nasreddîn was the uncontested leader of the community, and my guide Ahmad told me that he was *Yâdegâr-mehmân*, i.e., a minor incarnation of Bâbâ Yâdegâr.[19] (Sayyed Nasreddîn himself, I should add, proved to be a most unassuming man, who tried to dissuade his followers from holding exaggerated beliefs about him.)

The Haydarî family belongs to the Khâmûshî lineage of sayyeds and it owes its name and prominent position to an illustrious ancestor, Haydar, who became better known by the sobriquet of Sayyed Brâka ('Brother') and who was believed

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[18] Partow Hooshmandrad, however, informs me that Dâwûd-e Rash (or Dâwûd-e Siyâh) are in fact mentioned in the *Daftar*:; '…all the *Daftar-khwâns* I worked with also knew this term very well.' (Personal communication, 12 January 2014).

[19] The Ahl-e Haqq distinguish two types of divine incarnation: as a full manifestation, such as in the case of Soltân Sahâk and ʿAlî, who were complete incarnations of the Deity, and as an indwelling (*holûl*) in an otherwise human person, in which case the term *mehmân*, 'guest,' is used.

to be the human vehicle of several of the *haft tan*. The highly charismatic Sayyed Brâka, who flourished in the first half of the 19th century,[20] and his grandson and successor, Sayyed Rostam, who was still alive in 1920, wielded great spiritual but increasingly also worldly authority over the Ahl-e Haqq of the Gûrân district and beyond. The German physician J.E. Polak, who lived in Qazwin in the mid-19th century and was in contact with Ahl-e Haqq there, comments on their super-human veneration for their spiritual leader in Kermanshah province (Polak 1865, vol. I: 349). This leader must have been our Sayyed Brâka. An even more remarkable testimony is that of the American missionary Trowbridge, who worked around the turn of the 20th century at `Ayntab (present Gaziantep) in Southeast Anatolia and knew many local Alevis. one of his observations shows that the authority of the sayyeds of Tutshami in his day even extended to the Alevis of Southeast Anatolia:

> The Geographical Centre of [the Alevi] religion is in the town of Kirind, Kermanshah province, Persia. Four of Ali's male descendants now reside in Kirind. They are by name, Seyyid Berake, Seyyid Rustem, Seyyid Essed Ullah, Seyyid Farraj Ullah. Seyyid is correctly said only of Ali's descendants. *These men send representatives throughout Asia Minor and northern Syria for preaching and for the moral training of their followers*. (Trowbridge 1909: 342-3, emphasis added)

The British consul in Kermanshah, H.L. Rabino, relates how around 1900 Sayyed Rostam incited the chieftains of the Gûrân tribes to rebellion against the *khan*, the paramount (and governmentally recognized) chief of the Gûrân confederacy, and succeeded in gradually stripping the latter of both political authority and economic power (Rabino 1920: 24). This was probably only the culmination of a long process started under Sayyed Brâka, in which the sayyeds of Tutshami gradually replaced the tribal *khan* as the supreme leaders of the Gûrân. The *khan*s never regained their power; but the sayyeds were finally to lose much of theirs under Reza Shah's centralizing regime.

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[20] Mokri (in Elâhi 1966: 111) gives his dates as 1785-1863.

Fig. 6. The Mâl-a Âghâ, the mansion of the Haydarî family in Tutshami.

Sayyed Brâka was often mentioned in the conversations I had with Ahmad Bâbâ'î and others at Bâbâ Yâdegâr. Several of Ahmad's favourite *kalâm* were composed by dervishes from the entourage of Sayyed Brâka. These dervishes, who regularly gathered in the *takya* (lodge) beside the sayyeds' residence, were thirty-six in number, and each was believed to have composed a *daftar* of divinely inspired *kalâm*. The most beloved of them, whose *kalâm* are most frequently performed, was Nowrûz, a convert from Sunni Islam. Each of the dervishes was believed to have been the human vehicle for one of the four angels (*čwâr malak*, a subgroup of the *haft tan*): nine were *Benyâmîn-mehmân*, nine *Dâwûd-mehmân*, nine *Pîr Mûsî-mehmân* and nine *Mostafâ-mehmân*.

Fig. 7. The *takya* of Sayyed Brâka.

Ahmad accompanied me on my first visit to Tutshami and told me many stories of the days of Sayyed Brâka and the dervishes. The *takya* was, it appeared, a major place of pilgrimage too. We met groups of Qalkhânî and Tofangchî tribesmen (which formerly belonged to the Gûrân confederacy) performing their *ziyarat*. They kissed the threshold and door posts, window sills, and the fireplace (*ôjâgh*), which is considered most sacred and associated with the charisma of the Haydarî family – the term *ôjâgh* refers both to the fireplace and to the *khânadân*.[21]

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[21] Among the Alevis of Anatolia: the families of hereditary religious specialists (*dede*) and their central residences are similarly known as *ocak*, 'fireplace,' and the actual fireplace is considered sacred; visitors kiss the ground in front of this *ocak*. In the Bektashi *tekke*, too, there was a physical *ocak*, as observed by Birge: 'Perhaps in the middle of one of the long sides of the room is an alcove like a fireplace and called the *ocak*, fireplace, or sometimes *Fatma Ocağı*, the fire-place of Fatma, or simply *kûre*, furnace or fireplace.' (Birge 1937: 178; cf. Noyan 2010: 62, where a more elaborate description is given). The candles that have to be lighted in the Alevi and Bektashi ritual are lit from the fire in the *ocak* or, if there is no actual fireplace, from a central light that takes its place.

Fig. 8. The *ôjâgh* in the *takya*.

Several old *kalâmkhwân* lived in the sayyeds' residence, and allowed me to record *kalâm* they sang and explained to me. I took a strong liking to Kâ Karîm, who, during my second visit later that year, and with Sayyed Nasreddîn's permission, became my chief teacher about the *kalâm* and their interpretation.

KÂ KARÎM ON SATAN

Kâ Karîm was aware of the name of Malak Tâwûs but had never encountered it in any of the *daftar* of *kalâm*.[22] He could, however, recite from memory several *kalâm* mentioning Satan. He told me that my first guide Ahmad and his friends had painted a one-sided portrait of Satan in stressing his benign aspect and denying his fiery nature. Unlike the other angels, Satan was not created out of God's light only (as my friend Ahmad believed) but out of *nâr o nûr*, fire and light.[23] And whereas

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[22] The one *kalâm* in Sûrî's book, cited above, in which Malak Tâwûs is mentioned is not part of the Gûrân canon and is attributed to a poet affiliated with the Shâh Hayâsî *khânadân*, which is not represented here.

[23] Cf. the brief Gurani text on Dawud in Mokri 1974: 90-2, where it is said that Dawud "is the one who flies without wings in light and fire" (*paranda-y bî-par nûr [o] nâr Dâwûd*).

Ahmad had told me that Satan had always remained God's favourite angel, Kâ Karîm claimed that Satan had long been an opponent of God, and even His direct rival.[24] He had fallen from grace not for refusing to pay homage to Adam but for refusing to kneel before God Himself. The rivalry had lasted until their incarnations in the persons of Soltân Sahâk and Dâwûd, when the latter became the former's most intimate associate again. Even now, Kâ Karîm added, Satan is extremely powerful, the only angel with a certain degree of independence vis-à-vis the Deity. In spite of this, Kâ Karîm vehemently denied all connections between Satan and the Ahriman of Mazdaism.

Explicit praise of Satan is rare in the older *kalâm*, but occasionally we find there the Sufi empathy with Satan's plight. One *kalâm* has Satan complaining,

bâra la`natî har az im kîšân,

the burden of curses, I have carried it all alone.

This complaint is followed, however, by a threat:

girdî mûkerân mowzî aw halâtî,

I throw all who deny [my majesty] out into the endless desert.[25]

It is only in the *daftar* written by the thirty-six dervishes in Sayyed Brâka's entourage, collectively known as *Zabûr-e haqîqat*, "Psalms of Truth," that we find explicit praise of Satan. Nowrûz, probably the greatest of these poets, reputedly writes in one of his *kalâm*s that he had learnt all that he knew "in the school of Shaytân"[26]. Kâ Karîm read with me, and tried to explain, a number of poems referring to Shaytan — most of which were by his own grandfather, dervish Karîm Khalîl. Like many Gurani poems, they were so cryptic that even when all linguistic

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[24] This is reminiscent of a theme also found in the 11th-century heterodox text *Umm al-Kitab*: the angel `Azâzîl (i.e., Shaytân) is not only disobedient but actually pretends to be the equal of the Deity (Ivanow 1932: 451),

[25] Kâ Karîm had memorized these lines, which he once read in an old *daftar* of *kalâm*, he did not remember which.

[26] Kâ Karîm remembered this as one of Nowrûz' sayings, but could not find it again in the *daftar* of Nowrûz that he owned.

problems could be solved (which was not always the case), I often remained in the dark as to what was really meant. But it is obvious that the more positive appreciation of Satan here did not yet turn him into an entirely benevolent angel, such as he has become in the views of some of my earlier informants.

Dervish Karîm Khalîl was himself *Dâwûd-mehmân* and therefore in a way host to Shaytân. (Kâ Karîm was quite pleased when I teased him jokingly that he was therefore a grandson of Satan). In several of his *kalâm*s, Karîm Khalîl explicitly associates himself with Satan. Somewhere he says:

> šana Šaytân im, tîra bâšbulûka šana Šaytân im
> I am Satan's archer, I am the arrow of the commander of Satan's archers

and elsewhere:

> gâ gâ na šanûya šamâla Šaytân im.[27]
> at times I am in Satan's northern gale

In both cases the impression intended appears to be one of fierceness. This fierceness is matched by terrifying looks: in another *kalâm*, Shaytan, with whom the poet again explicitly associates himself, is depicted as having six horns, or rather antlers, with six branches each, which does not exactly project a benign image:

> da`wâš han wa das Šaytâna šaš šâx * har šâxê šaš pal damâx wa damâx
> His cause is in the hands of the six-horned Satan; six branches on each horn, [and the horns] all on top of his head.

A few lines further the poet concludes with:

> Karîm Šaytânim hâ wa šâxawa * har šâxê šaš pal wa damâxawa.
> My, Karim's Satan exists by his horns; horns of six branches each, on top of his head.

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[27] In the older Gurani texts edited by Mokri, Dâwûd is also associated with the Northern wind, *shamâl* (see Mokri 1974: 55 and the passages referred to there). Mokri notes that in the folklore of Kermanshah, violent winds are associated with the Devil (ibid.:54).

The first of these lines is from a *kalâm* in which various other avatars of Dâwûd and some of their attributes are mentioned. Such enumerations of successive incarnations are quite common in *kalâm*; an authoritative example occurs in the *Dawra-y Dîwâna Gawra*, one of the older texts in the Gurani Ahl-e Haqq corpus (Mokri 1977). Here Dâwûd addresses Soltân Sahâk:

> Dâwûd maramu: Soltân-i azîm,
> tu ka`ba'-i mi`râj, min Mûsâ-y kalîm
> tu Mortazâ-y dîn, min Qammar pêšîn
> tu Xôšîn-i nuhsad, min Čalabî-y zîn
> tu Xodâ-y barra, min Nasîm-i dîn

> Dâwûd declares: O great Soltan,
> you were the Ka`ba of the Mi`raj, I was Moses, who spoke with God;
> you were the Mortazâ of religion [=`Ali], I was [`Ali's servant] Qanbar of yore;
> you were Khôshîn of the nine-hundreds, I was Chalabî in the saddle;
> you were the god of the lamb [=Shâh Fazl], I was the Nasîm of religion.[28]

The names mentioned as incarnations in this *kalâm* are all part of (esoteric) Muslim tradition. Karîm Khalîl, in what was perhaps a deliberate provocation, goes beyond this and proclaims that Laylâ (of the famous romance of Laylâ and Majnûn), Qanbar (`Ali's groom), Shaytân and Dâwûd are all one. It is as if he wished to say, "yes, Satan is terrifying and can be a scourge to man; but that is only one aspect of Dâwûd, who is also utterly lovable (Laylâ) and the most reliable helper (Qanbar)." The empathy with Satan in Karîm Khalîl's poetry seems to reflect an effort to distance himself from Islam, and especially from those Muslims

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[28] After Mokri 1977: 143, 370. Note that the Deity is not only recognized in human incarnations but also in the spiritual Ka`ba encountered by Muhammad during his nightly voyage through the heavens. Shah Khoshin is in Ahl-e Haqq lore associated with nine hundred groups of nine hundred (nine hundred musicians, nine hundred practitioners of each craft, etc.); Chalabi was one of his companions. Shah Fazl is named here after a lamb that he owned, which he and his companions would eat and afterwards restore to life; the Guran tradition makes the Horufi poet Nasimi one of his companions (cf. Bruinessen 1995).

who make claims of spiritual advancement. He criticizes and threatens the hajis and shaykhs, who wage war on Satan:

> čand šayxa warîn da`wây xodâʾî * šaytân na da`wây jâr bâzî šânin.
> Some shaykhs even pretend to divinity themselves; well, Satan knows how to deal with such pretenders.

Satan was the most powerful symbol by which he could identify himself as different from his Muslim neighbours.

DÂWÛD THE BOAR

There is yet another symbol by which the Gûrân, or at least the Yâdegârî and Khâmûshî among them, insist on distinguishing themselves from the Muslims: they have always been known to eat pork, and they proudly proclaim that they do so.[29] There used to be wild boar in abundance in the mountains here, but by the time of my visit they appeared to have virtually died out, and people could only talk about them as if they were still eating them. In Tutshami, however, Sayyed Nasreddin's family still kept four boars as pets, which were treated with loving care, quite unlike other animals. Most visitors showed great interest in them, more than just the curiosity aroused by a rare species. The boar appears once to have had a special meaning to (at least some of) the Gûrân. One of my informants told me that the fierce nomadic Qalkhânî consider the boar as the preferred animal for the sacrificial offering (*nazr*) and kiss the meat of the slaughtered animal before consuming it. They reputedly dub the boar *barra-y Dâwûd*, "the [sacrificial] lamb of Dâwûd," stressing the association of Dâwûd with the boar.

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[29] Minorsky heard from a Gûrân informant that the Yâdegârî ate pork, while the Ebrâhîmî did not (Minorsky 1920: 49). He also quotes an earlier Turkish source to the effect that some of the Ahl-e Haqq of Kermanshah province do not eat pork but it remains unclear to which Ahl-e Haqq community this refers (ibid., 58).
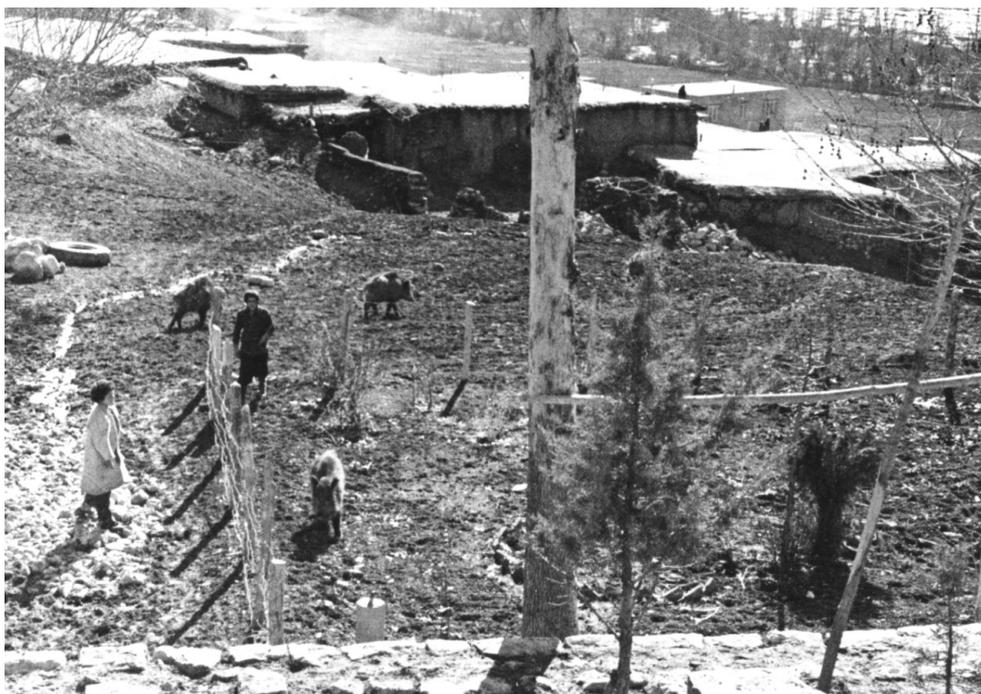
Fig. 9. Three wild boar kept as pets in front of Sayyed Nasreddîn's residence in Tutshami

None of the people whom I interviewed knew anything about the origins of this particular attitude to the boar, but it is certainly not a recent deviation. There are references to it in two Gurani Ahl-e Haqq texts, published by Mokri, that may date back to the 16th century. In the *Dawra-y Dîwâna Gawra*, Dâwûd is twice referred to as a boar (*dungiz*), and in the *Dawra-y Dâmyârî* it is Soltân Sahâk's companion Benyâmîn who, speaking of one of his earlier incarnations, proclaims he has eaten a morsel of pork (*na dawra Kâkâ nöčîm dungizin* – "when I was Kâka Ridâ I took a mouthful of *dungiz*").[30] In the learned editor's interpretation, this referred to a ritual meal and the text implies that Benyâmîn may have symbolically partaken of the essence of Dâwûd in this ritual.[31]

It is perhaps worth noting that the word used here for boar is Turkic *dungiz* (*toñuz*; modern Turkish *domuz*) and not the more common Gurani word *warâz* or *gurâz*, which is the term used in another old Ahl-e Haqq text describing a boar hunt

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[30] Mokri 1977: 125, 136-7 (Gurani text: 383, 375); Mokri 1967: 67 (Gurani text: 197). Mokri believes both texts to be 18th-century redactions of works that may originally have been compiled in the 16th century (1977: 16).

[31] There is no unanimity on the association of the boar (*dungiz*) with Dâwûd, however. One of Partow Hooshmandrad's learned informants believed the boar to have the essence of Benyâmîn rather than Dâwûd.

(Mokri 1966: 5, 108). As J.P. Roux (1969) has shown, the oldest Ahl-e Haqq texts show a significant stratum of pre-Islamic Turkish religious symbols and beliefs, which suggests there may have been interaction with the Turkish or Turkicized syncretistic communities that were the precursors of Alevism.[32] There are some indications that the boar had a special place in this Turkish syncretism.[33]

At present, it seems to be the Yâdegârî and the Khâmûshî among the Gûrân who emphasize their fondness of pork, whereas this is played down or simply denied by the Shâh Ebrâhîmî. Sociologically, therefore, it is closely correlated with the tendency towards dualism and with veneration of Satan. A logical connection with these two features cannot be detected, apart from the fact that both the boar and Satan are associated with Dâwûd and both are abhorrent to Muslims.

CONCLUSION

The veneration of Satan among the Gûrân Ahl-e Haqq appears to be grafted on an older cult of Dâwûd. There is no single view on the nature of Satan; different individuals and sub-communities hold mutually incompatible (and possibly self-contradictory) views on his love for or opposition to the Deity, but most concur on his lordship over this world. This positive appreciation of Satan cannot, however, simply be attributed to contacts with Yezidis, as several authors have suggested. The Gûrân speak quite freely of Satan by this name, and what their oral tradition and sacred texts say of him is rather different from the Yezidis' Malak Tâwûs (or Tâwûsê Melek, as the published sacred texts name him).

Some of the Gûrân also know Satan by the name of Malak Tâwûs, but this name does not occur in their canon of sacred texts – which do mention, however, the Peacock (Tâwûs) and associate him with Dâwûd). Malak Tâwûs is mentioned

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[32] It has to be noted, however, that both Roux and myself depend strongly on the interpretations of the Gurani texts by Mohammad Mokri, which are far from self-evident.

[33] One example, which I owe to Professor Irène Mélikoff (personal communication): after the Turkish conquest in the 13th century, the city of Laodicea in Phrygia, which was long held by an emir of Germiyan, was renamed Toñuzlu, suggesting that the Germiyan too (who were known to hold to heterodox religious views) held the boar in special regard. In later times the reading of the name was changed into the current, more innocent, Denizli.

(very) occasionally in later texts, originating in other branches of the Ahl-e Haqq. Other non-Yezidi heterodox communities also know Satan by the same name. I have heard the same name, for instance, from an old Kurdish Alevi informant in Erzincan, Turkey, who told me a version of the story of Satan's disobedience similar to the one Ahmad Bâbâ'î told me.[34] The peacock, Tawus, is associated with Satan in myths found among various syncretistic communities in the Middle East (Müller 1967: 368-73; Fauth 1987). The name, therefore, is not unique to the Yezidis although a well-read person would tend to associate it directly with them.

The Gûrân's denial of Satan's evil nature means that to (many of) them he is not involved in a struggle for power and influence with the Deity. Religious dualism appears to be denied here, or at least resolved in a higher-order monotheism. However, many Gûrân do believe in the very real existence of an occult struggle (*jang-e bâtenî*) between forces of light and darkness, of which the *haft tan* and *haftawâne*, as well as Bâbâ Yâdegâr and Shâh Ebrâhîm are the main protagonists. Interestingly, there is in Dersim a similar belief in an occult struggle in which the spirits of local saints are involved. Here it is Avdel Mursa (T.: Abdal Musa, a well-known Turkish Alevi saint) and Duzgı (T.: Düzgün Baba, the major saint of Dersim) who are involved in a permanent struggle. The former, from the occult world (*Xeyv*), leads evil jinn in a struggle against mankind, and the latter, from the higher spiritual station of Botin, counters the evil forces and protects mankind (Gezik & Çakmak 2010: 23-4, 70-3).

One important difference between the Yezidis and the Gûrân Ahl-i Haqq is that the latter do not frown on literacy. I met many educated people among them, who were deeply interested in other religious communities with whom the Ahl-e Haqq had beliefs or practices in common. They knew of the Yezidis, as they knew of Bektashis and Alevis, of Druze and Nusayris, of the Zekeri of Baluchistan and a whole range of Indian sects whom they believed to belong to essentially the same

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[34] A slightly different version is given in a recent dictionary of religious terms of the Alevi religion of Dersim (Gezik & Çakmak 2010: 118-19). Melekê Tavus is the name of Satan in the other world. He had adopted the form of a peacock when he persuaded Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. He was banned from his high position when he refused to prostrate himself for Adam, but he remains in control of this world, unlike the Deity, who has withdrawn from the world. Mankind has freedom of will but is incessantly tempted by Satan; guidance for mankind is provided by saints and prophets.

religion. Their knowledge, acquired from reading or perhaps travel, would not enter the written tradition, for the canon is said to be closed, but it served to interpret and comment on that tradition and some of this knowledge appears to have become part of the oral tradition.

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ARTUR RODZIEWICZ

Yezidi Eros
Love as the Cosmogonic Factor and Distinctive Feature
of the Yezidi Theology in the Light of Some Ancient Cosmogonies

I have loved Thee with two loves,
a selfish love and a love that is worthy of Thee.
As for the love which is selfish,
I occupy myself therein with remembrance of Thee
to the exclusion of all others.
As for that which is worthy of Thee,
therein Thou raisest the veil that I may see Thee.
Yet is there no praise to me in this or that.
But the praise is to Thee, whether in that or this.[1]

Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya

I would like to develop a thread that I mentioned at the conference in Armenia, dedicated to the peoples of the Caucasian-Caspian region,[2] where I tried to point out the convergence between the basic elements of the Yezidi theology and the Greek one (Rodziewicz, 2014). I tried to indicate the coincidence in the following areas:

1. The relation between the supreme God and the Demiurge.
2. The theory of seven heavenly spheres/planets governed by seven deities.
3. Descriptions of the original fall in Greek cosmogonies and the Yezidi theology.
4. The concept of matter and the material world, and the image of a peacock
5. Descriptions of the cosmogonical Pearl and the primal egg.

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[1] Tr. M. Smith (Smith, 1984: 102-103).

[2] "Autochthonous Peoples of the Caucasian-Caspian Region," 5-7 X 2012, Yerevan, Armenia.

Here I would like to develop in more detail the last point that I only mentioned in passing and to examine it in terms of cosmogony. This very important thread – that is the vision of Love as a kind of demiurgic factor has distinct parallels among the theological writings of the ancient Greeks and their later commentators. Moreover, as I will try to show that some aspects of this thread also have their far parallels in the literature of India, as well as the cosmogony of the Phoenicians.

At the same time, which is particularly worth emphasizing, the example topic of the cosmogonic Pearl/egg that is present in many cosmogonies in the Middle East, especially that of Ahl-e Haqq or Zoroastrian, the perception of Love as an active demiurgic factor acting with the creation of the world, is the dominating element of cosmogony praised by the Yezidis.

1. HISTORICAL, COMPARATIVE AND PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH

Before I proceed to the analysis of sources, I would like to quote a passage of young Yezidi's expression about his religion:

> In my opinion every religion has its own philosophy. Every religion is based on a way of thinking, it has a philosophy. Therefore religion is not only a matter of feeling. The Yezidi religion has its own philosophy, like the philosophies of other religions, it has a way of thinking, but as I said earlier I haven't yet understood correctly and in depth what the philosophy of the Yezidi religion is, what it is based on.[3]

This statement, beyond its essential content, also shows the level of awareness of the Yezidis living in diaspora in Europe. Being cut off from their indigenous homeland, they have to deal with quite a superficial knowledge of their own religion, and moreover – surrounded by other believers and ideas typical to Western academic thought and science, they look at their own religion from a new perspective. Searching after an inherent theoretical system hidden behind religious

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[3] Statement of the 27-year-old Yezidi from Syria (Kreyenbroek, 2009: 207).

ritual is an approach that is not obvious to the average Yezidi living in Iraq, Syria, Armenia, and Georgia.

However, the cited statements we come to the idea that is hard to disagree with – the core of the religious system are not emotions, but a specific thought, a concept that that finds its expression in the myths and rituals celebrated by its followers. This thought is related to otherthoughts present in religion and taken together they constitute the system.

So, I propose to look at Yezidism as the implementation of a theoretical system (in the cited statement called "philosophy"), the religious one. The religious system has its **distinctive features** that distinguish it from others (in a greater or lesser extent), as well as **parallel features**, that it shares with them. Both the distinctive and parallel features may be the result of (i) the revelation[4], (ii) human authorship, or (iii) borrowings[5]. When two systems have an extensive set of parallel features, one can speak of a **significant similarity** which is the greater, the more features, these systems share. The presence of a significant similarity between the two systems allows a better understanding of them individually – esp. when some area of system X is unclear, and system Y is better defined.

In my opinion this is the case with Yezidism (that is the religious system of the Yezidis), and what I describe as the Greek religious system, which we can find in

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[4] Ignoring this element is symptomatic of the approach of modern science. If we assume that in the whole history of mankind the revelation (ie. the direct transmission from the divine to the human reality) took place at least once, we should allow for the possibility of its repetition. Of course, the emergence of a revelation presupposes the existence of "divine reality." But ignoring this sphere of reality in contemporary science suggests that its dominant approach can be considered as camouflaged dogmatic atheistic position that uses science as an instrument of indoctrination, excluding the "open approach" in research.

[5] Another view for example J. Puhvel, who, referring to parallel features present within the different mythologies derived them from: the universal human nature or the diffusion of cultures or the existence of a common source (Puhvel, 1989: 3-4): "Comparative mythology of separately localized and attested traditions can be practiced on different levels of abstraction and generalization. "Universal mythology" is essentially reduced to explaining accordances (and, if relevant, differences or contrasts) by appealing to human universals or at least common denominators based on similarities of psychological patterning, environment, or levels of culture. (…) "Diffusionary mythology" studies how traditions travel, charting the spread and transmission of myth. (…) A third approach involves monogenesis, that is, tracing the mythical matter of disparate societies back to a common ancestry, one that includes language, society, and culture alike."

a corpus of the most important works of the Greek religion (broadly understood as writings, rituals and the iconography as well as their philosophical interpretations, later developed in early Christianity and the Gnostic systems of Late Antiquity). I am fully aware that the idea of a uniform Greek religious system is highly debatable.[6]

Taking this into account I am going to look at the parallel threads notfrom the perspective of a historian or orientalist, but a philosopher, who more than chronology and data transmission, is interested in the very fact of the occurrence of similarities or parallel features and whether they help to explain some particular issues.

It is also important to realize that when one is talking about the "religious system," it means what Weber's sociological tradition calls the "ideal type," which is a generalized formal picture of a described group, which can differ from particular cases.[7] Therefore, I am interested in the general and formal depiction, ie. the theological system manifested in Yezidi hymns and myths, and especially a fragment of this system and its juxtaposition with a fragment of the "Greek" and other systems described below.

Comparison of the Yezidi cosmogony primarily with the Greek's seems to me to be valuable for two reasons, firstly – these analogies are very evident, and secondly – the still impenetrable religious system of the Yezidis which we know from the hymns (*qewl*) and stories that do not provide explanations when the issue is discussed, the surprisingly similar parallel descriptions in the Greek works that include both images and **explanations**. In brief: Western tradition developed theology and philosophical reflection in the heart of their own religion, which allows us to recognisea specific system in this religion that one can regard with an almost logical precision, while religion of the Yezidis still remains in the area of oral transmission and has not yet been systemized.[8]

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[6] Cf. my book: *Idea i forma. ΙΔΕΑ ΚΑΙ ΕΙΔΟΣ. O fundamentach filozofii Platona i presokratyków* (Rodziewicz, 2012), in which I reconstruct a unified system underlying theological thought of the Greeks.

[7] There is a significant statement of M. Reza Fariborz Hamzeh'ee referring to the orientalist symposium in Berlin: "it was easy to observe the tendency of Oriental historians specify it as opposed to a tendency of sociologists to generalize" (Reza Fariborz Hamzeh'ee, 1997: 102).

[8] There is still a lack of the set of canonical Yezidi writings. I omit here reasons for this state, but no doubt it was caused, among others, by numerous persecutions, which has encouraged her-

2. LOVE

The theme of Love, more than any other topic, is present in Middle Eastern literature. This also applies to Kurdish literature.[9] In terms of the religious and philosophical reflection, it is usually found in a wide range of the sufi Arabic and Persian works – from poetry to philosophical treatises. However, love in Sufism is generally recognized in different respects.

Sufism treats love as the way of a lover (man) to union with the Beloved (God), so it is described from the perspective of later rather than the beginning of reality, whereas the cosmogonies describe the initial moment, prior to the appearance of man.

These types, or aspects of love, may be respectively called, as the **descending** and **ascending** or be described in a different typology as **sacred** and **profane** love (Giffen, 1971; Bell, 1979). The latter is a concern of almost all of the mystics of Islam (Abrahamov, 2003). A separate chapter was dedicated to the divine and mystical Love – *Fī māhiyyat al-ʿishq* (*On the Essence of Love*) – in the philosophical-scientific encyclopedia *Ikhwan al-Rasâ'il Safa'* influenced by the elements of Greek philosophy, issued in the X-century by the Brethern of Purity (*Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa'*, 1957: 269-286). The theme of love was developed by such im-

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metisation of the religion and a preference for oral transmission, as a safe method for followers and at the same time petrification a privileged position to the caste of sheikhs as the religious arbiters. As the Yezidi, Khanna Omarkhali, writes: "It is possible that Yezidis will soon solve the problem of the canonization of their religious texts which for a number of reasons relating to Yezidi history never occured earlier." (Omarkhali, 2009: 200); cf. the statement of Robert Langer: "A modern Yezidi orthodoxy (…) is beginning to be established by authoritative authors on the Internet and in other areas of discussion (…) now mainly dominated by lay people, who can access scholarly sources for information on their traditions and disseminate this information around the community." (Langer, 2010: 403).

[9] The archetype of love, or rather separated lovers, presents the seventeenth-century story *Mem i Zin* (*Mem û Zîn*) by Ahmad Khani. With regard to the thread of love in kurdish literature, cf. J. Bocheńska, *Рассказ и Любовь. Об источниках этических ценностей в курдской культуре* (2014); and kurdish love stories cataloged by Ch. Allison in *The Yezidi Oral Tradition in Iraqi Kurdistan* (Allison 2001).

portant figures as: al-Qušayri[10], Ibn Arabi[11], Jalal ad-Din (Rumi)[12], and venerated by Yezidis – Rābiʿa Al-ʿAdawiyya[13], who probably introduced love as the main element into the Sufism. Although she described it in a less technical language than philosophically sophisticated mystics, such as Sohrawardi, who defined love (*ešq*) as "Delight due to imagine a presence of an Essence"[14].

We should also be aware that on the concept of love developed in the Middle East, strongly influenced the Muslim reception of Greek scriptures, notably of Plato and the so-called *Theology of Aristotle*, as was *de facto,* a compilation of the writings of Plotinus.[15] A special role was played by a concept that can generally be described as "Platonic," that man by loving beauty present in various bodily things he encounters in the world, in fact that "love" turns to their ultimate source manifested in them – to divine Beauty *per se*, which can be equated with God.

In the same vein, for example, is *A Treatise on Love* of Ibn Sina (Avicenna) written.[16] Describing different kinds of love proper for particular parts of the soul, as the highest kind of love he recognizes that of the Supreme Essence and Pure Good, ie. God.[17]

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[10] Whole chapters of the *Ar-Risala al-Qušayriyya* are devoted to the mystical love (*maḥabba*); cf. polish translation: Al-Qušayri (1997), esp. p. 318n.).

[11] Cf. large section about love (ch. 178) of *The Meccan Illuminations*; published separately in Polish as a *Traktat o miłości*, Warszawa 1995.

[12] The very first verses of the *Masnavi-I Maʼnavi* introduce this thread: "Listen to this reed-flute that is complaining due to separation" (بشنو این نی چون حکایت می‌کند از جداییها شکایت می‌کند; Mowlavi, 2007: 5).

[13] One of the Yezidi hymns is dedicated to Rabia: *Quewlê Rabiʼe il‑ʿEdiwiye* (Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 196-201). Rabia's sentences: Upton, 1988; cf. also: Farid al-Din Attar, *Rabeʼa al-Adawiya*, (Farid al-Din Attar 1983); Smith, 1984 (in regard to love, cf. chapter X: *Love. Gnosis. The vision. Union*, p. 88-110); Sakkakini, 1982.

[14] "عشق ابتهج است بتصورحضور ذاتی"; *Partow Nāmeh* 84; Persian text with English translation: Sohravardi, 1998: 77.

[15] Cf. Plotinus, 1959.

[16] *Risalah fiʼl ʿishq*; Arabic text, apparatus and Russian translation: Серебряков, 1976; English translation: Ibn Sina, 1945: 208-228.

[17] "The highest *subject* of love is identical with the highest *object* of love, namely, Its high and sublime Essence" (tr, E. L. Fackenheim: *A Treatise on Love by Ibn Sina*, (Ibn Sina, 1945: 213), "The real object of the love of both human and angelic souls is the Pure Good (*ibidem*: 225); "Every being has a natural love for its perfection. (…) There is nothing more perfect than the First Cause and nothing prior to It. It follows that It is loved by all things." (*ibidem*).

But what is crucial for the Sufi reflection on love, is the emphasis that its aim is the condition called *tawḥīd* or *ittiḥād*, ie, "union" and "unification" – full union/communion of the lover with Beloved and thus being united to become one with the One,[18] the condition connected moreover with annihilation (*fanā*) of the lover in this absolute connection and thus the lack of distinction between the subject and the object of love.

In the aspect of terminology considerations particularly interesting are Ibn Arabi's statements on the theme. He attempts to collect and classify erotic terminology and words "*maḥabba*," "*ḥubb*," or "*'išq*" and describe them with logical precision. Thus *'Išq* he treats more as a form of passion,[19] as opposed to divine love (*ḥubb*). Exporting it into the semantics of an European reflection one can say that the general equivalent of *ḥubb* would be the Greek and Latin concept of *agape* and *caritas*.

What is characteristic of the concept developed by Ibn ‚Arabi is a comprehension of the divine love (*ḥubb*), as directed by God to Himself. Through the love expressed in the human world "God loves himself through entities that He created."[20]

But from the other side, e.g. in the writings of al-Ghazali we can find defense of the concept of *'išq* as sacred love.[21] So we can only observe the general trend and

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[18] Cf. my article on the mystics of al-Qušayri, Rodziewicz 1999: 33-59.

[19] "The station of love has four names: [1] The basic love [*ḥubb*], the purity of which penetrates the heart (…), implies unselfishness and the rejection of the own will due to the will of the Beloved [*Maḥbūb*]. [2] Affection or faithful attachment [*Wudd*]. (…) It is one of the divine features and means continuous existence in something. (…) [3] An impulse love, passion or exultation ['*išq*]. (…) However, the words *'išq* and *'ašiq* can't refer to God because *'išq* causes "wrapping around by love," which controls lover to the extent that permeates all his limbs. The word 'išq comes from the same root as *'ašaqa* – bindweed. [4] The sudden desire for love or desire as a result of love. This kind of love determines readiness of the will of a man, who gives up to Beloved, to the total giving himself up at the moment when this state appears in his heart. This word, however, cannot be applied to God." (tr. from the Polish translation of the Arabic text: *Traktat o miłości, op. cit.*, p. 13). Cf. Wronecka, 1998: 99-117; Grigore, 2002: 119-134.

[20] *Traktat o miłości, op. cit.*, p. 25.

[21] "Al-Ghazali felt it necessary to reassert emphatically the propriety of *'ishq* as a term denoting man's love to God. *'Ishq*, he contends, means simply love which is excessive (*mahabba mufrita*) and firmly implanted (*mu'akkada*). Thus when love for God becomes firmly implanted it is rightly called *'ishq*. Indeed, a man will come to love one having God's attributes to such a degree that even this word will not suffice to express the excess of his attachment. There are nev-

state that the love terminology had no final interpretation among sufis, which has been highlighted by numerous discussions dedicated to this theme.[22] Generally, it is assumed that in most cases the use of the term *'išq* is closer to the concept of passionate, profane love,[23] than *ḥubb* – divine and pure Love *par excellence*.

Within the division present in Sufism, into (1) the divine Love and (2) love that also belongs to creatures, love in cosmogonies would belong more to the first type. But it seems, however, that we are dealing with a different dimension or aspect than this described by the Sufis. Therefore, the supposition sometimes made, that love appeared in Yezidism under the influence of Sufism, should be carefully examined in a separate study. This supposition may be correct, as far as it is applied to love (2), but love (1) understood in the cosmogonical terms (not as the love of God to the people or God (Xwadē) to Malak Tawus or Malak Tawus to the Yezidis), is quite an original element, not necessarily of Sufi provenance.

On the other hand, we should note that such differentiation of understanding of love in the theological and anthropological aspects is present in many, if not all, of the religions and cultures, particulary in Christianity emphasizing that "God is Love" or in the numerous directives to loving God and other persons. It should

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ertheless some who understand from *'ishq* only the desire for (physical) union (*talab al-wisal*)." (Bell, 1979: 166)

[22] "A final question regarding *'ishq* was whether the term itself should be applied to the love-relationship between God and man. Early in the course of Muslim history *'ishq* had been adopted as the preferred word for sacred love by the theologian 'Abd al Wâḥid ibn Zayd of Basra (d. 177/793-94). This choice was based on a tradition from Hasan al-Basri in which God himself speaks (*ḥadîth qudsî* [holy hadith]), which contains the phrases *ashiqanî wa-'ashiqtuhu* or "he loved me with *'ishq* and I loved him with *'ishq*." (…) It is known from the *'Atf al-alif* of al-Daylami that the author's instructor in mysticism, the celebrated Ibn Khafif 'Abu 'Abd Allah al-Shirazi, d. 371/982), opposed the use of *'ishq* to denote sacred love until he discovered an opinion from al-Junayd supporting it. He then changed his mind and wrote a tract on the question. (…) Al-Daylami himself says that *mahabba* is the better term because consensus supports it, but he goes on to name *'ishq* as the highest stage of religious love. After the time of al-Daylami the importance of the issue seems to have declined, at least for some major writers. Al-Hujwiri (d. 465-69/1072-77) mentions the controversy, noting that *'ishq* implies desire; but he fails to offer any decision of his own." (Bell, 1979: 165f.).

[23] On the term *'išq* Bell writes (Bell 1979: 162): "According to the definition most widely held by Muslim intellectuals, which was presumably the legacy of popularized Aristotelianism, the word denotes excessive love, (…) "excess in love" (*al-ifrat fi 'l-hubb*)."

be kept in mind that Christianity initially adapted the conceptual apparatus of the Greeks, along with three important terms: *philia*, *eros* and *agape*, emphasizing in the first place "*agape*," which means "love without desire."[24]

Now we can proceed to the Kurds. They speak of love using the following terms in particular:

> *evîn* (*evindarî*, *evinî…*)
>
> *eşq* (*farsi:* عشق)
>
> *dildarî*
>
> *gir*
>
> *mihbet* (*farsi:* محبت)
>
> *ḥub* (*ḥebandin*, *ḥebîb*, *ḥebîn*)
>
> *ḥez* (*ḥezmekarî…*)[25]

Evîn and *eşq* are most frequently used in contemporary Kurdish literature.However, in the Yezidi religious hymns love is more often described by two words of Arabic origin *mihbet* and *eşq*.

2.1. Love in the Yezidi Cosmogony

Although among the pantheon of the Yezidi deities we also find the quite original deity responsible for love (so called Holy-angel, Milyāk'atē-qanǰ),[26] which doesn't seem to play special role in the macrocosmogonic process. As a phallic deity it relates more to the sexual relationship in the human microcosm.

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[24] It should be mentioned that Pope Benedict XVI devoted to this issue his first encyclical (*Deus Caritas Est*), where he emphasizes the originality of Christianity in the "discovery" of *agape* (which is not true, however, because the distinction between passionate, intimate love (*eros*), connected esp. with the lack of object of desire and with the sexuality and the "pure" love, which characteristic by the absence of lack (*agape*) is already present in the writings of Plato. Cf. Rodziewicz 2012: 393f.

[25] К. К. Курдоев 1960; Chyet 2003; Farqinî 2010; www.kurdonline.ru.

[26] G. Asatrian, V. Arakelova: "Holy Angel is the only example of the *Deus Phalli* in all New Iranian folk pantheons. Morover, similar personages have never been attested in Iran, neither in ancient nor in medieval periods. (…) The Holy Angel is a classic example of an authentic phallic

About the cosmogonical participation of love in the act of the initiation the world by God, we learn only from the oral tradition of the Yezidis. However, the *Black Book* connected with them contains descriptions of cosmogony but we cannot find anything about the cosmogonical role of love.[27]

Though there are a lot of references to this subject in the hymns (*Qewl*), especially in *The Hymn of the Weak Broken One* (*Qewlê Zebûnî Meksûr*), which describes the first stages of the cosmogonical process. The following passages are related to love (In bold the most important lines):

6	**When the King came from the Pearl**	*Wekî Pedşayî li durê bû*
	Some perceptions developed from it	*Hisyatek jê çihê bû*
	The branch of love came into being. (…)	*Şaxa mihbetê ava bû.*
7	In **the branch of love** came into being (…)	*Pê ava bû şaxa mihbetê*
15	My King spoke pleasantly	*Padşê min xoş kir sihbete*
	The King and the Cup and **Love**	*Padşa û kase û mihbete*
	They had created rules and limits	*Ewan çêkiribû hed û sede*
	There **love** had its place (…)	*Lêk rûniştin mihbete.*
18	**Love, the luminous, acting as leaven**	*Mihbeta xerza nûranî di navda*
	Came to dwell in it[28] (…)	*disekinî*
21	As a sign he gave them **Love, the**	*Mihbeta xerza nûranî dane*
	Luminous, acting as leaven (…)	*wan bi nîşane.*

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diety charged with the sphere of Eros and impregnation. (…) The whole complex of cults devoted to Milyāk'atē-qanǰ has been virtually lost by now." (Asatrian, Arakelova, 2004: 251, 256). Because of the embarrassing area, there is very little sources on it. The only written evidence known to me is the work of an Armenian, A. Avdal, from the 1957, invoked in the cited article, where we can also find a few fragments of oral tradition.

[27] Most of scholars agree that the text is not original. But this does not change the fact that it remains a source for the study on Yezidis and the testimony of their perception in the Middle East.

[28] Presumably in celestial Lalish.

| 23 | I said: 'My dear one, (your) intercession | *Min go, 'ezîzê min mehzeret* |
| | Is **Love**.' (…) | *wê mihbete.* |

27	My **King threw rennet into sea and**	*Padşê min hêvên havête behrê,*
	the sea coagulated	*behir meyini*
	Smoke rose up from it	*Duxanek jê duxini*
	All the seven heavens were built with it. (…)	*Her heft ezman pê nijinî*

32	**The earth did not become solid**	*'Erdi bi xora negirtibu hisare*
	Until Love the luminous, acting as	*Heta mihbeta xerza nurani bi*
	rennet, was sent into it.	*navda nedihinare.*[29]

Here we find a reference to something called a "branch of love" (*şaxa mihbetê*). That "branch of love" appears immediately after the emergence of God from the Pearl. So in the cosmogonical order, the Pearl is what precedes Love. This dendrological formula (*şax*) may imply something not mentioned *axis mundi*, from which emerge the individual branches, and in particular, the branch of love.[30]

However, in the hymn there's a mention of love as such (*mihbet*), which probably refers to the same. But when the branch is mentioned, the author highlights the rising of Love. At the same time Love is defined as the luminous, and its function as an "acting as leaven," "acting as rennet"[31]. It thus makes the first elements of the world link together and solidify.

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[29] Kurmanji text and English translation: Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 58-65.

[30] In another part of the same hymn there is a mention about another branch:

29	My king roamed in the sky	*Padşê min li ezmana sefer kire*
	He had travelled (over the world) several times	*Sefer kiribû, kir ker bikere*
	He established a number of pulpits	*Kire riknê çendî menbere.*

30	The Lovers have told this:	*Aşiqa jê xeberda*
	He separated another branch from it	*Şaxekî di jê berda*
	He established all the earths	*Kire riknê çendî 'erda*

[31] Ph. Kreyenbroek gives as a parallel meaning "yeast" (Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 61, n.23): "Since the substance in question causes liquids to coagulate, the translation 'rennet' seems preferable here").

In the same hymn a separate group consists of descriptions of love associated with the creation of Adam:

32	The Seven Mysteries came from above	*Heft Sur hatin hindave*
	The body of the Prophet Adam had	*Qalibê Adem Pêxember mabû*
	Remained wihout movement.	*bê gave*
	They said: Oh soul, why do you not Enter?	*Go, rûhê, boçî naçiye nave.*
33	The soul said: **Lovers know** (this)	*Rûhê go, bo 'aşiqa me'lûme*
41	The light of **Love entered his head**	*Nûra mihbetê hingifte seri*
	The soul came and made its home.	*Rûh hat û tê wetinî*
42	When he fashioned the body of the Prophet Adam	*Weki qalibê Adem Pêxember dikir nijare*
	The Holy Beings gathered around him,	*Xasa liber bestin beri care*
	before Time began	
	The Cup of Love (became) visible.	*Kasa ji mihbetê bi nedere.*
44	The Prophet Adam drank from that Cup	*Adem Pêxember ji wê kasê vedixware*
	He came to life, became intoxicated, and trembled	*Vedijiya, mestbû, hijiya*
46	**That Cup is luminous**	*Ew kasa nûrine*
	The Prophet Adam drank from it with	*Adem Pêxember vedixawar, bi*
	the love of a faithful (certain) heart	*eşqa dilê êqine*
47	Adam liked the Cup	*Ew kase bi Adem xweş*
	The mystical power of the Cup reached him	*Kerameta wê kasê digehiştê*
	The Cup took Adam up to heaven.	*Ewê kasê Adem dibire behiştê*[32]

Again, the same term occurs, *mihbet*, but there's also a mention of the "light of love" (*nûra mihbetê*) and "the cup of love," luminous as it is, from which Adam drank and revived him. We can also find the term "lovers" (*'aşiqa*) and the passage

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[32] Tr.: Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005, *loc. cit.*

about Adam in colloquial language, which describes him, in the act of drinking "from the cup of love" (*bi eşqa*). But love, as the cosmogonical factor is always described by the word *mihbet*.[33]

Another hymn, that describes the topic of love as a cosmogonical agent, is *The Hymn of the Creation of the World* (*Qewlê Afirîna Dinyayê*). The following passages are especially important:

9	Our God, in his mercy	*Êzdanê me bi rehmanî*
	Brought forth goodness and beauty for us (…)	*Hisnû cemal ji me ra anî*
	We were thrown into **the Mystery of Love**	*Em avêtin nav sura mihbetê.*
10	**He threw rennet into the ocean**	*Havên avête behrê*
	The ocean coagulated because of it (…)	*Behr pê meyanî*
	He built heaven and earth, fourteen spheres	*Çarde flebeq 'erd û ezman nijnî*
	Our God brought the Pearl out.	*Êzdanê me dur deranî.*
11	He **threw Love into it** (…)	*Mihbet avête navê*
12	Water flowed from the Pearl	*Av ji durê herikî*
	It became an ocean without end,	*Bû behra bê serî bê binî.*
	without beginning. (…)	
31	The soul was present, on high	*Û banda rûh hedirî*
	It came and went and passed	*Hat û çû bihurî*
	The light of Love reached the head	*Nûra mobetê hingavte serî*
	It came and became manifest	*Hat qalibê Adem da êwirê*[34]
	in the body of Adam.	

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[33] In *The Prayer of Belief* (*Dû'a Bawiriyê* 13) Sultan Ezi was described as a lover (muhib*ê*) of himself: *Ezi is a name greater than names. He is the lover of his own mystery.* (*Navê Êzî ji nava zêdeye. Ew muhibê sura xoye.*).

[34] Text and translation: Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 66-71.

We find references to some connection (of people? Yezidis? first elements?) with the "Mystery of love" (*sura mihbetê*) and once again there are denotations concerning thethrowing the thickening "rennet" into the ocean which gushes out of the Pearl. The new thread is the information about the appearance of the "Light of Love" inside Adam.

Further information is provided by *The Hymn of B and A* (*Quewlê Bê Elîf*):

1	B and A!	*Bê û elîf*
	The luminous Throne in the Pearl	*Textê nûrî sedef*
	My King is hidden inside it	*Pedşê min li navdayî bi xef.*
3	He worshipped himself	*Ew bi xo diperiste*
	Love was always one, and conscious	*Mihbet her yek û heste*
	He became light, worshipping himself	*Ew nûr bû bo xo di periste*
5	My King created by himself,	*Pedşê min bi xo*
	he became the Pearl (…)	*efirandibû dure.* (…)
7	Let us praise the White Pearl	*Da bideyn medeha dura spiye*
	A Cup was created from it (…)	*Kasek jê dihefiriye*
8	**Before scripture, before writing**	*Berî mişûre, berî xete*
	Before the Pen, before Truth	*Berî qeleme, berî heqîqete*
	Men had come to know this love.	*Mêr nasibû ew mihbete.*
9	**Love is from that**	*Mihbeta ji wêye*
	Our Truth, from that pond	*Heqîqeta, dot û dêye.*[35]

We find emphasizing the oneness of Love and its consciousness. Again its luminous character and primordiality are stressed, similar to the descriptions in the *Hymn of the Black Furquan* (*Qewlê Qere Ferqan*):

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[35] Text and translation: Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 71-74.

6	Oh God, you are the One, triumphant	*Ilahiyo, tuyî wahidî, qahirî*
	Before the foundation of the earths, before heavens	*Ji berî binyana 'erda, ji berî 'ezmana*
	Before the (holy) man, before the angels	*Ji berî mêra, ji berî meleka*
	Love was at your disposal:	*Mihbeta bi tera çêbû,*
	what did you create with it?	*te çî jê çêkirî?*
7	The king tells: (…)	*Pedşa dibêjitê:*
	Before the foundation of the earths,	*Ji berî binyana 'erda*
	Before the heavens.	*Ji berî ezmana*
	Before the (holy) men,	*Ji berî mêra*
	Before the angels	*Ji berî meleka*
	My love worshipped the khirque**.**	*Mihbeta min diperist xerqeye.*[36]

The hymn emphasizes the primordial character of Love, even a common birth with God – the words "*Mihbeta bi tera çêbû*" can also be understood as "Love was born with you" (Bocheńska, 2014). This hymn also introduces the topic of worship shown by Love to the divine curtain (*khirqe*)[37].

The passages presented above most fully describe love as the initial cosmogonic factor whose primary function is to combine, bind and stabilize the first elements of the world.

It is also worth noting that a similar function is performed by the "Agreement"(*Tifaq*), which is mention in the Yezidi prayer dedicated to it (*Dû'a Tifaqê*). Perhaps it could be another name of Love:

1	**The King created agreement**	*Pedşayî tifaq çêkir*
	He attached his own sweet name to it (…)	*Navê xoyê şêrîn lêkir*
2	Agreement is belief in the name of God	*Tifaq bawirî ji navê Xudêye*
	The angels chose it as their path	*Meleka pê girtibû rêye*

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[36] Text and translation: Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 94-103.

[37] *Khirqe* is exactly the kind of woolen garment, but its esoteric meaning refers to the divine mysteries (cf. *Qewlê Qere Ferqan* 25).

Through that agreement God became   *Bi wê tifaqê Xudê xo naskir*

Aware of himself in the Pearl.   *linav durêye.*[38]

2.2. Love in the Greek Cosmogonies

The Yezidi descriptions of the formation of the world have an interesting parallel in Greek cosmogonies, esp. in the *Theogony* of Hesiod and Orphics mythology.

The work of Hesiod is the most important because it has set the pattern of Greek cosmogony for centuries. For Hesiod this ancient agent, Love (or Eros), in classical Greek it's the same word, happens to be one of the first cosmic factors belonging to the most ancient divine Trinity:

116   Verily at first Chaos came into being, but   ἤτοι μὲν πρώτιστα Χάος γένετ᾽· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα

       secondly Wide-bosomed Earth/Gaia (…)   Γαῖ᾽ εὐρύστερνος (…)

120   And Love/Eros, the most beautiful among   ἠδ᾽ Ἔρος, ὃς κάλλιστος ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι[39]

       the immortal gods.

These few lines have been frequently commented on both in ancient and modern times. With regard to the Yezidi cosmogony one should focus on two issues. Hesiod said of the origins of the world that Chaos "came into being." It had already been pointed out by ancient elders that he didn't use the verb "to be" (he didn't say: "in the beginning there was Chaos") and therefore he might have suggested that before Chaos there was something else. The etymological analysis of the Greek word "Χάος" shows that it contains the root -ca, which means a chasm, crack or gaping throat.[40] So it could mean that the appearance of division or differentiation is the beginning of reality, which might implicitly suggest that at the very beginning the state of unity, or inseparability was present.

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[38] Text and translation of *Dû'a Tifaqê*, Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 109-111.

[39] All translations from Greek are mine; Greek text: Hesiod, 1966.

[40] Cf. a chapter of my book *Idea i Forma* concerning the cosmogonical opposition Chaos – Eros (Rodziewicz, 2012: 59-65).

After Chaos, Hesiod enumerates the Earth, and the Love (Eros). The activity of Eros can be seen as being in opposition to that of Chaos. While Chaos may indicate the initial division, Eros is the force responsible for combining many items into one.

This understanding of Eros appears very early. According to the platonist Proclus, as early as the 6th century BC. At that time Pherecydes from Syros (or Syria)[41] – a philosopher associated with the knowledge of the Phoenicians, claimed that Eros is one of the hypostases of Zeus himself:

> Pherecydes claimed that Zeus intending to generate transformed himself into Love/Eros, for having made the world of opposites, led him to the agreement and friendship, planted in all the identity and unity (ἕνωσις) that penetrate the whole. So thanks to them and thanks to those who created it, the world is undamaged. (Proclus, *In Platonis Timaeum commentaria* II 54, 28-55, 3)[42]

The theme of love, which binds the world (the opposite to a cosmogonic force of division), also appears in later Greek writings, especially in those associated with the Pythagoreans, such as Empedocles[43], who wrote about Friendship/Love[44]

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[41] Greek theologian, probably lived in the fifth century BC. Identification of his origin is not established. Ancient sources suggest his relationships with Phoenicia and the Middle East. See: West, 20032: 101, 620.

[42] ὁ Φερεκύδης ἔλεγεν εἰς Ἔρωτα μεταβεβλῆσθαι τὸν Δία μέλλοντα δημιουργεῖν, ὅτι δὴ τὸν κόσμον ἐκ τῶν ἐναντίων συνιστὰς εἰς ὁμολογίαν καὶ φιλίαν ἤγαγε καὶ ταυτότητα πᾶσιν ἐνέσπειρε καὶ ἕνωσιν τὴν δι' ὅλων διήκουσαν. ἄλυτος οὖν ὁ κόσμος διὰ ταῦτα καὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ ποιήσαντος· Greek text: Proclus, 1903–1906.

[43] As we read in a commentary of Simplicius of Cilicia: "Empedocles of Acragas, was born a little after Anaxagoras, admirer and close of Parmenides, and even more of the Pythagoreans. He describes the four bodily elements (fire, air, water, earth), which are eternal [, and by] multiplicity and being few [they] transform themself according to the combining/integrating and separation/distinguishing; and the prevailing rules by which they are moved is Friendship and Strife". (*In Aristotelis libros physicorum commentaria* IX 25, 19-24).

[44] Also called "affection" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1000b8: στοργή) and "Aphrodite." See the frg. transmitted by Simplicius (*In Aristotelis libros physicorum commentaria* IX 161, 2–3: ὡς δ' αὕτως ὅσα κρᾶσιν ἐπαρκέα μᾶλλον ἔασιν ἀλλήλοις ἔστερκται ὁμοιωθέντ᾽ Ἀφροδίτῃ):
> …and just the same those that are quite sufficient for the mixture,
> they love each other and integrate themself to Aphrodite/by Aphrodite

the opposite to Strife. Empedocles said, as Plutarch states later, in accordance with the traditional description of "the birth of Friendship and Aphrodite and Eros – as said by Empedocles, Parmenides and Hesiod too, in order to […] establish harmony and community of all things"[45]. Earlier Aristotle remarked:

One can assume that Hesiod first tracked down this thread, or anyone else who put Eros/Love or Desire in the midst of beings, as a first-principle, like Parmenides, who considering over the beginning of all things "The first of the gods – says – she[46] invented Eros/Love," Hesiod, in turn…[47]

Before Aristotle, his teacher – Plato – in The *Symposium*, a philosophical dialogue devoted to Eros, the conceptions of the ancient authors described as follows:

Great God is Love/Eros and strange among men and gods, because of the many different reasons and especially because of [its] birth. It is in fact an honor to be the oldest god among [the oldest]. Because that it is – here's the proof: there is neither the genealogy of Love/Eros, nor mention of it [stated] by the average person, or by a poet, but Hesiod says that first Chaos came into being

but

secondly Wide-bosomed Earth/Gaia

And Love/Eros

Cf. also *ibidem*, IX 158, 23; and *idem*, *In Aristotelis quattuor libros de caelo commentaria* VII 530, 2–4 (πῶς ὕδατος γαίης τε καὶ αἰθέρος ἠελίου τε κιρναμένων εἴδη τε γενοίατο χροιά τε θνητῶν, τοῖ᾽ ὅσα νῦν γεγάασι συναρμοσθέντ᾽ ᾽Αφροδίτῃ):
> *As out of the water and the earth and ether, and the sun*
> *mixing [togehter] arose forms and cover of the mortals*
> *the same as they are born now, harmonized by Aphrodite.*

[45] *De facie in orbe lunae* 926f6–927a6: Φιλότητος ἐγγενομένης καὶ ᾽Αφροδίτης καὶ ῎Ερωτος, ὡς ᾽Εμπεδοκλῆς λέγει καὶ Παρμενίδης καὶ ῾Ησίδος, ἵνα (...) ἁρμονίαν καὶ κοινωνίαν ἀπεργάσηται τοῦ παντός.

[46] Perhaps Aphrodite.

[47] *Metaphysic* 984b23-27: ὑποπτεύσειε δ' ἄν τις ῾Ησίοδον πρῶτον ζητῆσαι τὸ τοιοῦτον, κἂν εἴ τις ἄλλος ἔρωτα ἢ ἐπιθυμίαν ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν ἔθηκεν ὡς ἀρχήν, οἷον καὶ Παρμενίδης· καὶ γὰρ οὗτος κατασκευάζων τὴν τοῦ παντὸς γένεσιν "πρώτιστον μέν" φησιν "ἔρωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων," ῾Ησίοδος δὲ… Next Aristotle cites the passage of Hesiod's *Theogony*, and then refers to Empedocles.

He says here that after Chaos two (such) were created – Earth and Love / Eros. But Parmienides speaks of the [original] birth:

The first of the gods – says – she invented Eros/Love.

But with Hesiod also agrees Acusilaus.[48] So from many sides [comes opinion] that among [the gods] Love/Eros is the oldest.[49]

Despite significant similarities in the descriptions of love, as one of the first cosmogonic factors of the world, there should be noted a significant difference too. For example, in the vision presented by Hesiod, or by Empedocles dualism is stressed,[50] that makes it closer to Zoroastrian cosmogonies (that were of interest to the ancient Greek authors), than the Yezidi.

Apart from Hesiod, Empedocles and Parmenides, the particular parallels to the Yezidi cosmogony provides the cosmogonic myth, which can be reconstructed on the basis of ancient sources related to Orphism. But it should also be aware that we

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[48] Acusilaus form Argos (VI BC) classified by some Greeks as one of the so-called Seven Sages.

[49] Plato, *Symposium* 178a6-c2: ὅτι μέγας θεὸς εἴη ὁ Ἔρως καὶ θαυμαστὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποις τε καὶ θεοῖς, πολλαχῇ μὲν καὶ ἄλλῃ, οὐχ ἥκιστα δὲ κατὰ τὴν γένεσιν. τὸ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πρεσβύτατον εἶναι τὸν θεὸν τίμιον, ἦ δ' ὅς, τεκμήριον δὲ τούτου· γονῆς γὰρ Ἔρωτος οὔτ' εἰσὶν οὔτε λέγονται ὑπ' οὐδενὸς οὔτε ἰδιώτου οὔτε ποιητοῦ, ἀλλ' Ἡσίοδος πρῶτον μὲν Χάος φησὶ γενέσθαι,

αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα

Γαῖ' εὐρύστερνος, πάντων ἕδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεί,

ἠδ' Ἔρος

φησὶ δὴ μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι, Γῆν τε καὶ Ἔρωτα. Παρμενίδης δὲ τὴν γένεσιν λέγει·

πρώτιστον μὲν Ἔρωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων…

Ἡσιόδῳ δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖται. Οὕτω πολλαχόθεν ὁμολογεῖται ὁ Ἔρως ἐν τοῖς πρεσβύτατος εἶναι.

[50] For example, Hippolytus of Rome ascribes to Empedocles the following words: "I was talking that four gods [are] mortals (θνητόι): fire, water, earth, air, and two immortals, (…) in everything struggling with each other: Strife and Friendship." (*Refutatio omnium haeresium*, VII 29, 4–5, 22; 29, 23, 123–24, 125).

are dealing with a tradition that stretches for approximately a thousand years,[51] and that the main messages to which I will refer come from the period between the II and the VI century AD.

The myth transmitted by the followers of Orpheus deals with the Phanes Protogonos, which means "Firstborn," who "brings light" or "brings to light,"[52] in orphic sources also called the Love or Eros, that Phanes was begotten at the beginning of the world. This luminous god emerged from the egg. He is mentioned in the poem attributed to Orpheus (dating back to the V/VI century AD), called *Argonautica Orphica*:

12	**At first, the stern necessity of the ancient Chaos**	ἀρχαίου μὲν πρῶτα χάους ἀμέγαρτον ἀνάγκην
	And Kronos/Time[53], who born in his countless coils	καὶ Κ/Χρόνον ὃς ἐλόχευσεν ἀπειρεσίοισιν ὑφ' ὁλκοῖς
	Aether and the famous **omnispective Eros/Love** of the twofold nature	Αἰθέρα καὶ διφυῆ περιωπέα κυδρὸν Ἔρωτα
15	Great father of the eternally generating Night,	Νυκτὸς ἀειγνήτης πατέρα κλυτόν· ὃν ῥα
	called **Phanes**	Φάνητα
	by the later[-born] mortals[54] – first in fact	ὁπλότεροι καλέουσι βροτοί· πρῶτος
	was manifested. (…)	γὰρ ἐφάνθη.

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[51] This time frame can be roughly defined as the period between the times of the mythical Orpheus (around the VI BC), through the main activity of the sect od Orphics (its relatively newly discovered testimony – except of gold plaques – *Papyrus of Derveni* is dated to the V/IV BC) to the many extensive comments last diadoch of Platonic Academy, Damasicus from Syria (V-VI AD).

[52] Name from the verb φαίνω – to appear," and hence "Phanes" means "the one who is appeared/makes appear." *Etomologicum magnum*: "They call him Phanes … since he first became visible in the ether" (φάνης Φάνητος· Τὸν δὴ καλέουσι Φάνητα, …. ὅτι πρῶτος ἐν αἰθέρι φαντὸς ἔγεντο (*Etymologicum magnum*, *s.v.* φάνης). Similarly Pseudo-Clemens, *Homiliae* VI 5, 4, 3-4: "Orpheus calls [him] Phanes, because having appeared illuminated everything of himself" (Φάνητα Ὀρφεὺς καλεῖ, ὅτι αὐτοῦ φανέντος τὸ πᾶν ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἔλαμψεν).

[53] Different lections of MSS.

[54] I.e. humans.

421 At first the famous ancient hymn of a dark Chaos	Πρῶτα μὲν ἀρχαίου χάεος μελανήφατον ὕμνον,
How natures are mingled and Heaven reached the limits	ὡς ἐπάμειψε φύσεις, ὥς τ᾽ οὐρανὸς † ἐς πέρας ἦλθε·
And the birth of the wide-bosomed Earth and the depths of the Sea	γῆς τ᾽ εὐρυστέρνου γένεσιν, πυθμένας τε θαλάσσης·
And also **the most ancient self-complementary**[55] **ingenious Eros/Love**	and πρεσβύτατόν τε καὶ αὐτοτελῆ πολύμητιν Ἔρωτα,
425 **Who generated all things…**	ὅσσα τ᾽ ἔφυσεν ἄπαντα… [56]

According to ancient sources, this Eros has a complementary, double (διφυῆ) male-female nature[57] and emerged from some kind of cosmic egg. This male-female Eros/Love/Phanes illustrates well the nature of love as the perfect pattern and at the same time the factor that leads two things – male and female – to the unity in one common ambisexual body.[58] For Proclus, Phanes was an image of the fully realized completeness of elements:

Theologian [= Orpheus] gives [to the mental world character] of the most total animal having given him the head of the ram and the bull and the lion and the serpent / dragon, and in him first [combines] femininity and masculinity, as in the first animal: "Female

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[55] Probably a reference to the male-female, self-sufficient nature of Protogonos.

[56] Greek text: *Les Argonautiques d'Orphée*, ed. Georges Dottin, Paris 1930.

[57] Cf. frg. of the Orphic *Hymn to Eros* (Greek text: *Orphei hymni, op.cit.*):

1   *I call great, holy, sweet, charming Eros*
    The Ruler of the bow, winged, fiery-walking active in urge
    Playing with the gods and mortal men
    Clever, twofold nature, holding all the keys…

1   Κικλήσκω μέγαν, ἁγνόν, ἐράσμιον, ἡδὺν Ἔρωτα,
    τοξαλκῆ, πτερόεντα, πυρίδρομον, εὔδρομον ὁρμῆι,
    συμπαίζοντα θεοῖς ἠδὲ θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποις,
    εὐπάλαμον, διφυῆ, πάντων κληῖδας ἔχοντα.

[58] With regard to god's androgynism, as an common element to the Greek and Eastern mythology, see: Reizenstein, Schaeder, 1926: 69f.; Delcourt, 1966.

and powerful parent, god Erikepaios" – says the theologian. He also for the first time [gives] him wings.[59]

In turn, the *Hymn to Protogonus* (II/III AD), distributed by the same Orphics, describes this firstborn being with the following words:

1   I call the first-begotten of the double nature, great, wandering through æther

       Egg-born, glorying in golden wings

       Roaring like a bull, parent of blessed [gods?] and mortal men

       Memorable seed, worshipped in many festivals Ericapæus[60]

5   Ineffable, secretly flapping [his wings], **all-shining branch**

       With eyes cloaked in a dark mist/smoke

       Turning everywhere flapping wings around the world

       Leading a holy shining light by which they call You Phanes

       The ruler Priapus and the flickering Glare

10   Come now! Happy thoughtful, full of seed, arrive delighted

       On the sacred colorful mystery to the priests initiating [in it] .

1   Πρωτόγονον καλέω διφυῆ, μέγαν, αἰθερόπλαγκτον,

       ὠιογενῆ, χρυσέαισιν ἀγαλλόμενον πτερύγεσσι,

       ταυροβόαν, γένεσιν μακάρων θνητῶν τ' ἀνθρώπων,

       σπέρμα πολύμνηστον, πολυόργιον, Ἠρικεπαῖον,

5   ἄρρητον, κρύφιον ῥοιζήτορα, παμφαὲς ἔρνος

       ὄσσων ὃς σκοτόεσσαν ἀπημαύρωσας ὀμίχλην

       πάντη δινηθεὶς πτερύγων ῥιπαῖς κατὰ κόσμον

       λαμπρὸν ἄγων φάος ἁγνόν, ἀφ' οὖ σε Φάνητα κικλήσκω

       ἠδὲ Πρίηπον ἄνακτα καὶ Ἀνταύγην ἑλίκωπον.

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[59] *In Platonis Timaeum commentaria* I 429, 26-430,2: διὸ καὶ ὁλικώτατον ζῷον ὁ θεολόγος ἀναπλάττει κριοῦ καὶ ταύρου καὶ λέοντος καὶ δράκοντος αὐτῷ περιτιθεὶς κεφαλάς, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ πρώτῳ τὸ θῆλυ καὶ τὸ ἄρρεν ὡς ζῴῳ πρώτῳ· θῆλυς καὶ γενέτωρ κρατερὸς θεὸς Ἠρικεπαῖος, φησὶν ὁ θεολόγος· αὐτῷ δὲ καὶ αἱ πτέρυγες πρῶτον.

[60] One of the names of Protogonos, whose etymology hasn't been established; presumably of non-Greek origin (Asia Minor?); see West, 1983: 205f.; Guthrie, 1993: 97, 145.

10   ἀλλά, μάκαρ, πολύμητι, πολύσπορε, βαῖνε γεγηθὼς

      ἐς τελετὴν ἁγίαν πολυποίκιλον ὀργιοφάνταις.[61]

The image of Phanes/Eros/Love as a winged and luminous cosmogonical be-ing appearing from the egg must have been known quite early, because a similar description can be found in the comedy *Birds* by Aristophanes written in 414 BC:

693   There was Chaos, and Night and the black Erebus, the first, and the vast Tartarus

       But wasn't The Earth, nor Air, nor Heaven. And in the infinite valleys of Erebus

695   Blackwinged Night gives birth to **the first windy egg**

       From which, during the cycles of the seasons, **sprang the alluring Eros**

       Shining golden wings on the back, looking like the whirlwinds

       It was he, mixed with winged Chaos, at night in the midst of a vast Tartarus

       Who hatched our race, and as the first brought to light.

693   Χάος ἦν καὶ Νὺξ Ἔρεβός τε μέλαν πρῶτον καὶ Τάρταρος εὐρύς·

       γῆ δ' οὐδ' ἀὴρ οὐδ' οὐρανὸς ἦν· Ἐρέβους δ' ἐν ἀπείροσι κόλποις

695   τίκτει πρώτιστον ὑπηνέμιον Νὺξ ἡ μελανόπτερος ᾠόν,

       ἐξ οὗ περιτελλομέναις ὥραις ἔβλαστεν Ἔρως ὁ ποθεινός,

       στίλβων νῶτον πτερύγοιν χρυσαῖν, εἰκὼς ἀνεμώκεσι δίναις.

       Οὗτος δὲ Χάει πτερόεντι μιγεὶς νύχιος κατὰ Τάρταρον εὐρὺν

       ἐνεόττευσεν γένος ἡμέτερον, καὶ πρῶτον ἀνήγαγεν εἰς φῶς.[62]

Bird metaphorics is enriched by an element of the primal cosmic Egg from which hatched the golden-winged Love, which later becomes the cause of the successive generations of "birds" (angels/gods/men?). We also find the linking of Love with the symbolism of the wind (v. 695 and 697), which, according to M. L. West (searching for the oriental elements of Orphism) is reflected in the image of the Spirit *hovering over the waters* in the *Genesis*.[63]

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[61] Greek text: *Orphei hymni*, ed. W. Quandt, Berlin 1962.

[62] Greek text: *Aves*, Aristophane, vol. 3, *Les Oiseaux, Lysistrata* , ed. V. Coulon and M. van Daele, Paris 1928.

[63] "The conjunction of Eros and winds has a strongly Semitic appearance, since both ideas are united in the word *rûah*, which is the divine wind that beats over the waters in *Genesis* 1:2. In all

More detailed information about the Orphic cosmogony was transmitted around a thousand years later by the coming from the Middle East the last leader of the Platonic Academy, Damascius. Damascius, also take note that an expert of Greek philosophy and religion, who in 531/2 AD, after the closure of the Academy in Athens by the Emperor Justinian.[64] A few Greek philosophers went to the court of the Persian king Khosrau I[65] who was also fascinated by Greek culture, which he learned from Persian translations, created *inter alia*, supported by him the Academy of Gundeshapur (Khuzestan region, an area near the present day border with Iraq), where he worked, among exiles and refugees from Byzantium but also the Nestorians and the Greek philosophers.

Thus Damascius, in his most comprehensive work *On the first-principles* constituting a summary of the knowledge of the mystical ancient philosophy, presents a variety of transmissions about the Orphic cosmogony. Using quite complicated philosophical language of Late Antiquity wrote this text below among many others:

So in these circulating "Orphic" hymns, there is a following theology concerning the noetic things, taught by philosophers who put the Time/Chronos instead of the one first-principle of wholes and instead of two [first-principles] – Ether and Chaos, and instead of Being simply forming the egg, and formulating such a first Trinity. And to the second [Trinity] they include whether the egg – that is conceived and gives birth to the god, or shining chiton,[66] or the cloud, because Phanes leaps out of them. For different philosophers differently philosophize on the middle [cause]. (…)[67]

This is common Orphic theology.[68]

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the available reports of Phoenician cosmogonies, Desire or wind, or a wind that became Desire, appears in the initial stages." (West, 1983: 201).

[64] As a result of the edict of 529 AD, which prohibited non-Christians from teaching.

[65] A short report on the subject transmitted the Byzantine historian, Agathias Scholasticus in his *Historiae* (II 28-31).; (see Watts, 2005: 285–315).

[66] Kind of linen or woolen robe.

[67] Here we find sophisticated considerations on the philosophical significance of the structure of the egg itself.

[68] *De principiis* I 316, 18-317, 14: Ἐν μὲν τοίνυν ταῖς φερομέναις ταύταις ῥαψῳδίαις ὀρφικαῖς ἡ θεολογία δή τίς ἐστιν ἡ περὶ τὸν νοητόν, ἣν καὶ οἱ φιλόσοφοι διερμηνεύουσιν ἀντὶ μὲν τῆς μιᾶς τῶν ὅλων ἀρχῆς τὸν Χρόνον τιθέντες, ἀντὶ δὲ τοῖν δυεῖν Αἰθέρα καὶ Χάος, ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ ὄντος ἁπλῶς τὸ ὠὸν ἀπολογιζόμενοι, καὶ τριάδα ταύτην πρώτην ποιοῦντες· εἰς δὲ τὴν δευτέραν τελεῖν

Within the interpretation of Orphism shared by most of the ancient philosophers from Plato to Damascius – the beginning of creation was to include the formal sphere ("noetic things"), and the physical representation of them appears later than the pure intelligible forms. A similar theory we find in Yezidism, where the first created beings are mental forms (e.g. celestial pattern of Lalish), which then are physically "realized."[69]

In the 6th century AD we observe several versions of the Orphic cosmogony in circulation, however, the crucial thread concerning the cosmic egg and emerging from it a winged god remains unchanged. Damascius after the above-quoted description added:

> This [Orphic] theology, according to Hieronymus and Hellanicus (if it is not the same person) is as follows: "There was water – he says – from the beginning, and the matter, from which the earth was coagulated." (…) But the third principle after these both, was born from these – that is from water and earth, and it is a dragon/serpent with heads of a bull and a lion grown upon it, while in the middle there is a face of a god. [It] has also wings on his shoulders. It is called Time/Chronos and Heracles, and is accompanied by Necessity. (…) "But in them – he says – Time/Chronos born the egg." This tradition [of the Orphic cosmogony transmission] makes it a fetus of Time/Chronos. And [was] born among them, because also from these [principles] the third noetic trinity [is derived]. What, then, is it? The egg. The dyad of the male and female natures present therein, and inside the multitude of all kinds of seeds. And the third incorporeal god after them, with golden wings on his shoulders, who over his hips has adhered head/head of bulls, and on the head a huge serpent/dragon radiating various forms of animals. This must be assumed as the mind of the trinity, and [the] numerous, two middle [parts] – as the power, and the egg itself [as] the paternal first-principle of the third trinity – the third

ἤτοι τὸ κυούμενον καὶ τὸ κύον ᾠὸν τὸν θεόν, ἢ τὸν ἀργῆτα χιτῶνα, ἢ τὴν νεφέλην, ὅτι ἐκ τούτων ἐκθρῴσκει ὁ Φάνης· ἄλλοτε γὰρ ἄλλα περὶ τοῦ μέσου φιλοσοφοῦσιν. (…) Τοιαύτη μὲν ἡ συνήθης ὀρφικὴ θεολογία.

[69] In Late Antiquity, this type of interpretation, presumably inspired by the Greek philosophy, is also implemented to the biblical exegesis. Thus, reads the cosmogony of the *Old Testament*, Philo from Alexadnria (in his *De opificio mundi*), distinguishing for example the moment of the creation only a human form ("Adam"), from its incarnation, imaged in the *Old Testament* by clothing the first couple in the skin and leaving the realm of the formal sphere, called "Paradise."

god of this third trinity, indeed celebrated by theology in the hymns as Protogonos and called "Zeus," the disposer of all things and the entire world, and therefore he is called the Pan.[70].[71]

The terminology which Damascius uses has explicitly Pythagorean connotations. Within Pythagoreism terms such as "Monad," "Dyad," "Triad/Trinity" are used to describe the first stages of the development of the world. It is also worth noting that after reporting this passage of Orphic cosmogony, Damascius also refers to the theology of Zoroastrianism in his work ("of the Magi and the entire nation of Iran"[72])), which proves the exchange of ideas between the classical Greek area, and Middle East, that distinctly intensified during Late Antiquity.

A number of ancient authors emphasize that Phanes/Love/Eros also is called other names by Orphics, including "Zeus" (just as the previously cited Pherecydes, who had stated that the "Pherecydes claimed that Zeus intended to generate, so transformed himself into Love/Eros"). From the descriptions of love in the Yezidi hymns we can infer that Love would be a hypostasis of god, and thus called "an offshoot"/"branch."

On the subject of "hypostatic" character of Eros in Greek theology wrote, among others, Damascius' predecessor in running the Platonic Academy – Proclus:

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[70] The Greek word "pan" means also the "all."

[71] *De principiis* I 317, 15-319, 5: Ἡ δὲ κατὰ τὸν Ἱερώνυμον φερομένη καὶ Ἑλλάνικον, εἴπερ μὴ καὶ ὁ αὐτός ἐστιν, οὕτως ἔχει· "Ὕδωρ ἦν, φησίν, ἐξ ἀρχῆς, καὶ ὕλη, ἐξ ἧς ἐπάγη ἡ γῆ." (…) τὴν δὲ τρίτην ἀρχὴν μετὰ τὰς δύο γεννηθῆναι μὲν ἐκ τούτων, ὕδατός φημι καὶ γῆς, δράκοντα δὲ εἶναι κεφαλὰς ἔχοντα προσπεφυκυίας ταύρου καὶ λέοντος, ἐν μέσῳ δὲ θεοῦ πρόσωπον, ἔχειν δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων πτερά, ὠνομάσθαι δὲ Χρόνον ἀγήραον καὶ Ἡρακλῆα τὸν αὐτόν· συνεῖναι δὲ αὐτῷ τὴν Ἀνάγκην. (…) ἀλλὰ μὴν ἐν τούτοις, ὡς λέγει, ὁ Χρόνος ᾠὸν ἐγέννησεν, τοῦ Χρόνου ποιοῦσα γέννημα καὶ αὕτη ἡ παράδοσις, καὶ ἐν τούτοις τικτόμενον, ὅτι καὶ ἀπὸ τούτων ἡ τρίτη πρόεισι νοητὴ τριάς. Τίς οὖν αὕτη ἐστί; τὸ ᾠόν, ἡ δυὰς τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ φύσεων, ἄρρενος καὶ θηλείας, καὶ τῶν ἐν μέσῳ παντοίων σπερμάτων τὸ πλῆθος· καὶ τρίτον ἐπὶ τούτοις θεὸν ἀσώματον, πτέρυγας ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων ἔχοντα χρυσᾶς, ὃς ἐν μὲν ταῖς λαγόσι προσπεφυκυίας εἶχε ταύρων κεφαλάς, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς κεφαλῆς δράκοντα πελώριον παντοδαπαῖς μορφαῖς θηρίων ἰνδαλλόμενον. Τοῦτον μὲν οὖν ὡς νοῦν τῆς τριάδος ὑποληπτέον, τὰ δὲ μέσα γένη τά τε πολλὰ καὶ τὰ δύο τὴν δύναμιν, αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ᾠὸν ἀρχὴν πατρικὴν τῆς τρίτης τριάδος, ταύτης δὲ τῆς τρίτης τριάδος τὸν τρίτον θεόν· καὶ ἤδη ἡ θεολογία Πρωτόγονον ἀνυμνεῖ καὶ Δία καλεῖ πάντων διατάκτορα καὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου, διὸ καὶ Πᾶνα καλεῖσθαι.

[72] *Ibidem* I 322, 8: Μάγοι δὲ καὶ πᾶν τὸ ἄρειον γένος…

Long ago in fact Theologian[73] praised by Phanes the demiurgic cause. For there existed and pre-existed as claimed [Orpheus], great Bromios and all-seeing Zeus – to have indeed like a double source of demiurgy. [Praised in] Zeus [the] pattern [of demiurgy], because he is also Metis,[74] as [Orpheus] says: "Also Metis [is] the first parent, and delightful Love/Eros." He is called collectively "Dionysus" and "Phanes" and "Erikepaios." Therefore all causes participate on within another, and are present in each other, so if somebody concludes that a maker includes in itself the pattern, he is on a correct way of concluding.[75]

Similar statements we find in another Proclus's commentary:

For in Zeus there is Eros/Love as well. Because "Also Metis is mainly a parent and delightful Eros." And Eros/Love emerges from Zeus and is subjected to Zeus particularly among the mental [matters]. "There is in fact all-seeing Zeus and comely Love/

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[73] Orpheus.

[74] In the Orphic texts Metis (a goddess of knowledge and mental faculties) is also equated with Eros/Phanes. She is the first wife of Zeus, which he had to swallow (what describes in the language of myth Hesiod in *Theogony*, v. 889). The ancient commentators saw here a hidden allegory describing the compound of power and divine wisdom. At the same time it is worth mentioning that in the Orphic mythology Phanes was also equated with the hatched from egg serpent or phallus or the sun. The myth circulated about swallowed it by Zeus, which had somehow resulted in self-fertilization of god, and generating the world. Such a vision we can find already in the oldest preserved Orphic document – the *Derveni Papyrus* (col. XIII and XVI (Greek text and translation: *The Derveni Papyrus, Cosmology, Theology and Interpretation*, ed. G. Betegh, Cambridge 2004; because of the different lections, cf.: *The Derveni Papyrus*, ed. Th. Kouremenos, G.M. Parássoglou, K. Tsantsanoglou, Firenze 2006)). This absorption Fanes by Zeus would also give a key to explanation why sometimes Fanes is called Zeus. See also: Athenagoras from Athens, *Legatio sive Supplicatio pro Christianis* 20, 4.

[75] *In Platonis Timaeum commentaria* I 336, 6-18 (*Procli Diadochi in Platonis Timaeum commentaria*, red. E. Diehl, t. 1–3, Leipzig 1903–1906): πάλαι γὰρ ὁ θεολόγος ἔν τε τῷ Φάνητι τὴν δημιουργικὴν αἰτίαν ἀνύμνησεν· ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἦν τε καὶ προῆν, ὥσπερ ἔφη καὶ αὐτός, Βρόμιός τε μέγας καὶ Ζεὺς ὁ πανόπτης, ἵνα δὴ τῆς διττῆς δημιουργίας ἔχη τὰς οἱονεὶ πηγάς· καὶ ἐν τῷ Διὶ τὴν παραδειγματικήν· Μῆτις γὰρ αὖ καὶ οὗτός ἐστιν, ὥς φησι· καὶ Μῆτις πρῶτος γενέτωρ καὶ Ἔρως πολυτερπής, αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Διόνυσος καὶ Φάνης καὶ Ἡρικεπαῖος συνεχῶς ὀνομάζεται. πάντα ἄρα μετείληχεν ἀλλήλων τὰ αἴτια καὶ ἐν ἀλλήλοις ἐστίν, ὥστε καὶ ὁ τὸν δημιουργὸν λέγων ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ παράδειγμα περιέχειν ἐστὶν ὅπη φησὶν ὀρθῶς.

Eros" – as says Orpheus. They are in fact a cognate or rather they uniting each other, and each is a friend for other.[76]

To emphasize the unity of Greek theological reflection Platonists of Late Antiquity pointed out the similarities between the Orphic descriptions of Love, with those of Eros mentioned in Plato's *Symposium* (the text that influenced both the Greek and Middle Eastern philosophical and religious thought). Plato in the *Symposium* writes about Eros as a "great deity" (δαίμων μέγας) begotten in the mythical "Garden of Zeus."[77] He also emphasizes his status as the intermediary between the divine and human realities:

– What, then, would be Eros/Love? (…)
– [Something] between the mortal and immortal. (…) Great deity, Socrates, and all deity is between god and mortal.[78]

Text of the famous (also in the Islamic world) *Symposium* allow the development of the vision of both types, or aspects, of love, which I mentioned at the beginning – love perceived as a desire ascending human to the divine reality and love described as an autonomous force forming the reality.

We must also add that, in *Symposium* Plato presents various depictions of Love, of which one is particularly noteworthy, as it was commented on in later literature. According to it Love/Eros has two forms[79] – the so-called "Vulgar" and "Heaven-

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[76] *In Platonis Alcibiadem I* 233, 15-234, 2 (Proclus Diadochus, *Commentary on the first Alcibiades of Plato*, ed. L.G. Westerink, Amsterdam 1954): ἐν γὰρ τῷ Διὶ καὶ ὁ ἔρως ἐστί. καὶ γὰρ Μῆτίς ἐστι πρώτως γενέτωρ καὶ Ἔρως πολυτερπής· καὶ ὁ ἔρως πρόεισιν ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς καὶ συνυπέστη τῷ Διὶ πρώτως ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς· ἐκεῖ γὰρ ὁ Ζεὺς ὁ πανόπτης ἐστὶ καὶ ἁβρὸς Ἔρως, ὡς Ὀρφεύς φησι. συγγενῶς οὖν ἔχουσι πρὸς ἀλλήλους, μᾶλλον δὲ ἥνωνται ἀλλήλοις, καὶ φίλιος αὐτῶν ἑκάτερός ἐστι.

[77] *Symposium* 203b6: ὁ τοῦ Διὸς κῆπος. On the lexical and conceptual relationships between the description of Eros in Plato's *Symposium* and Phanes known from the Orphic tradition indicates among others Proclus (*In Platonis Alcibiadem I* 66,9-67,4).

[78] *Symposium* 202d8-e1: – Τί οὖν ἄν, ἔφην, εἴη ὁ Ἔρως; (…) – Μεταξὺ θνητοῦ καὶ ἀθανάτου. (…) Δαίμων μέγας, ὦ Σώκρατες· καὶ γὰρ πᾶν τὸ δαιμόνιον μεταξύ ἐστι θεοῦ τε καὶ θνητοῦ.

[79] This is associated in *Symposium* with the two ancient versions of myth relating to the Aphrodite: Aphrodite, daughter of the Sky/Uranus only and Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus and Dione.

ly." The first Love is "low," sexual, directed toward the bodily element, while the other is a spiritual love, which raises a lover tothe heavens.[80]

2.3. Love in other Greek-language Cosmogonies of the Middle Eastern Connotations

The thread of Love as a cosmogonic factor is present in the post-classical period especially in literature associated with the influence of Platonism and Pythagoreanism. An interesting example of combining the figure of Eros with the wisdom of the East are the so called *Chaldean Oracles*[81], texts probably belonging to the 2nd century AD. *Oracula Chaldaica* were very popular and respected within the environment of philosophers seeking common ground for Platonism and religious systems of the East. Porphyry, Iamblichus, Proclus or Damascius, in terms of rank put the *Oracles* alongside with Plato's *Timaeus* and treat them as a direct record of divine revelation.[82] Authorship of the Chaldean Oracles has links with the enigmatic figure of Julian, the philosopher known as the "Chaldean" and his son (Julian, called in turn the "Theurgist"). The very name of the oracle – "Chaldean" – clearly indicates Eastern associations.[83] What is worth noting by the way, in the early editions of the European Renaissance, this text is referred to as the *Oracles of Zoroaster*,or as the *Magic Oracles of Zoroastrian Magi*.[84]

Among the surviving fragments of the *Oracles*, a few refer to a cosmogonical role of Eros/Love, even called "holy":

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[80] *Symposium* 180c f.

[81] Scattered fragments: *Oracles chaldaïques*, ed. É. des Places, Paris 1971; R. Majercik, *The Chaldean Oracles*, Leiden 1989. The second edition provides fragments together with the context they occur.

[82] Cf. frg. 146, 150 and 169 (Majercik 1989).

[83] This can mean either the geographic origin, or – what seems more likely – an indication to the secret knowledge of the Babylonians.

[84] In the Greek sources Zoroaster is often described as the "Chaldean" and magi as the "Chaldeans." Cf. Bidez, Cumont, 1938: 252; des Places, 1971: 52 f..; Burns, 2006: 158–179.

Holy Love – the honorable bond present in all things.[85]

The most important excerpts are quoted by Proclus. Among others, in the *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*, summarizing the views represented by the old theologians concerning the subject of Love (that he himself briefly describes as originating from Demiurge "factor unifying the wholes"[86]) writes:

This largest and the most perfect bond, by which the Father covers the world from everywhere, as [by] a factor of friendship and the harmonious community of things present therein, by the *Oracles* is called *The bond of Love heavy with fire*:
For the paternal self-generated Mind having understood [his] works

In all sowed the bond of Love heavy with fire

And they [= the *Oracles*] give the reason:

In order to everything could continue to love for an infinite time
To not gone the things woven by the intellectual glow of the Father

For through Love all things are harmonized to one another:

Thanks to this elements of the world persist running with love.[87]

[85] Lydus, *De mensibus* I 11, 18-19:
   … ἁγνὸν Ἔρωτα,
   συνδετικὸν πάντων ἐπιβήτορα σεμνόν…

[86] *In Platonis Timaeum commentaria* II 54, 24-25: Ἔρωτα (…) ἑνοποιὸν ὄντα τῶν ὅλων. ἔχει δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς [=ὁ δημιουργός] ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν τοῦ Ἔρωτος αἰτίαν. Cf. *In Platonis Alcibiadem* 33, 8 f.

[87] *Ibidem*, II 54,5-16: τοῦτον δὲ τὸν μέγιστον καὶ τελεώτατον δεσμόν, ὃν περιβάλλει τῷ κόσμῳ πανταχόθεν ὁ πατὴρ ὡς φιλίας ὄντα ποιητικὸν καὶ τῆς ἐναρμονίου κοινωνίας τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ, δεσμὸν πυριβριθῆ ἔρωτος τὰ λόγια προσείρηκεν·
   ἔργα νοήσας γὰρ πατρικὸς νόος αὐτογένεθλος
   πᾶσιν ἐνέσπειρεν δεσμὸν πυριβριθῆ ἔρωτος.
καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν προσέθηκεν·
   ὄφρα τὰ πάντα μένῃ χρόνον ἐς ἀπέραντον ἐρῶντα,
   μηδὲ πέσῃ τὰ πατρὸς νοερῷ ὑφασμένα φέγγει.

What particularly draws attention in the context of the above-quoted Yezidi hymns, is the relationship of Love/Eros with the divine Mind and with fire.[88] Similar associations occur in the *Oracles* frequently. Proclus writing on the intellectual forms in another commentary points out:

The intelligible forms are divided and combined:

By the admirable bond of Love – according to the Oracle –
which first jumped out of the Mind
Wrapped fire in the fire that is bound, in order to mingle
The Source Craters, spreading the flower of his fire.[89]

Similarly to the descriptions in *Chaldean Oracles* is Love portrayed in one of the Gnostic cosmogonies, which could constitute an example of the presence of Greek threads in the Middle East. In this case the words of Prof. Birger A. Pearson are very significant: "From ancient times it has been averred that Gnostics derived their basic ideas from the Greek philosophers, especially Pythagoras and Plato." (Pearson, 1984: 56)[90]. This powerful effect of the Greek cosmogonies on the concepts present in the Middle East, is shown for example in the gnostic work *On the Origin of the World*,[91] from the corpus of the Nag Hammadi Library,[92] discovered in Egypt preserved only in the Coptic extract which dates back to the 4th century

διὰ γὰρ τοῦτον τὸν ἔρωτα πάντα ἥρμοσται ἀλλήλοις·

ᾧ σὺν ἔρωτι μένει κόσμου στοιχεῖα θέοντα.

[88] What exactly corresponds to the interpretation of Proclus, who generally treats fire as an allegory of the Mind (*In Platonis Cratylum commentaria* 170, 4: τὸ πῦρ εἰκών ἐστιν νοῦ).

[89] *In Platonis Parmenidem* 769, 4-12: τὰ εἴδη τὰ νοητὰ (…) καὶ διακέκριται ἅμα καὶ συγκέκριται δεσμῷ Ἔρωτος ἀγητοῦ κατὰ τὸ Λόγιον·

ὃς ἐκ νόου ἔκθορε πρῶτος

ἑσσάμενος πυρὶ πῦρ συνδέσμιον, ὄφρα κεράσῃ

πηγαίους κρατῆρας, ἑοῦ πυρὸς ἄνθος ἐπισχών.

[90] On the subject of the recepction of the Hesiod's *Theogony* among the Gnostics, esp. in connection with the descriptions of Love, see. eg. Mansfeld, 1981: 174-182; Turner, Majercik, 2000; Tardieu, 1974.

[91] The title given by scholars.

[92] Seems significant that among the religious gospels and other Gnostic texts of Nag Hammadi was also a fragment of Plato's *Republic* 588a-589b (NHC VI 5).

AD. The original was written in Greek.[93] We can find a lot of topics characteristic of Gnostic texts, such as hypostatic hierarchies of deities/archonts of the characteristic names, evil demiurge or that which is particularly important in the context of the debate on Yezidism, the privileged position of the serpent, called the "wise among all"[94], an animal to which man owes the Knowledge.[95]

Its author, presumably being inspired by the *Theogony* of Hesiod, starts with the remarks on Chaos,[96] and then describes the emergence of the seven divine beings and the seven heavens. Apart from this in the course of cosmogonic processes emerges the Love. Love or Eros arises from the "luminous blood" spilled by Providence[97] of the Divine demiurge Jaldabaoth.[98]

> Out of that first blood **Eros appeared**, being androgynous. His masculinity is Himireris[99], **being fire from the light**. His femininity that is with him – a soul of blood – is from the stuff of Pronoia. He is **very lovely in his beauty, having a charm beyond all the creatures of chaos**. Then all the gods and their angels, when they beheld Eros, became enamored of him. And appearing in all of them, he set them afire: just as from a single lamp many lamps are lit, and one and the same light is there, but the lamp is not diminished. And in this way, Eros became dispersed in all the created beings of chaos, and was not diminished. **Just as from the midpoint of light and darkness Eros appeared** and at the midpoint of the angels and mankind the sexual union of Eros was

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[93] Cf. comments by Myszor, 2008: 321; Bethge 2001: 236 ff.

[94] NHC II 5, 118, 25 "The wisest of all creatures" (tr. H.-G. Bethge, B. Layton, *On the Origin of the World* (II, 5 and XIII, 2), [in:] Robinson, 1988).

[95] In connection with Yezidism noteworthy are its structural relationships with other Gnostics – Ophites ("Devotees of the Serpent"), or Perates who worshiped the biblical Serpent.

[96] Text opens the following remark (II 5, 97, 24-30): "Seeing that everybody, gods of the world and mankind, says that nothing existed prior to chaos, I, in distinction to them, shall demonstrate that they are all mistaken, because they are not acquainted with the origin of chaos, nor with its root. Here is the demonstration." (tr. H.-G. Bethge, B. Layton, *On the Origin of the World, loc. cit.*).

[97] I.e. Pronoia. Ph. Perkins points out the association of the Love with Providence in the cosmogonical context in Plutarch's *De facie in orbe lunae* (927a) where also refers to the Stoics, Empedocles, Parmenides and Hesiod; (Perkins, 1980: 39; the paper attempts to demonstrate the Platonic roots of Gnosticism).

[98] Name supposedly of Aramaic origin (see: Rudolph, 20054: 83).

[99] Reference to Himeros belonging, along with Eros, to the mythical procession of Aphrodite.

consummated, so out of the earth the primal pleasure blossomed. The woman followed earth. And marriage followed woman. Birth followed marriage. Dissolution followed birth. After that Eros, the grapevine sprouted up out of that blood, which had been shed over the earth. Because of this, those who drink of it conceive the desire of sexual union. After the grapevine, a fig tree and a pomegranate tree sprouted up from the earth, together with the rest of the trees, all species, having with them their seed from the seed of the authorities and their angels. (NHC II 5, 109, 1-20)[100]

What particularly stands out in light of the remarks made earlier regarding the descriptions of Love by the Yezidis and the Greeks,[101] is the way some Gnostics depict love, as connected with light/fire.[102] And also the following issues are common to these three groups:

1. Deriving Love from god-demiurge.
2. Indicating of the primarily cosmogonic nature of Love.
3. Connecting Love with light.

The parallels between the various versions of Greek cosmogonies were perceived long ago. in the 2nd century AD Irenaeus of Lyons, one of the Church Fathers and the author of *Against Heresies*, claimed that the placing of Love (Cupid) into the cosmogonies by the Gnostics has ancient Greek origins. In a chapter on the Gnostic movement of the Valentinians he wrote:

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[100] Tr. H.-G. Bethge, B. Layton.

[101] As G. A. G. Stroumsa writes (1984: 68): "The highly syncretistic author of Orig. World integrated various elements of Hellenistic mythology into the basic Gnostic sexual myth of generation."

[102] Regarding the relationship of Love (Amor) with light and fire, see the description of Soul and Eros by Apuleius of Madaura in *Metamorphoses* (V, 13 and 23). Cf. a comment by Tardieu (1974: 159-165). Tardieu enumerates evident Greek parallels: "En situant Éros « au milieu » de la lumière et des ténèbres, l'auteur gnostique réunit, en un savant syncrétisme, la généalogie grecque d'Éros né de la nuit et principe de la lumière, et l'action du démiurge juif qui sépare lumière-ténèbres, nuit-jour. D'autre part, cette perspective rejoint l'idée grecque d'un Éros premier de tous les dieux, πρώτιστος ou πρωτόγονος." (Tardieu, 1974: 164).

With a much higher probability and charm tells about the birth of the universe one of the ancient comedians, Antiphanes, in the *Theogony*. For he says that from the night and silence emerged Chaos, and then out of Chaos and Night Cupid, and from this the light, and later according to him the next generation of the first gods. Then again introduces the second generation of the gods and the creation of the world… (*Adversus Haereses* II 14 1)[103]

About acting in the 4th century BC the poet Antiphanes of whom we know little, the cosmogony described by him is preserved only in the commentaries. But in this case something else is important, a few hundred years later the thread of cosmogonical Love is combined with the concepts of the Greeks and Gnostics are seen as their heirs. After these remarks on Antiphanes, Irenaeus returns to the Gnostics:

These men took a plot from here and rounded it by their comments as it were reflections on nature, changed only the names, and presented the very same beginning of the generation and emergence of the universe. In place of Night and Silence they substituted names Bythos [= Depth] and Sige [= Silence], and in place of Chaos – Nous [= Mind], and in place of Cupid ("by whom" – as saith the comical poet – "everything else has been ordered") they put here Verbum [= Logos][104], and for the first and greatest gods they have formed the Aeons.[105]

As the Greeks so the Gnostics preceded the appearance of Love and Light by the vision of endless Night. Because of the luminous character of love and its

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[103] Tr. A. Rodziewicz; "Multo verisimilius et gratius de universorum genesi dixit unus de veteribus comicis Antiphanes in Theogonia. Ille enim de nocte et silentio Chaos emissum dicit, dehinc de Chao et nocte Cupidinem, et ex hoc lumen, dehinc reliquam secundum eum primam deorum genesin.Post quos rursus secundam deorum generationem inducit, et mundi fabricationem.".

[104] With regard to the identification of Eros with Reason/Rationality (λόγος) born of the divine Mind and Soul before the appearance of the bodily reality, cf. extensive argument of Plotinus in *Enneads*, esp. III, 5, 7-8.

[105] *Adversus Haereses* cont. II 14 1: "Unde ipsi assumentes sibi fabulam, quasi naturali disputatione commenti sunt, solummodo demutantes eorum nomina, idipsum autem universorum generationis initium et emissionem ostendentes; pro nocte et silentio, Bythum et Sigen nominantes; pro Chao autem, Nun; et pro Cupidine («per quem», ait Comicus, «reliqua omnia disposita»), hi Verbum attraxerunt; et pro primis ac maximis diis, Aeonas formaverunt.".

life-giving activity, one can see allegorical references to the sun, what in fact the ancient exegetes already did. For instance, Plutarch, well acquainted with the religious mosaic of the Midle Eastern Hellenistic areas, in his treatise on love makes an interesting note that "the Egyptians, like the Greeks, know two Love/Eros – one vulgar, and the other heavenly, but the third they consider Love/Eros [as] the Sun"[106]. With the sun (and the serpent/phallus) were also identified Orphic Phanes.[107]

Similar associations also apply to the Gnostic movement, the so-called Sethians, who had to postulate existence of the cosmic trinity or "roots" of the reality: Light-Spirit-Darkness portrayed in their iconography and rituals. The first of these elements, the Light, has been linked with resembling Phanes image of the winged old man with a phallus, who they have described as the streaming Light.[108] Hippolytus of Alexandria (III AD), who wrote about them in his work against heresies (*Refutatio omniu haeresium* V, 20) sees in their system an eclectic continuation of Orphism.[109] In his opinion Setians have also associated this Light with rationality.

In the another Gnostic text from the corpus of the Nag Hammadi Library, *The Paraphrase of Shem*[110] we read:

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[106] *Amatorius* 764b3-5: Αἰγύπτιοι δύο μὲν Ἕλλησι παραπλησίως Ἔρωτας, τόν τε πάνδημον καὶ τὸν οὐράνιον, ἴσασι, τρίτον δὲ νομίζουσιν Ἔρωτα τὸν ἥλιον. Further he develops the thread on the analogy between Love and the Sun.

[107] Eg. Macrobius writes that Orpheus "called the Sun Fanes because of the light and lighting" (*Saturnalia* I 18, 13: "Φάνητα dixit solem ἀπὸ τοῦ φωτὸς καί φανεροῦ id est a lumine atque inluminatione."). Cf. a set of examples cataloged by M. L. West in his *Orphic poems* (West 1983: 206).

[108] See Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, V 20 7, 1-2: ἐπιγέγραπται δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ πρεσβύτου· Φάος ῥυέτης. Marcovich proposed an amendment "Light" : "Phanes" (cf. Marcovich 1974/1988: 447-451/89-92).

[109] In the opinion of M. J. Edwards, who analyzed the Hippolytus's fragment: "the Sethians also made their Demiurge a type of Eros" (Edwards, 1991: 30f.). I do not quote here the text of Hippolytus because of the quality of its condition and the necessity numerous amendments. I refer to the critical Marcovich's edition and his article *Phanes, Phicola and the Sethians* (Marcovich 1974: 448), where he quoted the Greek text along with the proposed emendations.

[110] Perhaps identical to the attributed by Hippolytus to Sethians *Paraphrase of Seth* (Robinson 1988: 341). Cf. the similar description of the luminous old-young deity comes from Light-God described in the Gnostic *Apocryphon of John* (NHC II 1, 2, 25 ff.).

There was Light and Darkness and there was Spirit between them. Since your root fell into forgetfulness – he who was the unbegotten Spirit – I reveal to you the truth about the powers. The Light was thought full of hearing and word (λόγος = Reason[111]). They were united into one form. And the Darkness was wind in waters. He possessed the mind wrapped in a chaotic fire. And the Spirit between them was a gentle (νοῦς = Mind [A.R.]), humble light. These are the three roots.[112]

As previously Orphics, so later Gnostics postulated a theory of unity preceding the formation of the world prior to the multiplicity ("one form" in the quoted passage) whether absolute (having no elements) or understood as the completeness of elements (called the Pleroma)[113]. This theory obviously isn't a distinctive feature only of those religious systems. The sole empirical observation of the dispersed multitude of different elements leads us to the hypothesis of the existence of unity and this concept of unity leads the mind directly toward the concept of the primal one. What is worth noting, Gnosticism describes this unity in almost technical terms, as did some Greek authors, especially the Pythagoreans.

Also in the Yezidi cosmogony we can find the equivalent of this theory, which they represent by a form of the cosmogonic Pearl. However, I concentrate primarily on the thread of Love, so to the Pearl motif I will refer only briefly to show the role that it plays in respect to the main topic.

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[111] Here is no place for a detailed explanation of this controversy. The Greek word λόγος means the mental faculty "reason" (lat. *ratio*) or the oration (lat. *oratio*), not the "word." Translation it as the "word" stems from the Catholic tradition, and has no justification in the Greek, which has a different terminology to denote the "word" (cf. Rodziewicz, 2011: 167-185).

[112] NHC VII 1, 1, 25-2,5; tr. M. Roberge and F. Wisse (Robinson 1988: 342).

[113] According to. J. M. Dillon the prototype for the Gnostic Pleroma was the divine pattern of the intelligible world, described by Plato in the *Timaeus*, on the basis of which God formed the world. So the concept of the Pleroma can be regarded as the "implantation from the Platonist tradition into Gnosticism" (Dillon, 1992: 108).

3. LOVE AND THE PEARL

As mentioned previously the belief in the original Unity is present among the cosmogonies of many religions (perhaps even in all of them). For example in the *Qur'an* we read:

> Are those who disbelieve aware that the heavens and the earth were of one piece/joined together, then We separated them, and We made every living thing from water. Will they not believe? (XXI 30)[114]

According to the story provided by the Yezidi hymns, the appearance of Love is preceded by the Pearl. These two elements are connected in some way, such as in the previously quoted *Qewlê Zebûnî Meksûr*:

THE HYMN OF THE WEAK BROKEN ONE	QEWLÊ ZEBÛNÎ MEKSÛR
6 When **the King came from the Pearl**	*Wekî Pedşayî li durê bû*
Some perceptions developed from it	*Hisyatek jê çihê bû*
The branch of love came into being. (…)	*Şaxa mihbetê ava bû.* (…)
7 Foundations were laid and established	*Kirine rikn û rikinî*
The Pearl burst open in its awe	*Dur bi heybetê hincinî*
It no longer had the strength to contain (God).	*Taqet nema hilgirî.*
10 It no longer had the strength to remain patient	*Taqet nema bisebirî*
It became adorned with many colors	*Zor bi renga xemilî*
It became red and white and yellow.	*Sipî bû,sor bû, sefirî.*
11 The Pearl was adorned, **it became shining**	*Dur xemilî, geş bû*
When there was neither earth nor sky nor Throne (…)	*Wekî ne 'erd bû, ne ezman bû, ne 'erş bû*

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[114] Tr. A. Rodziewicz; أَوَلَمْ يَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَٰهُمَاۖ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ حَىٍّۖ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

12	My **King separated the Pearl from himself**	*Padşê min dur ji xwe cihê kir*
	He approved of one Companion	*Bi yarekî ra erê kir*
	He fashioned a luminous *khirqe*. (…)	*Xerqê nûrani çêkir.* (…)
14	My King had **caused the Pearl to become visible** (…)	*Padşê min dabû durê nedere.* (…)
15	My King spoke pleasantly	*Padşê min xoş kir sihbete*
	The King and the Cup and Love	*Padşa û kase û mihbete*
	They had created rules and limits	*Ewan çêkiribû hed û sede*
	There love had its place. (…)	*Lêk rûniştin mihbete.*
24	What did my King say to the Pearl?	*Padşay çî gote durê*
	From the Pearl water was coming!	*Ji durê weryabû ave.*
25	**Water came from the Pearl**	*Av ji durê werya*
	It became the ocean and water collected in it.	*Bû behir û pengiya.*[115]

We find similar description in other hymns and prayers, for example in *The Hymn of B and A* (*Quewlê Bê Elîf*) and *The Hymn of the Creation of the World* (*Qewlê Afirîna Dinyayê*) or in *The Hymn of the Thousand and One Names* (*Quewlê Hezar û Yek Nav*) *The Prayer of Belief* (*Dû'a Bawiriyê*). I will quote only fragments of a few of them:

	THE HYMN OF B AND A	QUEWLÊ BÊ ELÎF
1	B and A!	*Bê û elîf*
	The luminous Throne in the Pearl	*Textê nûrî sedef*
	My King is hidden inside it. (…)	*Pedşê min li navdayî bi xef.*
5	My **King created by himself, he became the Pearl** (…)	*Pedşê min bi xo efirandibû dure.* (…)
6	By himself my **King created the White Pearl**.	*Pedşê min bi xo efirandî dura beyzaye.*

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[115] Tr.: Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 58-60.

7	Let us praise the White Pearl	*Da bideyn medeha dura spiye*
	A Cup was created from it (…)	*Kasek jê dihefiriye*

8	Before scripture, before writing	*Berî mişûre, berî xete*
	Before the Pen, before Truth	*Berî qeleme, berî heqîqete*
	Men had come to know this love.	*Mêr nasibû ew mihbete.*

9	**Love is from that**	*Mihbeta ji wêye*
	Our Truth, from that pond.[116]	*Heqîqeta, dot û dêye.*

The Hymn of the Creation of the World   Qewlê Afirîna Dinyayê

1	Oh Lord, in the world there was darkness (…)	*Ya rebî dinya hebû tarî* (…)

4	**In the ocean was only a Pearl**	*Di behra da tenê hebu dûr*
	It did not progress, it did not progress	*Ne dîmaşiya, ne dîmaşiya*
	You quickly gave it a soul	*Te xaş rûh anî ber*
	You made your own **light manifest in it** (…)	*Nûra xa lê peyda kir.* (…)

8	**The Pearl burst open in its awe of God** (…)	*Dur ji heybeta êzdan hincinî* (…)
	It became adorned with such colours	*Ji rengê îsan xemilî*
	Red and white became visible in it. (…)	*Sor û spî lê hêwirî* (…)

10	He threw rennet into the ocean	*Havên avête behrê*
	The ocean coagulated because of it (…)	*Behr pê meyanî*
	He built heaven and earth, fourteen spheres[117]	*Çarde flebeq 'erd û ezman nijnî*
	Our God brought the Pearl out.	*Êzdanê me dur deranî.*

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[116] Tr.: Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 71-72.

[117] That is the seven spheres of heaven and the seven spheres of earth.

11	**He threw Love into it**	*Mihbet avête navê*
	From it he brought forth two eyes	*Jê peyda kir dû çavê*
	A great deal of water flowed from it	*Jê herikî pir avê*
12	**Water flowed from the Pearl**	*Av ji durê herikî*
	It became an ocean without end, without beginning[118]	*Bû behra bê serî bê binî.*

The Yezidi hymns depicting God as the source of the world and light, the moment of the appearance of Love, movement, change, and the beginning of generation, repeatedly connect with the image of the Pearl. The simplified cosmogonical sequence captured therein looks as follows:

1. In the dark limitless ocean the Pearl that contains/is God remains still.
2. Opening of the luminous Pearl and the emergence of God.
3. Spilling the endless sea/ocean of elements;
4. The appearance of luminous Love;
5. Elements are connected/coagulated by Love.

The parallels to the image of Pearls or some unit of luminosity preceding creation of the world is present also within the cosmogonies of Mandeans[119], Ahl-e Haqq, or Zoroastrians. It can also be concluded that the Pearl corresponds to the present in many cultures image of the cosmic egg. According to Zoroastrianism, whose confessors live territorially very close to the Yezidis' homeland, one can pay attention to the fragment described in the *Bundahišn* (*The Primal Creation*), the work representing a Middle Persian compilation of the Zoroastrian cosmogony (also showing a Greek influence).[120] From the initial verses we learn about the luminous object created by Ahura Mazda:

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[118] Tr: Kreyenbroek, Rashow, 2005: 66-67.

[119] In the religious hymns of the Mandeans the "Pure Pearl" symbolizes the soul (cf. hymns 96; 214; 252; in: Drower, 1959).

[120] Another title: *Zand-āgāhīh* (*Knowledge from the Zand*); see: Boyce, 1968: 40-41; cf.: www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bundahisn-primal-creation. Original text: *The Bûndahishn. Being a Facsimile of the TD Manuscript*, ed. T. D. and B. T. Anklesaria, Bombay 1908.

Out of His own Self, out of the Essence of Light, Ohrmazd created forth the astral body of His own creatures, in the astral form of luminous and white Fire, whose circumference is conspicuous; and out of the Essence of those Spirits, which remove the opponent that is in both the creations: that which is Power and that which is Time.

He created forth the astral body of the good Wind, as the Wind was necessary; – there is someone who calls it the Wind which is the Lord of duration.

He created forth the creatures, with the help of the Wind which is the Lord of duration; for, when He created even the creatures, the Wind, verily, was an agent which was necessary in His work. (*Great Bundahišn* I 44-45)[121]

The creation of the material world, as in Yezidism, takes place later. But we don't read about the pearl. Another analogy in the Zoroastrian cosmogony would be descriptions of the primal creation of heaven, more specifically the celestial sphere containing all things, which is described as luminous, round and firm.[122] The Zoroastrian cosmogony is also connected with the Yezidi version by a description of the water springing up from this glittering object:

First, He [=Ahura Mazda] produced the shining and visible Sky, which is very distant, and of steel, of shining steel, whose substance is the male diamond; its top is connected with the Endless Light; He produced all the creations, within the Sky, the fortification, resembling a bag within which is laid every implement which was requisite for the contest, or resembling a dwelling wherein everything remains; the prop of the base of the Sky, whose width is as much as its length, its length as much as its height, and its height as much as its capacity, is entirely like the desert, the chasm, and the forest.

(…)

Secondly, He created the Water out of the substance of the Sky. (*Bundahišn* Ia 6-7)[123]

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[121] Tr. B. T. Anklesaria: *Zand-Ākāsīh, Iranian or Greater Bundahišn*, Bombay 1956.

[122] Or even metallic (as in *Farvardīn Yašt* 2). M. Boyce indicates that the Avestan word for sky, "Asman" also means "stone" or "stones" (Boyce, 1975: 74). Cf. *Datistān-ī dīnīk* XC 2: "The sky is a dome, wide and lofty; its inside and whole width and boundaries (*akhyakiha*), besides its material existence, are the stone of light, of all stones the hardest and most beautiful." (*Datistān-ī dīnīk*, tr. E. W. West).

[123] Tr. B. T. Anklesaria: *Zand-Ākāsīh, Iranian or Greater Bundahišn*, *op. cit.*

But a much greater similarity to the threads of the Yezidi cosmogony, especially to 1) the creation of two worlds (the intelligible pattern and the corporeal world), 2) the Pearl and 3) the ocean, we find in the works of the Yezidis' neighbors – the Yârsân (Ahl-e Haqq).[124]

In a well known article dedicated to the Ahl-e Haqq cosmogony, *La naissance du monde chez les Kurdes Ahl-e Haqq*,[125] M. Mokri cites its extract derived from the manuscript that he possessed entitled (*Šāhnāma-e Haqiqat*):

A ce moment n'existait ni Terre, ni Ciel, ni Univers, ni rien d'autre, ni Trone, ni Tablette, ni Calame, ni Firmament, ni Paradis, ni enfer, ni houris, ni anges, ni Planète, ni Soleil, ni Lune. L'Essence de l'Adoré existait en tant que *Yā*[126]. Il n'y avait dans l'Existence aucune créature que la Vérité suprême, unique, vivante et adorable. Sa demeure était dans la Perle et son Essence était cachée. La Perle était dans la coquille et la coquille était dans la mer et les ondes de la mer recouvraient tout.[127]

With the exception of the existence of the shell (imaging perhaps an additional hypostatic level), the similarities are evident.[128] A similar vision also presents another manuscript cited by Mokri, *'Ālam-e Haqiqat*, which emphasizes the original uniqueness or oneness of God:

Avant le commencement de la création, l'Essence de la Vérité suprême était dans l'état d'Unité. (…)

Il entra dans le sein de l'océan de la Perle.[129]

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[124] Schematic summary of the presence of this thread in these three territorially close religions, presents Kh. Omarkhali in her article: *The Status and Role of the Yezidi Legends and Myths*, (Omarkhali, 2009: 203 ff.).

[125] Mokri, 1963: 159-168.

[126] Supreme God.

[127] *Ibidem*: 160. (cf. Mokri, 1966, 1971).

[128] See the cited article, where were collected many similar passages. Significant similarities are also present in the text *Tadhkira'i A'lā* (see the edition: Ivanov, 1953). Regarding the thread of the Pearl, cf. also: M. Mokri, 1960: 463-481; Stoyanov, 2001: 19-33 (author refers also to Yezidis, and points to the many analogies concerning the thread of the Pearl, including Ahl-e Haqq and Eastern Christianity).

[129] Mokri, 1963: 161.

Who at the very beginning resided in the complete silence, which according to Mokri "symbolizes the undifferentiated state"[130].

This lack of diversity is emphasized also in the Yezidi apocryphal, *Meshefa Resh* (the *Black Book*). Although it is considered a forgery, it seems to be a counterfeit, which quite well presents an elementary knowledge of the Yezidi theology and shows that the vision of the monadic Pearl has a permanent place within the Yezidi cosmogony. We read in it:

In the beginning God created the **White Pearl** (درة البيضة) from himself, **and the bird**, calling him "Angar." (…) He shouted at Pearl with a powerful shout. As a result four pieces arose, and from inside of it overflowed the water, and so was created the sea. The world was **rounded** but **undivided**.[131]

The thread of the original One/Unity which when broken or opened results in the emergence of elements and generating the world is present in many cosmogonies. What is interesting in the case of the Yezidi cosmogony is the connection of these four elements with the symbolism of water. What should therefore be noted, in turn, is that in the ancient texts of the Greeks the connection of four elements with the water resulted in the recognition the symbolism of the sea as referring to the matter.[132]

Considering descriptions of the original unity in ancient European tradition, in the first place one needs to put a clear analogy between the Yezidi cosmogony and that presented by Hesiod.

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[130] *Ibidem*.

[131] Arabic text in: Joseph, 1909: 122-123:

في البداية خلق الله درة البيضة من سره العزيز وخلق طر اسمه انغر

(…) فصاح على الدرة صيحة عظيمة فانفصلت وصارت اربعة قطع من بطنها خرج الماء وصار بحراً وكانت الدنيا مدورة بلا فراق

As regards the problematic vocabulary, see: Gasparro, 1974: 201. Ph. G. Kreyenbroek juxtaposes a similar section with the following translation of the Ahl-e Haqq song's fragment: "The water of the sea was an ocean. For some time the Pearl was in the water. There was no (contrast between) ocean and dry land. The King of the Universe (i.e. God) uttered a command to the Stone, the Stone disintegrated, and from the pieces of the stone smoke rose up into the air" (Kreyenbroek, Marzolph, 2010: 77).

[132] Cf. passages that I juxtaposed in the *Idea i Forma*, (Rodziewicz 2012: 317-318, n.937; See also Pépin 1953: 257–259.

Above I have already pointed out the parallels concerning Love/Eros, and I mentioned that the beginning of cosmogony presented by Hesiod suggests the existence of a specific state before Chaos came into being. Later commentators of *Theogony* explicitly said that thus Hesiod indicates that before the Chaos, i.e. the crack or abyss and before formation of the world, the One or state of the Unity was present. "One" as a both mathematical and theological term appears in a large number of sources connected with the Pythagoreans, who in order to describe the cosmogonical sequence started from the original One (τὸ ἕν) (or Monad/Unit (μόνας) opposed to Dyad)[133], which in turn had generated the numbers, and then the numbers culminated in the incorporeal formal world, that was a pattern for the physical world. One can even say that what the other religious systems described by the language of a myth, the Pythagoreans enclosed in the formal and mathematical terminology. It is worth mentioning that this original Unity they described in mathematical language as "even-odd"[134] (similar to the Orphic, who called Phanes Protogonus the "male-female"). From the original number Pythagoreans let emerge the first order of the four elements which constitutes a formal pattern for the fundamental elements of the physical world: 1 for the fire, 2 for the air, 3 for the water and 4 for the earth. This first four numbers (1+2+3+4), called Tetractys is at the same time an original pattern of the universe symbolized by their sum (10).[135]

The original state of unity mentioned also associated with Pythagoreanism, Empedocles who pointed to Love as the primary cosmogonical factor that brings the generated world of elements to the state of unity.[136] To describe the original unity he used his own new term the "Sphairos" meaning the sphere or globe (that resembles a little the Zoroastrian thread mentioned above). That perfectly spheri-

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[133] In regard to the difference between these terms, cf. Syrianus, *In Aristotelis metaphysica commentaria* 151, 17-21; Theon of Smyrna, *De utilitate mathematicae* 20, 19-20; and *Cohortatio ad gentiles* (18b1-d4) attributed to Saint Justin Martyr.

[134] Cf. Iamblichus of Apamea, *Theologoumena arithmeticae* 1, 12.

[135] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 986a15–21; Por. Simplikios, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* IX 181, 7-30 and 230, 34-231, 2.

[136] This idea can be seen even more clearly in the *Strasbourg Papyrus* (side L, v. 267), cf. Janko, 2005: 16.

cal Sphairos can be understood as an original invisible model of the world.[137] In his cosmogonical poem, Empedocles wrote:

Once the One rises – to be a single [thing] from the multitude,

then it's growing again – to be the multitude from the One.[138]

Similar words about the original unity Parmenides also wrote, to whom he, (Hesiod and Empedocles), is ascribing that he put the thread of Love into descriptions of cosmogony. The topic of the original unity, often associated with light is quite common in Greek tradition, and we find it in many works of the ancient authors, in which it takes various forms – from the mathematical, through Empedoclean "Sphairos" or Parmenidean Being as such, "monadic nature," or Beauty[139]. The idea of the primordial unity is assigned to the Greek tradition by its most ancient theologians, especially the mythical Orpheus:

I 494   *… Orpheus*

Having raised kithara in a left hand started the song

And he sang that the Earth and the Heaven and the Sea

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[137] Cf. Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, VII 29, 13–14, 63:
"And about the idea of the world, which it is ordered under the influence of Friendship, says this:

For don't rise from the back two offshoots,

Neither feet nor nimble knees, nor any genital organs

But Sphairos he was equal to itself.

Such is the most beautiful world's form that Friendship made of the multitude [of things] – one. While the Strife the cause of the ordering separation according to parts, of this one disconnects and performs the multitude [of things]." Cf. Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* X 1123, 26–1124, 6 and X 1183, 32–1184,1.

[138] Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* IX 158, 15:

τοτὲ μὲν γὰρ ἓν ηὐξήθη μόνον εἶναι ἐκ πλεόνων

τοτὲ δ' αὖ διέφυ πλέον' ἐξ ἑνὸς εἶναι.

[139] As in Plato's *Phaedrus* (250b5-c6), where he describes the primordial state: "The luminous Beauty could see at that time […] [before an incarnation, when we have stayed] along with the glorious choir […] when were complete and free of evil, that so troubled us later. […] We were pure in the pure light and not sealed in this what we call now the surrounding body, trapped like oysters."

Once combined together in one shape…[140]

and to his (no less mythical) disciple or son Musaeus who had to state that:

Everything arises from the One and dissolves in it.[141]

In similar terms had to formulate his cosmogony Linus (usually mentioned in sources together with Orpheus and Musaeus):

There was once this time where everything was fused together.[142]

The theory of the same structure appears again in the texts of Plato or his disciple, Aristotle:

One harmony from all these things together singing and dancing in heaven [ie. planets], arises from the One and in the One has its end.[143]

and then it is established within the whole mystical and theological tradition of the Greeks in particular among Platonists, such as Plotinus and Numenius, Proclus and Damascius. However, it is less common to correlate this beginning with Love, as in the Yezidi cosmogony. For this reason, a parallel that is especially interesting is discussed above the Orphic cosmogony, where the luminous god Phanes Protogonus also called Love/Eros emerges from the primary pearl-like egg.

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[140] Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica* (ed. H. Fraenkel):

ʾΟρφεύς,

λαιῇ ἀνασχόμενος κίθαριν, πείραζεν ἀοιδῆς.

Ἤειδεν δ' ὡς γαῖα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἠδὲ θάλασσα,

τὸ πρὶν ἔτ' ἀλλήλοισι μιῇ συναρηρότα μορφῇ

[141] Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum* I 3, 5–6: φάναι τε ἐξ ἑνὸς τὰ πάντα γίνεσθαι καὶ εἰς ταὐτὸν ἀναλύεσθαι.

[142] ἦν ποτέ τοι χρόνος οὗτος, ἐν ᾧ ἅμα πάντ' ἐπεφύκει (ibidem I 4); cf. Stobaeus, *Anthologium* I 10, 52-7.

[143] Aristotle, *De mundo* 399a12-13: Μία δὲ ἐκ πάντων ἁρμονία συναδόντων καὶ χορευόντων κατὰ τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐξ ἑνός τε γίνεται καὶ εἰς ἓν ἀπολήγει.

4. THE PEARL AND THE EGG – MORE DISTANT PARALLELS

The image of the cosmic egg is known to many religions. However, the Yezidis do not talk about the egg, but about the Pearl,[144] what allows them to emphasize it much better are the four following segments: 1) the relationship with light – because pearls, unlike eggs, glitter; 2) the relationship with water symbolism; 3) the relationship with beauty and what is particularly important, and overlooked by commentators 4) monism. Yezidism, because of a strongly accented antidualistic threads finds in the Pearl a better representative of the essential element of its theology, than in the egg, which, due to its structure, is more appropriate for dualistic systems, e.g. Zoroastrianism.[145]

As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, despite the striking parallels, it is too simplistic to detect in the Yezidis' theology merely a duplication of the Greek concepts, or more generally the copying of Western tradition by the East. Of course, on many levels such a phenomenon occurred (e.g. as a result of the campaign of Alexander the Great), but the area of theory, especially the theological and cosmological is much more resistant to the adoption of any patterns, than it is in the area of architecture and technical inventions.[146]

However, not being able to exclude such a possibility, we should also pay attention to two particular areas parallel to the described issue, the connection of Love and the Pearl that appear within the tradition of the East, of which the Yezidis at some time and by some intermediate elements may have to deal with. By that I mean cultures much older than the Greeks – the Phoenicians and the Aryans.

I will refer to them only briefly here.

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[144] According to the Egg–Pearl analogy, cf. Gasparro, 1974: 201-227.

[145] Considerations for detailed symbolism of the egg one can find in the ancient literature on Orphism. Cosmic analogies are there built in respect to the opposition: white-egg – yolk. Especially interesting seems the egg thread in Zoroastrianism. besides the fragment cited above, see. Plutarchus, *De Iside et Osiride* 369f4-370b2; cf. Gasparro, 1974: 218f.

[146] Cf. Vasunia, 2007a: 238.

4.1. Phoenician Desire

Much earlier than the described formal relation Greeks–Yezidis (West–East),took place the geographic-temporal relation of the opposite direction (East–West), which has survived in the West in the most striking form of the myth of Europe. According to ancient transmissions Europe was supposed to be a Phoenician princess abducted by the god Zeus and taken to Crete. Upon which her brother sailed out of the Phoenician Tyre to look for her. His name was Cadmus. According to the myth, he gave the Greeks sixteen Phoenician letters that formed the first European alphabet. Thus, traces of Eastern elements in European culture were preserved *inter alia* in the very beginnings of the Greek scripture, which was originally written from right to left as it is in the Middle East, with no distinction between uppercase and lowercase letters. In other words, to the understanding of some essential elements that constitute the beginnings of European culture we have to look to the East.[147] Undoubtedly, also the intellectual relationships between thinkers of the Greek and Persian worlds occurred a long time ago and concerned even those who

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[147] Tradition of deriving Greek cosmogonical thought from the Eastern cultures, esp. of the Chaldeans, Egyptians and Zoroastrian is quite old, and currently is undergoing a renaissance. Eg. in Plato's *Timaeus* we find an emphasis on relationships with Egypt. With regard to the influence of the Chaldeans, Zoroastrians, and even Hindu, see. eg: Pausanias, *Graeciae descriptio* IV, 32, 4; Olympiodorus, *In Platonis Alcibiadem Commentarii* 2, 134-141; *Diogenes Laertius*, *op. cit.*, I 1 and 6-11. One of the most involved scholars trying to prove the imitativeness of the Greek concepts is M. L. West, who both – ancient Greek cosmogonies, as well as philosophical and religious thought derives with much ease from the Eastern areas pointing to the original cult of the sun, which echoed, are to be specific cosmogonies of the West. Cf. his *The East Face of Helicon* (West, 20032). In the *Orphic Poems* (West, 1983: 105) he writes: "The divine progenitor Time, who emerged between the sixth and the fourth centuries BC in India, Iran, Sidon, and Greece, developed out of the figure of the Eternal Sun, whose worship was particularly ancient and important in Egypt.").

Relationship with Zoroastrianism concerns esp. Pythagorean and Platonic school and those thinkers who emphasized the dualistic thread, but is seen also within the lexis, what is good illustrated by the word "magos," that entered to the Greek language. As W. Burkert stated: "The word magos (*magush*) is incontrovertible evidence for Iranian influence in Greece" (Burkert, 2004: 107). With regard to general description of the Greeks' reception of Zoroastrianism, cf.: Sherwood, Pemberton, 1929; Vasunia, 2007a, 2007b; Afnan, 1965; de Jong, 1997.

have dealt with cosmology.[148] But this of course does not rule out the possibility of the occurrence of the parallel phenomena on those of the opposite direction.

In the case of the discussed thread of Love and the relation to the pearl/egg, it should be noted that before the Yezidi and Greek cosmogonies a similar description was also known to the Phoenicians, according to ancient sources. Of course, with regard to the relationship with Yezidism, whether the thread already appeared (resp.: was attested in writings) in Phoenicia before we found it in the cosmogonies of the Greeks,and the potential impact on the Yezidi cosmogony doesn't change much. This is because in spite of much greater proximity of Phoenicia to the territories inhabited by the Yezidi (and Kurds) at a time when the most important figures for the Yezidi religion operated (sheikh Adi or Rabia), the influence of Hellenistic culture was much stronger.

Especially close to our thread is a cosmogony presented by a Sanchuniathon of Beirut,[149] cited from Philo of Byblos (who had to translate writings of the Phoenicians into Greek) by a Christian writer, Eusebius of Caesarea. Sanchuniathon had to present it as the oldest written cosmogony because was derived from the Taautos/Thoth (Egyptian god, the inventor of writing, equivalent to the Greek Hermes). Eusebius writes:

> Philo having enumerated these issues in the preface, then gets to explaining Sanchuniathon of Beirut expounding the Phoenician theology more or less like this:
>
> "As the first-principle of all things [Sanchuniathon] assumes a dark and windy air, or a wind of dark air and dark chaos; limitless, and with no end for ages. But when – he says – breath/spirit fell in love with its own beginnings and came into being blending, that tangle called Desire. It is a first-principle of the creation of all things. But it didn't know its own creation.And from its blending, breath/spirit, came Mot. Some say it's a mud, while others that the rot from a watery mixture. And from this came all the seed of creation and the birth of all things. And there were some animals having no sensual

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[148] Cf. West, 1971; Bidez, Cumont, 1938; Kingsley, 1995: 173-209; Vasunia, 2007a: 237-265; Vasunia, 2007b: 272-282.

[149] About him, see: *Praeparatio evangelica* I 9 20-24.

perceptions, from which came thinking animals, nd they were called "Zo-phasemin"[150], ie. "Watchers of the sky." And was/were formed like the shape of an egg and began to shine […] Mot and the sun and the moon and the stars and the great stars. (…)

These things were found in the cosmogony recorded by Taautos and in his writings"[151]

In the quoted fragment we find elements the parallels of which are present in the Yezidi cosmogony, that is: manifestation of love at the beginning of the world which was directed by the first creative factor towards itself (ἠράσθη τὸ πνεῦμα τῶν ἰδίων ἀρχῶν) and call this cosmogonic force the Desire/Lust (πόθος)[152] responsible for combining and plaiting and finally the coming of something "in the shape of an egg" accompanied by brightness.

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[150] Semitic ṣōpê šamīn; cf. West, 1994: 301.

[151] *Praeparatio evangelica* (ed. K. Mras) I 9,30,1-10,5,4: Ταῦτα κατὰ τὸ προοίμιον ὁ Φίλων διαστειλάμενος ἑξῆς ἀπάρχεται τῆς τοῦ Σαγχουνιάθωνος ἑρμηνείας, ὧδέ πως τὴν Φοινικικὴν ἐκτιθέμενος θεολογίαν· Τὴν τῶν ὅλων ἀρχὴν ὑποτίθεται ἀέρα ζοφώδη καὶ πνευματώδη ἢ πνοὴν ἀέρος ζοφώδους, καὶ χάος θολερόν, ἐρεβῶδες. ταῦτα δὲ εἶναι ἄπειρα καὶ διὰ πολὺν αἰῶνα μὴ ἔχειν πέρας. ὅτε δέ, φησίν, ἠράσθη τὸ πνεῦμα τῶν ἰδίων ἀρχῶν καὶ ἐγένετο σύγκρασις, ἡ πλοκὴ ἐκείνη ἐκλήθη πόθος. αὕτη δ' ἀρχὴ κτίσεως ἁπάντων. αὐτὸ δὲ οὐκ ἐγίνωσκε τὴν αὐτοῦ κτίσιν, καὶ ἐκ τῆς αὐτοῦ συμπλοκῆς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐγένετο Μώτ. τοῦτό τινές φασιν ἰλύν, οἱ δὲ ὑδατώδους μίξεως σῆψιν. καὶ ἐκ ταύτης ἐγένετο πᾶσα σπορὰ κτίσεως καὶ γένεσις τῶν ὅλων. ἦν δέ τινα ζῷα οὐκ ἔχοντα αἴσθησιν, ἐξ ὧν ἐγένετο ζῷα νοερά, καὶ ἐκλήθη Ζοφασημίν, τοῦτ' ἔστιν οὐρανοῦ κατόπται. καὶ ἀνεπλάσθη ὁμοίως ᾠοῦ σχήματι, καὶ ἐξέλαμψε Μὼτ ἥλιός τε καὶ σελήνη ἀστέρες τε καὶ ἄστρα μεγάλα. (…) Ταῦθ' ηὑρέθη ἐν τῇ κοσμογονίᾳ γεγραμμένα Τααύτου καὶ τοῖς ἐκείνου ὑπομνήμασιν.

[152] This version of the Phoenician cosmogony also confirmed the peripatetic Eudemus of Rhodes, cited by Damascius: "Sidonians, according to the same writer, before all things assume Time, Desire and Cloud. And from the mingling Desire with Cloud came two first-principles: Air and Breeze. (…) And again of two of them under the influence of mind were begotten an Otus/Egg – mental as it seems. (*De principiis* I 323, 1-6: Σιδώνιοι δὲ κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν συγγραφέα πρὸ πάντων Χρόνον ὑποτίθενται καὶ Πόθον καὶ Ὀμίχλην, Πόθου δὲ καὶ Ὀμίχλης μιγέντων ὡς δυεῖν ἀρχῶν Ἀέρα γενέσθαι καὶ Αὔραν. (…) Πάλιν δὲ ἐκ τούτων ἀμφοῖν Ὦτον γεννηθῆναι κατὰ τὸν νοῦν, οἶμαι, τὸν νοητόν.)

Certainly, it can not be ruled out that some version of the Phoenician cosmogony arrived to the Greeks,[153] or Yezidis. But, as I wrote, here I am not concerned with genealogies but with the analogies.[154]

4.2. The Indian Golden Egg and Kāma

Elements that have direct equivalents in the Yezidi cosmogony as well as the above mentioned parallel cosmogonies can also be found in a geographically remote area, in India. This applies particularly to works of the Vedic tradition: the *Rig Veda*, and the classic work of the Hindu cosmogony and ethics, entitled *Manusmṛti/Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*.

The *Manusmṛti*, dating about 200 BC – 200 AD, shows in detail the origins of the world, which emerged by the primal god from the luminous golden egg or embryo (*Hiraṇyagarbha*):

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[153] For example the Platonist Iamblichus in the biography of Pythagoras, writes about his relations with the Phoenicians and the descendants of someone named "the investigator of nature" Mochus (*De vita Pythagorica* III 13-14), about who in turn we read in the relation by another Platonist (Damascius in: *De principiis* I 323, 6-16) that in his cosmogony talked about the original Egg, from which emerged heaven and earth.

[154] Among the contemporary analysis, it is worth to mention once again the paper of M. West, *AB OVO, Orpheus, Sanchuniathon, and the Origins of the Ionian World Model*, in which he develops its earlier comments on the thread of the cosmic egg and tries to prove its Oriental origin: "It is well known that sometime before 700 B.C. the Greeks took over from the Near East a complex theogonic myth about the succession of rulers in heaven (…), and that this story forms the framework of Hesiod's *Theogony*. (…) It is less well known that at a later epoch, sometime before the middle of the sixth century B.C., a quite different and no less striking oriental myth about the beginning of things was introduced to Greece: the myth of the god Unaging Time (…) and of the cosmic egg out of which heaven and the earth were formed." (West 1994: 289.); cf. *idem* 1971: 28-36 and his comments in the *Orphic Poems* (West, 1983: 103-105, 198-201). However, West goes much further, and (based on Greek sources) tries to reconstruct the original Phoenician version of this myth (West 1994: 305): "The basic story will look like this:

In the beginning there was no heaven and no earth, but a limitless watery abyss, cloaked in murky darkness. This existed for long eons. Eventually Unaging Time, who was both male and female, made love to himself and generated an egg. Out of the egg came a radiant creator god, who made heaven and earth from it."

I

5   There was this world pitch-dark, indiscernible, without distinguishing marks, unthinkable,

     incomprehensible. (…)

6   Then the Self-existent Lord appeared. (…)

7   That One – who is beyond the range of senses. (…)

8   As he focused his thought with the desire of bringing forth diverse creatures from his own body,

     it was the waters that he first brought forth; and into them he poured forth his semen.

9   That became a gold egg, as bright as the sun; and in it he himself took birth as Brahmā. (…)

12   After residing in that egg for a full year, that Lord on his own split the egg in two by brooding

     on his own body.

13   From those two halves, he formed the sky and the earth, and between them the mid-space,

     the eight directions, and the eternal place of the waters.

14   From his body, moreover, he drew out the mind having the nature both the existent and

     the non-existent; and from the mind, the ego – producer of self-awareness and ruler

15   – as also the great self, all things composed of the three attributes.[155]

Similarly, as in the the Yezidi cosmogony we find several stages of generation. Original perfect god/One created the luminous embryo or an egg in which he placed himself, and then left it (as Brahmā). After a certain time that egg (in Yezidi cosmogony: the Pearl) split and from it emerged a differentiating world composed of elements, gods, time and a further order of the proto-castes and also humans.

Addendum to the image above brings one of the *Rig Veda* hymns. This work is much earlier than the *Manusmṛti* attests the thread of the cosmic golden egg, as a permanent elment of the Hindu cosmogony. Most significant is a fragment of the hymn from the X book (dated 1350-1200 BC):

X 129

1   Then was not non-existent nor existent: there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it.

     What covered in, and where? and what gave shelter? Was water there, unfathomed

     depth of water?

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[155] Tr. P. Olivelle: *Manusmṛti*, 2005: 87.

2   Death was not then, nor was there aught immortal: no sign was there, the day's and night's divider.

       That One Thing, breathless, breathed by its own nature: apart from it was nothing whatsoever.

3   Darkness there was: at first concealed in darkness this All was indiscriminated chaos.

       All that existed then was void and formless: by the great power of Warmth was born that Unit.

4   Thereafter rose Desire in the beginning, Desire, the primal seed and germ of Spirit[/Mind].[156]

       Sages who searched with their heart's thought discovered the existent's kinship in the non-existent.[157]

Also here the initial state is characterized by a lack of diversity ("not non-existent nor existent"). A mention is made of the original One (*tad ekam*), which was directed to itself ("breathed by its own nature"). But the most significant is the introduction to the cosmogony of the thread of Love. As stated by Ralph Griffith commenting on his own translation: "Desire: Kāma, Eros, or Love"[158]. This *Kāma* (known in the West thanks to the *Kama Sutra*) comes from the (divine) Mind or Spirit (*manas*).

A similar cosmogonic vision represents, among others, *Shatapatha Brahmana*[159] (VIII/VI century BC), where the god Prajapati (very similar to Orphic Phanes Protogonus)was depicted as a complete, total unity, which under the influence of desire (*kāma*) is responsible for reproduction and enters into the water created by himself, in which the egg is formed. Then gods are born.[160]

1, 6, 1   Verily, in the beginning this (universe) was water, nothing but a sea of water. The waters

           desired, 'How can we be reproduced?' They toiled and performed fervid devotions, when they

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[156] X 129,04b: *mánaso rétaḥ prathamáṃ yád āsīt*.

[157] Tr. R. T. H. Griffith: *Hymns of the Rigveda*, 1897: 575.

[158] *Ibidem*, n. 4. Cf. comments on this passage in a light of the Orphic parallels: Alsbrook, 2008: 42).

[159] Cf. *Shatapatha Brahmana* VI 1, 1, 5-15; XI 1, 6-18.

[160] *Ibidem* XI 1, 6, 1-1, 6, 2: "Verily, in the beginning this (universe) was water, nothing but a sea of water. The waters desired, 'How can we be reproduced?' They toiled and performed fervid devotions, when they were becoming heated, a golden egg was produced. The year, indeed, was not then in existence: this golden egg floated about for as long as the space of a year. In a year's time a man, this Pragâpati, was produced therefrom; and hence a woman, a cow, or a mare brings forth within the space of a year; for Pragâpati was born in a year. He broke open this golden egg. There was then, indeed, no resting-place: only this golden egg, bearing him, floated about for as long as the space of a year." (tr. J. Eggeling, *The Shatapatha Brahmana*, 1900: 12).

were becoming heated, a golden egg was produced. The year, indeed, was not then in existence: this golden egg floated about for as long as the space of a year.

1, 6, 2   In a year's time a man, this Pragâpati, was produced therefrom; and hence a woman, a cow, or a mare brings forth within the space of a year; for Pragâpati was born in a year. He broke open this golden egg. There was then, indeed, no resting-place: only this golden egg, bearing him, floated about for as long as the space of a year.[161]

The topic of the golden cosmogony embryo is later sung in many treaties, including in the *Upanishads* (for example in the *Chandogya*).[162] Probably the most extensive expansion of this thread presents one of the eighteen *Mahāpurāṇas*, purana titled "*The Cosmic/Biggest Egg*" – *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* (dated at 700-1000 AD).[163] The golden cosmogonic egg described in detail in the first part contains the whole of reality, seven worlds,[164] which emanates.[165]

In conclusion it may be stated that in terms of chronology the *Rig Veda* would be the oldest attested source, which contains threads characteristic of the Yezidi cosmogony: the primal waters, the luminous germ of all things and especially the role of the demiurgic love.

It does not mean, of course, that thereby Yezidis derived their cosmogony from India. Perhaps the question of the genetic interrelationships between the cosmogonies above describedsimply cannot be answered.[166] The safest way is to just indicate and describe parallelism.

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[161] *Ibidem*, p. 12.

[162] Cf. *Chāndogyopanishad* III 19.1. English translation: *The Chāndogyopanishad. A treatise on Vedānta Philosophy translated into English with The Commentary of S'ankara*, tr. G. Jha, Poona 1942, p. 172.

[163] Cf. *The Brahmānda Purāna*, tr. G. V. Tagare, vol. I, Delhi 1983, p. Ixxix-Ixxxi.

[164] *Ibidem*, I 1.3.29-31.

[165] Cf. I 1.1.43-44 and I 1.5.109.

[166] We do not know for example whether the language and concepts present in the *Rig Veda* represented indigenous factor, or rather were "brought" by the Aryans migrating from the West. In other words – we may as well try to derive element the Yezidi or Orphic cosmogony from India as the Indian one from the areas of Thrace or Kurdistan. Cf. remark by K. Alsbrook in the context of research on Orhic-Vedic analogies: …"whether the mythology and language of the *Rig Veda* were indigenous to India or brought in by an invading or migrating people. This distinction will become more crucial in the comparison between the Vedic and Orphic texts." (Alsbrook 2008: 7).

5. CONCLUSIONS

The symbol of Love (and the symbol of the Pearl) has many parallels in Greek sources as well in the Gnostic writings directly related to them or Phoenician and even Indian. The analysis of these parallels allows us to draw not only a historical, but a philosophical conclusion, that could be formulated as follows: The principle and the beginning of Love is the One. The role of Love is to consolidate different elements by bringing the "spilled" multitude into a stable state of restored unity, the state, one can say, of the primal One symbolised by the Pearl. This is done through some kind of reversal of the cosmogonical order sequence or by mapping into the world an original pattern of One, which represents the Pearl. I emphasized that this Pearl was described as luminous, like Love. In a sense, then, Love that occurs later than the Pearl, brings elements back to a pearl-state.

On the other hand, due to the relationship of these two luminous beings towards each other it can be said that the Pearl by itself is also a model or a pattern for Love which has already been associated with the occurrence of differentiation and division of elements, that is, the state of the absolute and indivisible Whole, in which God remained with himself in a self-love.

I hope my comments have contributed to a fuller understanding of the Yezidis as not only the distant heirs of ancient traditions, but above all, the equal participants of the culture, broadly understood, the participants who, through the intriguing similarities in their descriptions of the creation of the world, will also allow us to understand how it really was, *When the King came from the Pearl*.

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KAROL KACZOROWSKI

Yezidism and Proto-Indo-Iranian Religion

The aim of this article is to propose development of analysis of ancient traits in Yezidism from a perspective that would encompass both classic theories from history of religions and modern Kurdish studies. This work provides an overview of existent attempts in this field and arguments for conducting further research in this matter rather than a completely new comparative analysis. The first parts of the article are devoted to presenting notions of Proto-Indo-Europeans and Proto-Indo-Iranians. The history of scientific interest in Proto-Indo-Europeans is shown through a discussion on the theories of Max Müllers and Georges Dumézil. After introducing the concept of Proto-Indo-Iranian culture and its archaeological evidence presented that possibly refer to ancient traits in Yezidism, supplemented by an overview of contemporary attempts in Kurdish Studies of comparisons between Yezidi, pre-Zoroastrian and pre-Vedic religions.

THE CONCEPT OF PROTO-INDO-EUROPEANS AND THEIR RELIGION

Fredrich Max Müller was one of the first scholars who in the19th century associated development of language and development of culture. In his comparison of Vedas and Greco-Roman mythologies he found many linguistic and structural similarities. In the late 19th century Vedic culture was perceived as earlier than Greek as the language of Vedas was perceived as older than the language of Greek mythology. Owing to the discovery of Indo-European language group by grammarians (see Müller 1907: 8), linguists like Muller presumed that Sanskrit was the ancestor of all Indo-European languages (see Müller 1907: 284-293). In support

of such an assumption Müller has enumerated parallelisms between names and functions of deities in Vedic, Hellenic, Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, Celtic, Italic and Slavonic languages. He also noted many *survivals* of pagan gods in contemporary languages. The most known example of such an influence is connected with the Norse god – *Thor.* Müller suggested the origin of the Icelandic name *Thorr* in Anglo-Saxon *Thunor* – which means *thunder* and it's connection with the name of day – *thursday* (see Müller 1907: 288).

The most profound argument for the striking resemblance between religious vocabulary in all Indo-European languages lies in the words depicting the notion of god in a most basic form – *deiwós* derived from *dyeu* meaning sky and day. Main uranic deities in many Indo-European pantheons are called "sky father" – Indo-European *dyeus phater,* Sanskrit *Dyaus Pita, Greek Zeus Pater,* Latin *Jupiter* (Mallory & Adams 2006: 408-409).

The first attempt to group European languages can be traced as early as the beginning of the 17th century. Joseph Scaliger (1540-1609) divided the languages of the continent into groups based on similarities in the word for God (see Mallory 1989: 9-10).In 1767 James Parsons had shown similitude between a great deal of European languages, Indic (Bengali) and Persian. This linguistic comparison led him to a conclusion that Europeans, Hindus and Iranians had to have the same ancestor in the past. Lacking, at that time, historical or archaeological data, Parsons relied on the Bible, claiming that this group of languages had been originated by Japhet – third son of Noe. Scalinger's and Parsons's attempts proved the similarity between European and Hindu languages but failed to obtain scientific acclaim partially due to lack of consistency in the explanation of this phenomena. Despite earlier efforts in grouping European languages it is Sir William Jones who is widely attributed with discovering Indo-Europeans. Having shown the same linguistic affinity as Scalinger and Parsons, in 1796 Jones proposed the existence of some common ancient language from which all those contemporary languages developed (see Mallory 1989: 10-15).

In the beginning of the 19th century Rasmus Rask pointed out that enumerating similarities are not enough for scientifically proving the idea of ancestral language of Europe, India and Iran. To achieve systematical comparison he and many other linguists (among others Franz Bopp – Müller's teacher) focused on grammatical

studies. The term "Indo-European" was used for the first time by Thomas Young in 1813. Throughout the 19th century Indo-European studies blossomed and advanced producing elaborate models of linguistic evolution, most notably August Schleicher's tree and Johannes Schmidt's wave model (see Mallory 1989: 18-23).

In the meantime disciplines such as comparative mythology and cultural anthropology were developing both in continental Europe and Great Britain. Works of Schleicher and Schmidt were highly influential in these new fields but it was Max Müller who made the greatest impact on the anthropology of religion, severely criticizing the then dominant unilinear evolutionism (see Müller 1977; Barnard 2004: 47-49). The first anthropologists such as: Edward B. Tylor, John Lubbock, Louis Henry Morgan, William Robertson-Smith and James Frazer, became interested in the evolution of religious beliefs and proposed numerous sequences of religious stages that mankind has gone through. One of the most vibrant discussions in this field throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries was devoted to finding the most primitive form of religion. Müller proposed *natural religion* – characteristic for Vedic Indian society as the earliest type of religious beliefs. According to Müller such a religion is based on a sense of communion with nature and is connected with worship of its forces and idea that the world corresponds to the body of a supernatural being. The linguist also claimed that the names of gods were used primarily for describing abstract phenomenon associated with nature, and worship is a reflection of awareness of the infinite (symbolized e.g. in the skies, sun etc.) (see Müller 1856; 1907). Having expressed serious doubts about the existence of a sole sequence of religious evolution Müller inspired anthropologists to a diffusionist approach which explained religious innovations rather through inter-cultural contact than internal evolution. Moreover, influenced by Max Müller's work, one might be inclined to form the diffusionist idea that there should have existed the Proto-Indo-European religion which was the root for all Indo-European mythologies.

What further popularized this idea was Georges Dumézil's trifunctional theory in which he proposed a tool for comparison between all Indo-European mythologies. According to this approach comparative philologists and historians of religions should begin their scientific inquiry with finding three functions that would correspond to parts of society and the Gods attributed to them. These three func-

tions that organized the Indo-European world view would be: sacral or sovereign, martial and economic attributed to corresponding social stratification of priests, warriors and herd-cultivators. Since the 1930's Dumézil published several highly acclaimed papers (among them *Flamen-Brahman* and *Mythe et épopée*) in which he proposed the theory and illustrated it with substantial examples. Having proclaimed this new method in comparative mythology and philology, Dumézil shifted interest of scholars from linguistic analogies to functional affinities.

In order to demonstrate the trifunctional pattern one can compare three castes in India, and three divine patrons in Norse mythology (see Dumézil 1958; Mallory 1989:131-132; Leiren 1999). *Varna* traditional division of Hindu society contains[1]: *Brahman* – scholars and priests, *Kşatriya* – warriors and kings, *Vaiśya* – agriculturalists and cattle herders. Moreover, *Mitra and Varuna* (sometimes depicted as one god) are protectors of law and cult, *Indra* is the Hindu god of war and the divine twins *Nasatya* are associated with the lower castes (Dumézil 1948).

Similar stratification of pantheon can be observed in Norse mythology. Adam of Bremen a medieval German chronicler wrote about the custom to pour libation on Odin, Thor or Frey in the circumstances would want to stop or prevent. Based on chronicles, myths and mythological elements in medieval Scandinavian art, one can assume the existence of a Viking Trinity consisting of Odin – All-Father, patron of magic and priests, Thor – who blessed warriors and Freya who was associated with fertility and marriages[2] (Leiren 1999; Mallory & Adams 2006: 430).

Trifunctional hypothesis have inspired many scholars in fields of philology, religious studies and anthropology. Especially scholars of functionalist and structuralist approaches were heavily influenced by Dumézil's ideas. As the tripartite theory

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[1] *Şudra* – the fourth, outer-caste in *Varna* order, can be considered from the viewpoint of trifunctional analysis as an addition to primal three-partial division. Such a hypothesis is postulated also by genetic researchers who found greater affinity of Hindu people to Europeans among higher classes in India (see Bamshad, Kivisild, Watkins et al. 2001).

[2] Depicting Odin as god to whom libation was poured during war in Adam from Bremen's chronicle can be interpreted that there was reversal from the original order due too perceived closeness to Thor and distance to the almighty Odin. Such a reversal can be explained as *deus otiosus* in Eliade's sense or a transition from one god to many formed from his hypostases (which was noted as common development in many religions by Geo Widengren). It can be also an example of how many contradictions and difficulties are encountered while entertaining tripartite theory (see Eliade 1978; Widengren 1969:93-129; Gonda 1974).

was developed and refined, both by the author and his followers, three functions were perceived more as ideal concepts organizing the cosmos or means of analyzing it rather than the actual stratification of Indo-European societies (see Dumézil 1987). In spite of widespread acknowledgement of the theory and its contribution to comparative studies, two major controversies were raised by scholars in the second half of 20th century.

The first objection (often raised by Dumézil's opponents) stated that searching for elements of three functions in various mythologies and constructing comparative tables of such divisions can lead to a mere simplification of complex and sometimes incomparable religious ideas. Furthermore, some critiques argue that even if tripartite classification was thoroughly examined and proven it would still not provide enough explanation of the lifestyles and social customs of Indo-Europeans (see Gonda 1974). In the second part of the 20th century the idea of unifying all Indo-European mythologies by reconstruction of one archaic religious complex was widely rejected among historians of religions and linguists, as a result only a few scholars pursued this topic.

James Patrick Mallory and Douglas Quentin Adams (2006: 423-427), authors of one of the most recent textbooks on Proto-Indo-European, are highly sceptical about the possibility of a complete reconstruction of archaic Indo-European beliefs. They enumerate major obstacles in the sole reconstruction of the names of Proto-Indo-European deities: susceptibility of these names for attrition and innovation, attachment of various epithets and absence of data not influenced by subsequent cultures (e.g. Christianity). Interestingly, throughout the years linguists were much more successful in reconstructing Proto-Indo-European vocabulary concerning many other aspects of life than religion (Mallory & Adams 2006: 423).

The second problem with the hypothesis of Proto-Indo-European religion is that as the archaeology of Proto-Indo-European peoples was developing in 20th century it became highly problematic to find a link between a linguistic construct of Proto-Indo-Europeans and exact, particular archaeological culture that would provide artifacts proving the existence of such an archaic religion. Dumézil argued that the Mitanni treaty is evidence of ancient tripartite theology, however, contemporary archeology would associate this culture with Proto-Indo-Iranians than Proto-Indo Europeans (see Mallory & Adams 2006: 430; Bryant 2001: 135-136).

Since the 1960's the dominant archaeological explanation of the migration of Indo-Europeans is the Kurgan hypothesis by Lithuanian-American archaeologist Marija Gimbautas (1965). The theory states that Indo-Iranians separated from Indo-Europeans in 2000 B.C. and it is very unlikely that Indo-Iranians migrated to Western Europe (which would support the radical diffusionist idea). Despite astounding similarities in names and functions of gods between all Indo-European mythologies, it appears impossible to discern a date or in which Proto-Indo-Europeans would constitute a single, rather homogenous civilization (or group of interconnected societies). One of the most recent studies of ancient European genomes revealed that early inhabitants of the continent were a mixture of three groups: hunter-gatherers that migrated to Europe from Africa no sooner than 40, 000 years ago, agriculturalists from Middle East who came with subsequent migration and a third mysterious group from northern Europe and Central Asia (see Callaway 2014; Lazaridis et al. 2013).

PROTO-INDO-IRANIANS

Having presented the history of the idea of Proto-Indo-European religion and after underlining disputes and hardships concerning its reconstruction, it is important to stress that the presented notion is a theoretical construct of linguists, philologists and historians of religion (see Mallory 1989:8) . On the other hand there are certain artifacts and significant customs that support the hypothesis of unity between religion of ancient Iran and pre-Vedic or even Vedic religion. Moreover, the existance of substantial similarities in: names of Gods, their functions and same mythemes among all Indo-European mythologies is undoubted and widely accepted by scholars of religious studies around the world.

Proto-Indo-Iranians as predecessors of inhabitants of Iran and India spoke a language that spawned the Indo-Iranian group among Indo-European languages. Linguistic, cultural and topical analogies between Avesta and Rig-Veda can hardly be assigned to pure coincidence. The oldest parts of Avesta, Yasna and especially five Gathas from it, show affinity to Vedic Sanskrit to such an extent, that there was a period when philologists treated Avestan as dialect of Vedic (Mallory & Adams

2006: 76). Owing to cultural and geographical proximity enhanced by closeness in economy based on cattle-herding, it is justified to treat ancestral religious ideas both to Rig-Veda and Mazdaism as one religious system that can be called Proto-Indo-Iranian (see Bryant 2001: 130-135; Mallory & Adams 2006: 32-35,76-77; Widengren 1969: 58-92).

Proto-Indo-Iranians are usually associated with Sintashta-Petrovka (dated circa 2100–1800 BCE) and Andronovo (1800-1400 BCE) cultures of the Eurasian steppe between the Ural River on the west and the Tian Shan mountains on the East. One of the arguments for such a categorization is the presence of New Years initiations and sacrificial rituals showing an analogy to such rituals mentioned in Rig-Veda (Anthony 2007: 409-411).

There was also a significant influence of Proto-Indo-Iranians or Indo-Aryans[3] on the Kingdom of Mitanni in northern Syria, although its the majority of its inhabitants speak Hurrani. As previously mentioned trade documents between Htitties and Mittanis enlisted Proto-Indo-Iranian gods: Mitra, Varuna, Indra and Nasatya (see Mallory 1989: 35-40, Mallory & Adams 2006: 102). The first three gods were members of *Adityas* (see Rig-Veda Hymn XXVII) – protector gods supporting motion in the world, attributed (especially Varuna) with roles of keeping sacred order – Sanskrit *rta*. It is vital to note that Ahura Mazda is also connected with true divine law – Avestan *aša*. In Rig-Veda Varuna is twinned with Mitra as the god of oaths and with Indra in re-establishing of order during the New Year (Mallory & Adams 2006: 432).

After presenting the notion of Proto-Indo-Iranians I would like to propose a theoretical and analytical continuum from most archaic, abstract and only postulated by scholars Proto-Indo-European religion strongly based on artifacts and written documents, the relatively younger Vedic religion. Proto-Indo-Iranian would be characteristic for both ancient Iranian beliefs and pre-Vedic religion. Despite differences between these three notions it is important to bear in mind that it is impossible to point to exact borderlines between the presented religions. Furthermore,

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[3] Archaeologists hypothesize that Indo-Aryans separated from Iranians around the second millennium before the common era. The treaty of Mitanni is often posed as evidence of distinct Indo-Aryan language (see Mallory & Adams 2006: 102), however linguistic divisions do not necessarily lead to instant differences in religious cosmogonies and cosmographies.

existence of major discrepancies between pre-Zarathustrian Mazdaism, is highly debatable, and one can argue that cosmogony presented in Rig-Veda is the closest to Proto-Indo-Iranian (if not identical).

MAJOR THEMES OF PROTO-INDO-EUROPEAN AND PROTO-INDO-IRANIAN RELIGIONS.

After describing the main characteristics of Proto-Indo-European notions and Proto-Indo-Iranian cultures , I would like to enter into the most general and most basic mythemes among them. They are not necessarily characteristic of Indo-European beliefs but also other religions of cultivators. All Indo-European mythologies involve gods (often called by similar names) associated with aspects of nature and cult depending on a function (e.g. sky father, thunder god, sea god, god of wind, river goddess, pastoral god) . Common cosmogonies are connected with primal sacrifice that allowed life to emerge on earth and battle with a dragon or serpent (often attributed to some aspect of triplicity). These forms of sacrifice are also often extended by beliefs about the cyclical sustaining of world by some kind of sacrifice enabling a sequence of seasons (see Mallory and Adams 2006: 439-441; Widengren 1969: 150-187).

Certain religious traits can be attributed specifically to Proto-Indo-Iranians. The most significant and apparent ones would be: rituals connected with fire and four other elements and the importance of ritual purity and orthopraxy in contrast with relatively much lesser emphasis on orthodoxy (see Widengren 1968, Boyce 1979).

POSSIBLE PROTO-INDO-IRANIAN HERITAGE IN YEZIDI RELIGION

Having touched on the most general features of Proto-Indo-European religion I now propose some analogies between Yezidi and Proto-Indo-Iranian cosmology and cosmography.

Proto-Indo-Iranian and other Indo-European cosmogonies stress an idea that unity underlies diversity – as in Zoroastrianism, six divine beings – Amesha Spentas are not only creations but also parts of God and have their equivalents for human souls, in Hinduism, Brahman is a Great Cosmic Spirit in which all personal souls – Atman, should be integrated (see Widengren 1969: 93-110). In Yezidi cosmogony there are ideas that God came from the Pearl, the Pearl turned from white to multicolored, from smooth to showing waves. Yezidi also believe that at the beginning of creation God had created Seven Angels (*Heft Sur)* or Seven Mysteries (Kreyenbroek & Rashow 2005: 21-26). Furthermore, in Rig-Veda there are seven *Adityas* who arguably have similar functions of keeping the divine order as Amesha Spentas and the Seven Mysteries, although they are more sons of God than holy beings or angels (see Rig-Veda Hymn XXVII). Creation of the Seven Divine Beings and mediation powers in the beginning of time leads also to establishment of the hierarchy of supernatural beings, which is almost identical in Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and Yezidism – supreme beings, holy beings, antropomorphic beings. One of the Yezidi sacred poems, *Qewls* depict the sun and the moon as the two eyes of God making the association between the world and the Divine Body apparent (Kreyenbroek & Rashow 2005: 20-21).

Another common theme that can be associated with Proto-Indo-Iranian religion is transition from pre-eternal celestial existence to a material form – as from Zarathustrian *menog* to *getig*. Yezidi *Khirque* – "patched frock", "mystery", symbolizing authority of Sheikh Adi is said to existed at the beginning of time only in a spiritual form. *Sunet* – tradition and *Sunetkhane* – House of Tradition existed at first only as immaterial mysteries that came to life owing to Sheikh Adi. According to *Qewls*, Lalish – a Yezidi sacred mountain valley in which Sheikh Adi was buried, existed in pre-eternity, when it become a material place, with its White Spring it helped form the world and allowed flowers to flourish. Adam's body was created from four elements that came to life no sooner than *Def* and *Shibab* the sacred instruments had come to earth from the heavens. The Seven Mysteries also existed in spiritual form before they drank from the Cup and became embodied (Kreyenbroek & Rashow 2005: 23-29).

Spiral sense of time and specific apocalyptic or eschatology associated with it, is a distinct Proto-Indo-Iranian trait present in Yezidism (see Omarkhali & Reza-

nia 2009). Summary and estimation of the most common themes of this concept of history would include: beginning with pre-eternity, when only positive spiritual forms existed in unity, occurrence of sacrifice that caused differentiation and embodiment in an imperfect material world, ending with the ultimate defeat of this imperfection preceded by a sequence of cycles in which divine mediators offered people a kind of redemption. This sequence is illustrated in Zarathustrianism with concepts of *menog, getig, gezumishn* (era of contamination of good, mixed with evil) and final renovation *frashokereti*. Hindu historiography depicts four eras – *yugas*, the first one is *Satya Yuga* when virtue is prevalent and the world is governed by gods, the last era *Kali-Yuga* is characterized by immorality and disgrace but at the end comes the raider on a white horse – *Kalki* who destroys all filth and restores *Satya Yuga* (see Wilkins 2003: 245; Widengren 1969: 456-479). In Yezidism materiality is introduced through drinking from the Cup, and there are periods *Bedil* of history, ending with the defeat of evil.

Mediators that are present in every era are also common in these religions There are *avatar's* of Vishnu in every *yuga* (*Kalki* being the final incarnation of Vishnu). Zoroastrian saoshyant appears in every era and, eventually brings *frashokereti*. In Yezidism, Sultan Ezid – the son of Mu'awiya and in the same time the incarnation of the Supreme Mystery and "founder of faith" is believed to be present in every era, at the end he will summon Shefredin and lead the battle against evil. Sheikh Adi is also believed to be both a spiritual form in pre-eternity, historical figure and the sun (Kreyenbroek & Rashow 2005: 30-34).

Another hypothesized trait of Proto-Indo-Iranian religion is the emphasis of contrast between esoteric and exoteric realities, probably more apparent in Ahle-Haqq (see van Bruinessen 1995) but still present in Yezidi religion. According to Scandinavian phenomenologist of religion – Geo Widengren (who was in a way a follower of Dumézil), Proto-Indo-Iranian religion is the source of a Gnostic Attitude. Widengren came to such a conclusion by comparing Vohu Manah and Manvahmed Vazurg in Manicheism (see Widengren 1945). Though he himself had written that Mani had radicalised the duality of the universe, previously strengthend byprophet Zarathustra, its source lies in a more ancient religion. The main features of such an attitude would be: transition from monic-panteistic to dualistic nature of the world, contrast between exoteric and esoteric realities (parallel in

Upanishads, Vendidad and Manichaean texts). The idea that the whole world is divided into parts and then added to one of the parts, and salvation is achieved by redemption of both material beings and the savior himself are said traits of a Gnostic attitude as proposed by Widengren. Though most of these aspects are present in Yezidism – differentiation, existence of the seven mysteries as elements and parts of the world, return pristine at the end of the world, it can be debatable if sole emphasis on esoteric-exoteric duality is a Proto-Indo-Iranian trait or a specific addition to ancient religion made by Zarathustra (see Kreyenbroek 1993) and radicalized by Mani. Widengren could therefore be criticized for oversimplification and wrong interpretation of pre-Zoroastrian and Vedic cosmogonies.

But after engaging in significant affinities between Yezidism and Proto-Indo-Iranian religion the still most vital question is which of these traits are Proto-Indo-Iranian and not just simply Zoroastrian features? It requires that one should carefully analyze these mythemes and find those which Zoroastrian religion is devoid of, and those which are not products of a subsequent addition from Sufism, Gnosticism or Islam but are ancient. Though it may appear as a very challenging task there have been some attempts to do this. Below is a short overview of these attempts.

Definite categorization of every mytheme to either Proto-Indo-Iranian complex or non-Proto-Indo-Iranian is not possible in every case. In a similar way the debate about nature of Zurvanism is inconclusive, does its main components reveal a preserved folk religion or is it an addition or heresy to Zoroastrian reform of Masdaism (see Boyce 1957)? However, the sole debate can be perceived as very enriching for Iranian and religious studies.

Philip Kreyenbroek (1993) in his article *On Spenta Mainyu's Role in the Zoroastrian Cosmogony* has argued that Yezidi, Ahle-Haq and Vedic cosmogenies contain mythemes of a positive primal sacrifice that changed a static or stonelike universe into an active one. These myths are in contrast with Zarathustrian negative cosmogony of contamination of the world by the evil Ahreman. Comparing Vedic cosmogony to ones described in the Young Avestan passages and Bundahishn, Kreyenbroek associates Spenta Mainyu with Mithra (and Mitra), proving that only in Pahlavi Books, the second stage of creation became negative and worse than the previous state. Based on these assumptions Kreyenbroek (2013) notes that Yezidi cosmogony – as a positive differentiation – reflects Proto-Mithraism, and hypoth-

esizes that Tawusi Melek could be associated with (presumably negative) side of Mit(h)ra.

Khanna Omarkhali (2004) had elucidated on connections between Yezidi and pre-Zoroastrian initiation rites and festivals. In Yezidism, the colour dark blue is forbidden while in India and Sufism it is a color of mourning. Yezidi adherents wear *Toka Ezid – a* white undershirt with a round collar, supplemented by a woven wool cord as distinct signs of their initiation. Analogue signs of initiations are present in Zoroastrianism – white undershirts *stakhr paysankha* and protective belts *kusti.* Boys from the upper three *varnas* in India, during initiation wear a sacred cord – *yajnopavita.* Both Omarkhali, Kreyenbroek and Khalil Jindy Rashow point to a possible resemblance between Zoroastrian Autumn festival devoted to Mithra (*Mehragan*) and the Yezidi Feast of the Assembly (*Jema'iye*) which also takes place in Autumn. Elements of celebrating the Yezidi New Year (*Seresal)* in early spring, reveal a closeness to Zoroastrian belief that in early spring (end of the year)- the souls of the dead are walking on Earth (Kreyenbroek & Rashow 2005: 16-17).

Ricardo Gustavo Espeja (2004) argues that Yezidi endogamy is reflected among the castes in Hinduism. His hypothesis is that endogamy was widespread among Kurds before the Islamization, as Islam promotes the idea of *umma* rather than family code.

CONCLUSION

Although the concept of Proto-Indo-European religion may only be a theoretical construct and impossible to prove by archaeological evidence, there are however, substantial evident affinities between all Indo-European languages and mythologies. Proto-Indo-Iranian culture, ancestral to Iranian and Indo-Aryan, on the other hand, appear as a more actual and verifiable hypothesis. Whether major religious themes spread among Indo-Europeans through diffusion or appeared owing to cultural innovation remains debatable. Critiques of Georges Dumézil stress that searching only for analogies between religions may lead to oversimplifications of complex and multilayered religious ideas. Nevertheless, comparative methods

may shed light on those composite matters and provide scholars of religious studies with new explanations and interpretations of mythologies and cultures connected with them.

In cases of relatively less studied belief systems, which are supported with a small amount of widely-known artifacts, such methods can be equally deceptive or promising. Arguably reconstructing Proto-Indo-Iranian religion through comparison of ancient traits in Zarathustrianism, Hinduism, Yezidism, Ahl-e Haqq and other belief systems of cultural and geographical proximity, can also lead to a better understanding of these religions and history of their development. Bearing in mind the potential of such studies, one should remember that in a presented general analysis the distinction between new additions and more ancient themes may remain problematic.

There are strong similarities betwen Yezidi, Hindu and Zoroastrian: cosmogonies, eschatologies, apocaliptics and cosmographies. Philip Kreyenbroek postulated connections between Yezidi and Ahle-Haqq cosmogonies and Indo-Iranian based on affinity with positive character of primal sacrifice apparent in Veda but contrasting with Zoroastrian myths. Khanna Omarkhali suggested analogies between Yezidi and ancient Iranian Rites. Ricardo Gustavo Espeja pointed to Yezidi endogamy as a trait distinct from Zoroastrianism and owing to the closeness with Hindu endogamy proving ancient influence.

Attempts at comparison between Proto-Indo-Iranian and Yezidi religions, covered in this article, can be treated as evidence that searching for ancient mythemes not only helps reconstruct pre-Zoroastrian and pre-Vedic religion but it may also provide a deeper comprehension of Yezidi themes.

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JOANNA BOCHEŃSKA

Following The Snake
Yezidi Inspirations in Contemporary Kurdish Literature

INTRODUCTION

Yezidi religious and cultural heritage has always been an important inspiration for both oral and written Kurdish literature. It is due to the oral and written Kurdish literature, of poetry and prose genres as well as sacred and profane spaces that were interdependent. The motifs and forms of expression were borrowed from each other. This phenomenon was transfered to Kurdish contemporary literature that is now applying Yezidi religious motifs in many different ways. They are direct inspirations from Yezidi sacred texts which are read by contemporary Kurmanji writers and from oral and classical Kurdish heritage which also consists of Yezidi motifs although their origin has to be called "plausible" especially in works which were declared a part of Muslim tradition. There are no doubts that many religious motifs applied by Yezidis were part of a wider Sufi tradition of the Middle East. They were borrowed from other religious groups or at least can be considered an application of the diverse religious heritage of the Kurdistan region. However, the unquestionable ethnic links between the Kurds and Yezidis[1] which are based on common language (namely Kurmanji dialect of Kurdish) and the fact that Yezidism was much more widespread in Kurdistan in the past (Kreyenbroyek&Rashov, 2005: 5) than it is today suggests that this source of inspiration should be treated with due respect

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[1] Yezidis are Kurmanji speakers and that is why they are usually called "the Yezidi Kurds". However it should be remember that not all of them consider themselves to be Kurds. The problem is triggered by the process of switching from a traditional and religiously based definition of a community to a modern ethnic and national one. Nevertheless in this paper I treat Yezidi beliefs as the inseparable part of Kurdish cultural heritage.

and attention. It must be stressed that for a classical or modern writer, language and its oral and written literary products are always a very important subject of interest. Especially if we take into account that Kurdish oral tradition composed both by Muslims and Yezidis have always considerably surpassed the written one in quantity. Moreover, the contemporary Kurdish national ideas are keen to emphasize that Yezidism was Kurdish "true religion" before the Kurds were converted to Islam. Taking into consideration the history of its origin as shown in Yezidi texts and its unquestionable links with Islam, these ideological ideas are focused more on stressing the Indo-Iranian background which distinguishes the Kurds from Arabs or Turks. Yezidism is sometimes regarded as the attempt of Kurdish tribes to create a cultural and to some extent political distinction and independence from the surrounding Muslim world. Declaring Laleş as the main pilgrim centre and severing the links with Mecca and other Muslim sanctuaries (Kreyenbroyek&Rashov, 2005: 34-36)[2] may be considered in light of both cultural and political impact. The above mentioned ideas are reflected in Kurdish contemporary literature too. However, it is the philosophical and mythical dimension of Yezidi sacred texts which stirs writers imagination and makes their literary ideas deeper and more meaningful.

My analysis is based on some of Mircea Eliade ideas which emphasize the role of *Sacrum*, myth and symbols, not only to a man of traditional society but to a contemporary inhabitant of a secularized world as well. It is very likely that for modern Kurdish writers to whom I refer have the intention to explore the symbols and Sacrum in a given reality as one of the most important tasks in their literary efforts. It can be understood as – to use Eliade's term – both seeking *orientation* for Kurdish contemporary literature's ethical and philosophical dimension as well as – constructing a meaningful dialogue with world literature that some parallel motifs inhabit. This way the regional and cultural specific of Kurdistan becomes a part of a wider intertextual background for contemporary literature.

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[2] The story of declaring Laleş as the main religious center for all Yezidis is repeated many times in Yezidi texts. We find it in other stories, e.g. The Story of the Zangid Sultan and Sheikh Adi, Bedredin, Sheikh Hesen and Sheikh Mend, (Kreyenbroyek&Rashov, 2005; 115). The process of setting Laleş as the main sanctuary and pilgrimage center corresponds with Eliade's concept of making the world sacred and ordered by traditional religious societies. Consecration of a place repeats the cosmogony and creates the sense of life for the whole community. (Eliade, 1959; 32-47).

Reerring to the symbols and myths and their role within traditional society Eliade stresses that although creating and applying them was a feature of a religious man, "the modern man who feels and claims that he is non-religious still retains a large stock of camouflaged myths and degenerated rituals" (Eliade, 1959: 204-205). Kurdish contemporary literature is undoubtedly the product of modern Kurdish national identity(Ahmedzade, 2005) rather than of traditonal customs and beliefs. The Kurdish writers to whom I refer (Mehmed Uzun, Hesenê Metê, Jan Dost) spent a considerable part of their lives in exile in the West. They learned western languages to read their literature. However, the close scrutiny of their texts indicates that the religious motifs of different origin play an important role in their works. Most of them are applied knowingly although Kurdish writers knowledge of symbols cannot be considered a scientific one. It is based on the desire to acquire deeper knowledge of their own cultural, literary and lexical heritage by reading texts. The writers admit that many of the symbols are "mysterious" and one is unable to understand them fully[3]. However, such fatalistic statements should not be taken literally as the literary application of archetypes and symbols is a kind of "understanding" too. I will even dare to say that their intuitive "understanding" which is based on literary reproduction of motifs can bring new light to the scientific analysis of the original sacred texts. According to Eliade symbols are pregnant with messages and in time new meanings can be added to them (Eliade, 1959: 137). Such construction of multiplied meanings should be seen as a wider phenomenon, not detached from its cultural background but to some extent universal. Similar symbols and their development are found in other cultures[4]. They create a modus operandi for the modern heir of *homo religiosus* who still desires to grasp the meaning of the surrounding world (Eliade, 1959: 201-2013). That is why the application of some Yezidi motifs in contemporary Kurdish literature can be treated both as interpretation and reinterpretation of said motifs which are based on the writers social experience, knowledge and most importantly– imagination. Moreover, such interpretation and reinterpretation is closely connected with ethi-

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[3] We find such statements in their books to give an example, *Hawara Dicleyê* by Mehmed Uzun and *Gername* by Hesenê Metê. I have also noticed it directly from Hesenê Metê when we were discussing the meaning of Yezidi Qewls (Spring 2013).

[4] A good example is an aquatic symbol used by many different cultures.

cal and in a wider sense – philosophical dimension of the work. It is based on its inter-textual character. The above mentioned doubts expressed by writers considering the right to interpret the symbol, story or motif is in fact a great guide to the rich world of meanings. As underlined by Philip Kreyenbroek "the many such themes can be understood in more than one way"(2010: 76), so the "open interpretation" which implies different readings and contexts is much favourable here. Especially, if we take into account the achievements of postmodern theories and the more freedom that they have given to the reader. Today, interpretation of Kurdish literary texts cannot be imprisoned by its social or political context, the so called "Kurdish issue". Still many await to be discovered in its intertextual dimension. That is why the modern interpretation should rather expand the borders and seek new perspectives and approaches.

THE PLAUSIBLE YEZIDI INSPIRATION
IN KURDISH FOLKLORE AND CLASSICAL LITERATURE

Before we switch to Kurdish contemporary literature it would be opportune to refer briefly to Kurdish folklore and classical tradition. As mentioned above they were interdependent, so, the application of symbols should be seen from at least two angles. There were motifs of oral tradition that inspired the classical view and the classical that has been adopted by the oral. We can give the example of *Mem û Zin* by Ehmede Khani (1695), much inspired by local legend, and Feqiye Teyran's poems which were repeated by *dengbêjs* (traditional Kurdish bards). Doing so, they became and remained part of oral tradition, saving them from oblivion. It is also likely that many symbols which were later used in Yezidism to express some esoteric meanings originated from oral literature of the region. When Calîl's family was collecting the Kurdish folklore in Armenia they recorded many sacred Yezidi texts too. The sacred Qewls were not distinguished in their publications – not because of the "lack of knowledge" of their collectors (being of Yezidi origin), but most of all due to the specific Soviet period which did not favour any diverse religious texts to be promoted. It becomes apparent when we compare original Kurdish fairy tales with its Russian translation published in 1989 in Moscow which

changed their character too. God and the inseparable religious context was to some extent hidden from sight in order not to vex the secularized Soviet reader.

FOLKLORE

The motifs and images in Kurdish fairy tales collected by Calîl's family[5] which can be ascribed to Yezidi religious and philosophical tradition. I will mention only a few of them. Of course, their exclusive Yezidi origin can be disputable, but as the stories were collected mostly among Yezidis we are encouraged to believe the Yezidi symbolism in them. We can distinguish them as follows:

1. Personages. Yezidis are the main personages of some fairy tales and the Yezidi customs are directly mentioned. The best example we can find is in the fairy tale entitled *Çilkezî*.
2. Meaningful images of animals, which are the part of Yezidi symbolism.

I wish to point out two meaningful images of animals, which undoubtedly are linked to Yezidi symbolism:

2.a. Snakes

In the fairy tale about Ahmed The Hunter the black snake tries to kill the white one who is the daughter of the king of snakes. She hides herself in a circle and calls Ahmed to help her. The black snake jumps into the circle and fights with the white one. When Ahmed takes aim at him (it is very difficult to distiniguish the bodies of fighting animals) he shoots off white snake's tail by mistake. Afterwards he is forgiven by the king of snakes and receives the snake's magical poison as a gift which enables him to understand the language of animals. Moreover, the white

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[5] I refer to the texts I have received from prof. Calîlê Calil from Eichgraben Library Archaives in 2010. The fairy tales have also been published in Kurdish (1978) and in Russian (1989) in Moscow.

snake presents her cut tail to Ahmed which when buried in the ground grows into a beautiful tree with different fruits. However, in order to retain his new gifts Ahmed must never reveal this secret to anyone.

I would like to underline a few meanings which can be connected with the Yezidi tradition where the snake is a significant symbol associated with Good rather than Evil as is widespread in Christian and Muslim traditions.

- snakes are advisors, the source of knowledge
- their poison can be the elixir of knowledge, even though the snake shows its dangerous character to Ahmed, he decides to take the risk anyway
- the snake's tail becomes a tree with diverse fruits, in other words – the source of diversity
- (The nature of the tree is not easy recognised by other people who are used to normal plants. They wish to know the true origin of the tree and ineffectively bet on Ahmed's question of what kind of tree it is, They always lose and must pay him).

We notice that the dangerous nature of the snake is not hidden. Ahmed is afraid of them and snakes understand this very well. They do not want to give the poison to Ahmed claiming that it can be perilous to possess it. However, it is the snake poison that open the borders of cognition to Ahmed and the snake's tail which turns into an impressive tree with diverse fruits. So, it would be more appropiate to say that the snakes "natural evil" is understood as the source of Good not Evil. However, it definitely requires some skills and knowledge (Ahmed fails, when he reveals his secret to his prying wife. His maturity turns out to be insufficient to appreciate the value of the gift). Similarly, the image of a "wise snake" has been explored and noted by Eliade when he considered *coincidentia oppositorum* and the ambivalent nature of the deity which is widespread in many different traditions (1970: 201-248).

2.b. Rams

In the tale of Small Evdile, the two rams, one black and one white fight with each other. When they sweat, the black one becomes white while the white one becomes black. According to the advice of the monster's daughter's, Small Evdile should jump on the white ram's back, after it has become black. But due to the animals fast and rapid movements, he mixes them up and jumps on the back of the black one. This worsens his troubles by plunging him even deeper into the well that imprisons him.

2.c. The Blurred Borders of Good and Evil

In both fairy tales there is a vivid motif of mixing up the white and black bodies of the animals. Interestingly, the images of black and white, Good and Evil, they oppose each other but what is even more crucial, for a moment their natures become extremely difficult to recognize and separate. This is misleading for someone who has to choose the right option. These two motifs are extremely meaningful, thus, giving the fairy tale a more complex view concerning the nature of Good and Evil, as well as human weakness and bad choice. However, the bad decisions made here by the personages are done in good faith, they do not end one's struggle but are the reasons to explore new spaces and to face new experiences.

In the aforementioned examples the fighting animal images represented the blurred borders of Good and Evil which was held and expressed by Yezidi oral tradition. It seems that it was a very important element of Yezidi religious tradition which brought them so much suffering from the Muslims. Being labelled "devil worshippers" originated from the special characteristic of the role of Evil which could be understood as Good in fact. It was not comprehended by the outside world and lead to many tragic consequences. The figure of Tawûsê Melek (the Peacock Angel) is the best example of such a Yezidi understanding of "evil". Tawûsê Melek (or Satan in Muslim and Christian tradition) did not bow to a man due to his faith to God not to his pride and superiority as seen by Christian and Muslim

traditions[6]. That is why he was loved and forgiven by God becoming his first and most important emanation. Of course, the motif of blurred borders of Good and Evil, and the Evil which can help to cross the borders of cognition certainly was more widespread and cannot be attached to Yezidi religious beliefs only[7]. In order to analyse Kurdish contemporary literature it would be adequate to mention that this motif has been used in European literature too, such as Goethe's *Faust* or Michał Bulhakov's *Master and Margarite*. Curiously Bulhakov was known for his interest in the Middle Eastern diverse religious heritage. I will now show how that interest for Iblis or Mephistopheles –used in European literature – belongs to the main motifs which are explored and applied by Kurdish contemporary writers with a deep regard to the Ehmede Khani's contributions in this field.

CLASSICAL LITERATURE

The introduction of *Mam û Zin* presents Khani's work as the part of Muslim cultural and literary heritage. However, there are motifs which irrefutably remark that the links with Yezidi tradition are justified. As far as we know and we can only presume that Khani might have known Yezidi oral tradition, it seems better to call the links "plausible". They can be found in the plot and meaning of *Mam û Zîn*. I wish to point out a few of them that I think are of considerable importance.

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[6] In this context the ontological question may be asked: if Tawûsê Melek was exactly the same figure as Satan who's deeds where interpreted in a different way by Yezidis? Or maybe he was a different figure, who's deeds where mixed up with those of Satan and misunderstood. It seems that there is no clear answer on that question and interpretation itself creates a sense of reality.

[7] In his article *When Haji Bektash Still Bore the Name of Sultan Sahak: Notes on the Ahl-i Haqq of the Guran district* Martin van Bruinessen (points to the sub-sect of the Ahli-i Haqq sect of Guran (todays Iran) which "venerates Satan as the Lord of this world and denies he is the Evil One. The Guran identify Satan with Dawud, one of the angels in the Ahl-i Haqq pantheon." (Bruinessen: 1995: 3)

a. Khani's description of Satan (Iblis), which we find in the introduction.

Satan is described as a "tragic" not just "evil" creature. Khani stresses his faithfulness to God (not pride and superiority as we can find in Muslim and Christian tradition). The poet goes even further by personifying Iblis as Bekir (one of *Mem û Zîn*'s personages) who is finally forgiven and understood as God's envoy. (Bekir is called Iblis or snake in a direct way. The way he behaves in the story's plot is also very meaningful. Although he is called a villain by Cezira's people he never committed any bad deed but incited Prince Zeid to them.) That is why the associations with Tawûsê Melek, the Yezidi main Archangel called Archangel of the Faith seems justified here.

b. The Khani's God-Love idea seems the most important element which crowns his work. *Mem û Zin* begins with invocation to God where Love is mentioned several times and God's name is called to be "the inscription of the pen of love" (Khani, 2008; 15). "The love", "the lack of love" and "the role of love in human life" becomes the main theme which is also found in the plot as well as in the philosophical dimension of the work. The God -Love idea could be inspired by Yezidi and in a wider context by Sufi tradition. In Yezidi tradition Love was the main feature and an instrument of God. Love (*eşq* and *mihbet*) is mentioned many times in Yezidi Qewls while not so often in the Quran and Sunnah. It is present in other Sufi traditions, which were widespread in Kurdistan and Anatolia at that time but taking into consideration the Kurdish ethnic and more importantly common language links with Yezidis along with the meaningful combination of all aforementioned motifs we can definitely assume that the Yezidi tradition was not alien to Khani.

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

Contemporary Kurdish (Kurmanji dialect) literature seeks its links to Yezidi tradition. The significant writers of contemporary literature such as the late Mehmed Uzun, Jan Dost, or Hesenê Metê have explored Yezidi tradition in many ways. It is, however, important to say that none of them are of Yezidi origin, as they were all born in Muslim families. We can point to:

1. Story lines, (characters, events, customs and rituals of Yezidi origin)
2. Symbolic meaningful images
3. The concepts of the novels

1.   Story line

1.a   Yezidis become important characters in novels

Biro

Hawara Dicleyê (The Call of the Tigris River) by Mehmed Uzun recalls the Mir Bedirkhan uprising (the first half of 19thcentury) but it dates back to earlier ancient events. Biro, short for Ibrahim, is the main character, he is an orphan child brought up by the shepherd Apê Xelef. He is blind in one eye and has a big scar on his face which recalls the sad past of his persecuted family. Biro's Yezidi origin is obvious from the very beginning. He introduces himself under different names. One of them is *Biroyê Êzidi*. This name and his blindness in one eye is a very clear reference to two historical figures. The first is the Prophet Ibrahim and the second Yaşar Kemal (born in 1923), a contemporary Turkish writer of Kurdish origin the friend and somehow "literary father" of Mehmed Uzun. Although both personages are from separate times they were connected in the novel thanks to Biro's characteristics. His desire is to discover the reasons of Kurdistan and Mesopotamia's failures and tragedies as well as to uncover the diverse cultural heritage of the region. As we know the Prophet Ibrahim is often referred to as "the father of many religions"

and is a symbol of the peaceful coexistence of them[8]. Y. Kemal was one of the first Turkish writers to discover and express the colourful diversity of Anatolia's cultural heritage. Uzun undertakes the tradition of both while the Yezidi origin of the main character is more than just a national whim to indicate distinct Kurdish features.

Lûlû and Geştina

Mysterious Lûlû and Geştina from Hesenê Metê's *Gotinên gunehkar* (Sinful Words) seems closer to Muslim beliefs at first. But their strong and cordial attachment to the black snake and futher events suggest that their "Islam" is at least very much influenced by the Yezidi background[9]. Behram – the main personage of the story while lost in Kurdistan mountains – travels to Mirê Mezin. It is the journey to "Satan" not to the official God which allows Behram to know the Truth. The image of tragic, wise and good Satan is undertaken again but Hesenê Metê intentionally mixes up different motifs and not only of Yezidi origin[10]. As if he wished to say that it is not the source of inspiration which is the most significant but rather the idea of "thorough listening to the Satan's whispers".

1.b. Uncovering Yezidi origin

Travel to Laleş and Mount Sincar (*Hawara Dicleyê* by M. Uzun, *Gername* by Hesenê Metê) become significant motifs constructing the identity and personality of the characters.

Biro goes to Laleş and decides to stay there for a while. He wishes to discover his true origin but at the same time he is not keen to stay there for ever. He does not want to be a follower of one single religion, but seeks the common source of all of them. Sincar and Laleş become the most important places of his moral education which allows him to gain maturity and self confidence.

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[8] On the contrary Bruce Feiler in his book *Abraham. A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths* shows that the figure of Abraham so important for Jews, Christians and Muslims is in fact appropriate to them in the sense of "an exclusive property." (Feiler, 2005)

[9] It is well known that many Yezidis were converted to Islam in order to escape persecutions.

[10] In the second part of the story Mekrus, who is the father of Geştina turns out to be Armenian.

In *Gername* (The Book of Journey) Hesenê Metê's travels in search of literary inspirations becomes more important because it leads to Laleş. Metê even calls it a pilgrimage and the travellers become "hajis", although they are not of Yezidi origin. Yezidism is labelled as "our religion".

2.   Symbolic meaningful images

The most important and powerful elements are Yezidi symbols which are applied to strengthen the main concepts of Kurdish writers work. In other words, they bring intertextual context to modern Kurdish novels pointing out the continuation of some meanings which refer to the longevity of ethical and philosofical tradition of the region.

2. a. Peacock

As a small child Biro discovers the image of the peacock in the library of his Armenian friend and patron Mam Safo. The picture fascinates him and stirs his imagination. Watching the peacock in the Mam Sefo's library Biro is delighted first of all with its colourful appearance :

> Û hemû per bi rengên têkel, mîna keskesora piştî baranên boş, bedewiyeke bêpayan
> dihanîn pê. Teyr ne bi heft rengên keskesorê, lê bi heftê û heft rengan xemilîbû. (Uzun,
> 2002: 61)

> And all the wings with colours mixed like a rainbow after heavy rain, bringing never
> ending beauty. The bird was embellished not by seven but by seventy seven colours of
> a rainbow.

Biro's reaction to the picture is more than just aesthethical delight:

Ez li ber lewhê rawestam û bêdeng, bêlebat, min lê nihêrî. Ez ji her tiştên roja nû ku ez wiha kite bi kite qal dikim, bi dûr ketibûm û bi lewhê re bûbûm yek. Çavê min, kite bi kite, per bi per, reng bi reng, neqiş bi neqiş, li ser teyr dizivirî. (Uzun, 2002: 61)

I have stood before the picture plate and watched it without making any sound or movement. I have become distant to all things of the new day I was describing you in details and I was at one with the plate. My eye was gazing the surface thoroughly, wing after wing, colour after colour, pattern after pattern.

It suggests a kind of mystical experience and adds an important context to the main idea of Mehmed Uzun's novel, which is the search for unity that would consist of many different languages, religions and cultures. Similarly, the Yezidi traditional Peacock symbolizes unity in diversity. As we all know its colourful tail is glistening in the light so the many colours it displays are difficult to separate creating impressing unity. The same is with the diverse cultural heritage of Kurdistan – Mehmed Uzun seems to tell us. A similar motif of a colourful and diverse world is expressed in one other place of the novel by direct quotation from Yezidi Qewl:

Madem qal hat ser asimanê, divê ez bibêjim ku asiman û hawîrdor wê rojê mîna rêzên qewlê yêzidiyan bûn: dûre ji renga xemilî. Sor bû, spî bû, sefirî. Sor bû, spî bû, geş bû. Ji minareyan dengê azanê, ji bircên dêran dengê zingilê, ji kuçe û kolanan dengê def û zirnê, ji medrese û dîwanxaneyên terîqetan dengê tekbîr û erbanê, ji xanan dengê têkel ê kerwanan, ji hewşên malan dengê tilîliya jinan û qîreqîra zarokan dihat. (Uzun, 2002: 65)

Since the subject is the sky I should tell you that that day, the sky and the surroundings were like the Yezidi qewls' verses: the pearl was adorned by colours. It became red, white, yellow. It became red, white, shining. There was a voice of ezan coming from the mosque, a voice of a bell coming from the church, there were voices of def and zurna coming from streets and alleys, voices of prayer and a tamburine were coming from medresas and diwanxanas, voices from caravans coming from carvanserais, rebukes of women and the shrieks of children could be heard from the yards.

The idea of a multidimensional colourful world is also strenghtened by the image of a rainbow which is repeated constantly in the novel. Needless to say that the symbol of a rainbow emerging from the light fractured sunbeam can mean unity in diversity as well. It resembles the peacock's tail play of colour and creates a meaningful parallel to it especially when we take into consideration that the sun has an important meaning both for Yezidis and the modern Kurdish national idea which used the sun symbol on the national flag. The cultural and thought diversity was perceived as "evil" by all extreme ideologies (chauvinistic nationalism as well as fundamental Islam) which dominated the region. But in Uzun's novel it is understood as the source of good, beauty and peace. The needed precondition seems to be the mature appreciation for all its variety.

Moreover, the figure of Tawûsê Melek is also directly mentioned in the plot. Curiously, his role is mixed up with that of Azrail – the angel who in Muslim (and not only Muslim) tradition brings death upon people:

hawara birîndarekî ye ku nefsa mirinê ya Melekê Tawis bi ser de hatiye (Uzun, 2002: 27)

the call of the wounded who feel the breath of death brought by Melekê Tawis

or:

Heye ku Melekê Tawis jî îşev bi dengê Dicleyê û ronahiya stêran, were û min bi baskên xwe, hilde û bibe ware heyv û stêran, warê Stêrê. Hîngê ez ê tevî teyrê tawis, bikevim ser riya dawîn ku Meleke Tawis ê nîşanî min bide. Ka ew roja hanê! (Uzun, 2002: 35)

Maybe Melekê Tawis will come this evening along with the voice of the Tigris River and the light of stars. He will take me on his wings to the land of the moon and the stars, the place of Stêr. Then I will set up with the peacock on the last journey which the Melekê Tawis will show me. O! Where is this day.

The mistake is however Uzun's deliberate choice justified by the idea of the novel. As expressed in the quotations above such an image of death is devoid of

fear and danger. It is not death that is most terrifying to Biro but the human cruelty and fear itself. Curiously though the same vision of death is present in the film *Nîwemang* (Halfmoon) by the well known Kurdish director Bahman Qubadi. Keko, who is one of the film's key personages expresses it by the sentence taken from Kirkegaard[11].

2. b. The Snake

In Hesenê Metê's *Gotinên Gunehkar* (Sinful Words) it is a snake which opens, the main character's door of cognition. Behram sees the snake sleeping in a box in the house of Lûlû and Geştina to whom he paid a visit. He is scared and wants to kill it but Geştina stops him. It is worth mentioning that the snake is called the "home snake" and Behram is astonished. For him the snake does not deserve to be called in such a familiar and warm way. In other words, his convictions fed by Islam says the snake is not an animal to be kept at home.

> Na, bi qurban, na….guneh e. Tu rûne. Xirabîya wî marî nîne….ew marê malê ye.
> Ev cara pêşîn e ku ez dibihîzim bê marê malê jî hene. Geştina xanim van gotinan bi awayekî pir sade û bêyî lez dibêje. Lê ez tirs û tatûleke veşarî jî di ruyê wê de dibînim. Tirs û tatûla wê jî ew e ku ez rabim û wî marî bikujim. Vê yekê ez tavilê têdigêhîjim. Ew naxwaze ez tiştekî welê bikim, naxwaze ez bikujim. (Metê, 2008: 18)

> – No, O! No….it is a sin. Sit down. There is no evil of that snake…that is the home snake.

This is the first time I hear that there can be a home snake too. Geştina xanim says it in a very simple and calm way. But I see the fear and anxiety concealed in

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[11] It is disputable if Kako's utterance comes from Søren Kirkegaard or not, although it is declared as such by Kako himself. However, what is more important is the fact that both the utterance and the main idea of the film which is the desire to realize ones own talent and potential in spite of death are in line with Kirkegaard's philosophy. More on this topic see *Кино веры, надежды и любви. Реализм и метафизика в фильмах Бахмана Кубади* (The Cinema of Faith, Hope and Love. Realism and Metaphisics in Bahman Ghobadi's films), (Bocheńska, 2013: 150-175)

her face. She is afraid that I will stand up and kill the snake. I understand it at once. She does not want me to do such a thing, she does not want me to kill.

The following piece indicates the close relationship between the snake, the hosts and Mirê Mezin (The Great Prince), who will be the main reason for Behram's travels. Behram's reaction causes the snake to become anxious, so Geştina tries to calm it down with a song. Curiously she treats the snake as if it could hear and speak.

> Marê martîze….
>
> ev dem êdî payiz e
>
> ne guhdar ke ne bibihîze…
>
> tu bide xatirê Mîrê xwe î Mezin
>
> û here ji vir dûr bilîze!…(Metê, 2008 : 18)

> The charming snake….
>
> now it's autumn
>
> do not listen, do not hear
>
> entrust it to Your Great Prince
>
> and go, play far away from here!…

At first Behram tries to convince his hosts that snakes are bad and devil creatures, the enemies of God. He even quotes the Old Testament but his words do not to have any impact on Lûlû and Geştina. This is the first occasion when the Yezidi background of the hosts is so openly suggested. Afterwards, Geştina tells Behram the story of her father Mekrûs who met and fed the snake when digging a well. He went against the advice of his helpers, who felt disgust and fear for the snake. Mekrûs allowed the snake to eat the yoghurt from his pot. It brought a lot of objections and friends disliked him. However, Mekrûs argued that he could not act in other way because:

> Ewî marî bi çavekî wusa jî li min dinerî ku ji min wetrê bi min re tenê….tenê bi min
>
> re dipişirî. Bi min wusa hat ku min û wan çavan, me ji derekê hevdu nas dikir. (Metê,
>
> 2008: 26)

That snake was looking at me with such an eye that it seemed to me that it was smiling only at me. It seemed to me that I and those eyes we have known each other from somewhere.

So the image of a "domestic and familiar snake" is strengthened. The snake turns out to be known from somewhere. It is described as *morbelek* (of two colours or black and white) and the way it eats and moves resembles beauty and grace not an ugly and disgusting creature. Its beauty is visible for Geştina's father but not for other people:

Na, tiştekî weha tune ye. Çênabe….çênabe ku narînî û şîrînîya aferîdekî mîna maran bibe nîşaneya xirabîyê. Mar ne aferîdên kuştinê ne. Tiştekî welê pîrozwerîn di ruhê van maran de heye ku…lê herkes nikane bibîne. (Metê, 2008: 28)

No, there is not such a thing. It cannot be….it cannot be that such gentleness and sweetness of a creature like a snake becomes the sign of evil. The snakes are not the creatures who kill. There is something blessed in their spirits….but not everyone can see that.

Mekrûs discovers and starts to love the beauty and the animal itself. That is why he does not agree to treat the snake as a killer. It is man who is a killer which is very well exemplified by the angry and frightened people who grasp at sticks to kill the animal. Mekrûs's attachment to the snake isolates him from the other villagers. He says that he has been a friend of snakes from his childhood times, to know their language, which is a well known folklore motif[12]. He is motivated firstly by his love for the snake and the deep repugnance to kill anyone.

But the snake also symbolizes the Mirê Mezin (The Great Prince) to whom Behram will travel to in the following part of the story. The snake appears at the beginning and opens the door to the other world. It is understood as the space of esoteric or mythical meanings that can be ascribed to everyday reality (a kind of *Sufi*

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[12] A good example is the fairy tale of Marbengi who was a friend of snakes until one of them beat his son because he had vexed the snake, see *Yılan tutkunlu* (Gündoğar, 2003;158-167)

tariqa) but also as the way of obtaining a deeper moral maturity which demands higher sensitivity and more responsibility from a man.

2.c. The Sea

Mijabad by Jan Dost is a kind of magic allegory of the historical events of establishing the Mahabad Rebublic and as such can be understood within the scope of Kurdish magic realism as Haşem Ahmedzade defines it (2011: 293-294). However, there is one image which cannot be perceived just in light of contemporary magic realism due to the fact that it draws the important context from Yezidi tradition. The figure and statements of Emîral Axa who is an example of a madman. He wanders on Mahabad's streets declaring repeatedly that "without the sea and the navy there could be no country, no independent state". These odd words repeated in many different contexts are much more than a helpless protest against the geographical conditions of Kurdistan. They may be interpreted in the light of Kurdish magic realism but mainly as the inspiration taken from Yezidi heritage where the sea or ocean becomes a meaningful element of the creation of the world, to quote from the Hymn of the Creation of the World:

Mihbet avête navê

Jê peyda kir dû çavê

Jê herikî pir avê.

Av ji durê herikî

Bû behra bê serî bê binî

Bê rê û bê derî

Êzdanê me ser behrê gerî

Êzdanê me sefîne çêkir

Însan heywan teyr û tû

Cot bi cot li sefîne siyar kir.

He threw Love into it [into Pearl]

From it he brought forth two eyes

A great deal of water flowed from it.

Water flowed from the Pearl

It became an ocean without end,

Without beginning

Without road and without gate

Our God circled over the water.

Our God made a ship

Men, animals and all sorts of birds

He gave a place in the ship, two by two.[13]

(Kreyenbroek, Rashov, 2005: 67)

An ocean coming from a pearl gives both a life-giving, good and annihilating power united by it's source which is the interior of the pearl filled with Love. Flood brought by God (similar to Christian and Muslim tradition) can be cured by the presence of a ship. It seems that these images create the meaningful background for Emîral Axa's "mad words" which can be regarded as the desperate demand for the unifying power of Love to overcome many social, cultural and political contradictions and difficulties. Only this is to be the solid base for an independent country to appear. One can of course argue that the sole image of the sea (or better the lack of sea) can not be enough proof of Yezidi context. However, similarly to Uzun and Metê Jan Dost in his novel has exemplified the rich diversity of the region which yielded to the aggresive power of modern ideologies and human fear. He read Yezidi texts[14] and even if he applies the image intuitively it gives us the right to ascribe the Yezidi tradition context to the novel. It is also worth noting that the image of the sea is understood in the scope of Eliade's *cincidentia oppositorum* term. It is both "life giving" and "anihilating" as is the meaning of Love which causes the sea to appear. Life and death as well as Good and Evil which has been

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[13] Kurmanji text and its translation given after Kreyenbroek&Rashow (2005).

[14] According to the information I received from the writer in Spring 2013.

brought by the flood is to be finally reconciled and unify. Similar to the snake, the symbol of the sea consists of opposite meanings which lift and complete each other at the same time.

3. The concept of the novels

3.a. Reincarnation and different time concepts in Hawara Dicleyê

The Yezidi symbolism acquires its contemporary meaning in modern Kurdish prose. The images are "pregnant with meanings", so the writers' ideas cannot be separated from them. We should not forget that literature consists of literary images rather than of theoretical discourses. However, I would also like to highlight some ideas, that are considered to be of Yezidi origin. They are likely to have some impact on the form and content of the contemporary novel.

The best example is *Hawara Dicleyê*. Its plot consists of many voices of various personages. They are heard in the novel thanks to Biro's task which is to tell stories. To master his voice he listens to many diverse sounds not only human. There are sounds of the Tigris river, of ancestors, of Yezidi *feqirs* and *qewls* and even of the Silence.

> Diclê me ez,
> Dengê Dîcleyê,
> Qîrîna ku olan dide,
> Hawara who bang dike,
> Strana ku dibêje. (Uzun, 2002: 126)

> I am the Tigris River,
> the voice of the Tigris River,
> the scream which produces religions,
> the cry which calls,
> the song which tells.

Or:

Bêdengî, west e,

Heke ne west be, keser e,

Heke ne keser be, hesret e,

Heke ne hesret be, jan e,

Heke ne jan be, bîr û heş e.

Yan jî ev hemû ne.

Yan jî hin ji van in. (Uzun, 2002: 114-115)

It is the Silence, tiredness,

If not the tiredness, the sorrow,

If not the sorrow, the longing,

If not the longing, the pain,

If not the pain, the thought and memory.

Or all of them.

Or some of them.

Reproducing them in the novel is in fact the attempt to create the poliphony which importance and need for the Kurdish modern novel was stressed by Remezan Alan (2009) or Haşem Ahmedzade (2013). It corresponds with Uzun's idea of rising from death, the lost, forgotten or neglected diversity of Kurdistan. This task must be seen in both aesthetical and ethical perspectives. Uzun's ideas oppose any kind of extremisms which are still widespread in the Middle East. He is promoting diversity of religions, customs, and thoughts. But a more thorough analysis will reveal other aspects of *Hawara Dicleyê*'s postulate of diversity. It is connected with its historical dimensions and refers to the Yezidi concept of time.

The historical events that are mentioned in the novel do not limit themselves to the times of the Bedirkhan uprising. Uzun recalls a more distant past too. It was achieved not by the direct description of rewinding history but by a more subtle way. I mention the two most important elements. There is a place (Kurdistan) which is often called Mezopotamya, and the Tigris River which is treated as the dumb witness of the long history. However, Biro has the special gift hearing and

understanding it. Therefore the history of the Kurds is seen in a wider and more ancient context as well. It is understood in the scope of national ideology which very often tries to prove the nation's right to the land by recalling the duration of its settlements. The names Mezopotamya and Tigris or Dicle are very popular among the Kurds who use them to name TV stations, foundations, institutes, universities as well as hotels and many other small cultural or buisiness enterprises. But Uzun's concept goes deeper than that. It is connected with the Yezidi belief in reincarnation as well as with the vision of time which consists of linear and periodical (cyclical) motifs.

During one of the *şevbuhêrks*[15] Biro tells the reader about the Yezidi belief in reincarnation. After explaining it he compares one of his spiritual experiences to reincarnation. He was dead but was born again to hear voices of the surrounding world, to become a *dengbêj*. His description resembles rather a kind of spiritual initiation. It has however, a broader meaning, that is in the following paragraph where Biro specifies his understanding of time, life and human soul:

Wext, eve bû; mekanekî bêserûber ku bi tenê ji dengan dihate pê. Heyat, eve bû; dareke abadîn a çinarê ku ji pelên ku hertim dibişkovin û diweşiyan, hatibû pê. Hîs û bihîstiyariya însanî, eve bû; bayekî sivik ku di nav wext û heyaman, war û welatan, dar û pelan de digeriya. (Uzun, 2002: 133)

Time was the space without any order or form consisting only of voices. Life was the eternal tree of platanus, from which leaves blossom and fall. Human consciousness and sensitivity were the light winds which blow among times and epochs, places and countries, trees and leaves.

Time is the endless space but it is life which is renewing itself again and again in the scope of the time. Compared to a wind a human soul travels from place to place.

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[15] The evenings during which the fairy tells stories and sings songs were told by *çirokbêj* and *denbêjs*. Uzun uses the word *şevbuhêrks* to name the chapters of the book, i. e. *Şevbuhêrks 1, 2,* etc.

Looking to the plot and time of the novel we come across linear, historical, quantitative and periodical (cyclical), qualitative time. The first is connected with the story of the Bedirkhan uprising, a thorough description of reality, the course of events, and prose language, the latter with Biro's spiritual and moral experiences, his role as a *dengbêj* which consists of both hearing and telling, with the lyrical pieces of the novel. Thanks to his skill we are able to hear the voices from the past which are immortal, they just come and go. Linear history is exemplified in the novel but the voices which are heard and recounted by Biro, circulate, although they never repeat themselves in the same way. This literary form refers to the Yezidi concept of time described by Khanna Omarkhali and Kianoosh Rezania. In their article they point to different time categories which are: the *enzel* – denoting the state of being before the creation of the world, time before the creation of the world, the creation of the world and the first man, the creation of time units. Moreover, they distinguish: periodical time, three tofans (literally three storms), and linear time (Omarkhali, Rezania, 2009: 335-346). In order to uncover some of *Hawara Dicleyê*'s meanings I wish to indicate the special character of periodical and linear time which in Yezidi cosmogony complete each other[16]. It is useful to apply the term of "spiral time" defined by Anna Pawełczyńska in her interesting study of the meaning of time for human cognition, development and culture. Pawełczyńska says that spiral time consists of both evolution and regression (1986; 20). Omarkhali and Rezania point out several categories of Yezidi periodical time which are *bedil*, *zeman* and *dewr*. All have similar meanings that refer to "change, changing or turning, revolution and in Yezidi context denotes a new period of time in the history of the world. Therefore, it could mean renewing or renewed and designates the start of a renewed period of time"(Omarkhali, Rezania, 2009; 340). The changes repeat itself but not exactly in the same way. In such a spiral time

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[16] Eliade stresses that cyclical time helped to comprehend the sacred meaning of the world, the renewing cosmogony. Repeating it in myths and rituals was crucial for a traditional community because it formed the sense of it. The spiral character of the cyclical time including repetition and evolution was described by Martin van Bruinessen in the context of Ahl-i Haqq community: "the sacred history of the AH is cyclical. In each period or cycle (*daura*) essentialy the same drama unfolds itself, enacted by the human incarnations by the same spirits. The circularity is not perfect, however: the AH admit a gradual evolution, there being a clear progress from the revelations brought by Ali to those of Sultan Sahak. (Bruinessen, 1995; 9)

the new experiences and meanings are added continuously. Similar vision was created by Mehmed Uzun in order to understand the difficult history of the Mezopotamya-Kurdistan land. On one hand the linear time of the Bedirkhan uprising is presented. Bedirkhan himself brings the people hope for change and renovation. He is the powerful and determined leader who wishes to build an independent Kurdish state. However, he is unsuccessful due to the Ottoman Empire policy and "old mistakes" that were repeated by him and his family members, they comprised of: blind ambition, envy and neglect towards the other non-Muslim members of Kurdistan society. Thanks to the lyrical voice of the Tigris River or Silence plaited into the course of historical events linear time is confronted with a sphere beyond the profane world, the sacred time of eternity. We cannot call it *enzel* because it is not the detailed reproduction of the Yezidi cosmogony, but as it has been already said the thorough reproduction is not the important for a writer's imagination. The confrontation of both linear and eternal times repeats itself periodicaly in the text and allows us to perceive the time of Bedirkhan's ruling as part of an endless human saga. This way it is equal to the old regional legends mentioned in the lyrical confessions of the Tigris River or Silence. In this context it is important to remember that the Yezidi sacred texts consist of both prose and lyrical parts too. The stories and legends which have a prosaic form tells of important historical events in the Yezidi community and the lyrical parts narrate more complicated mystical senses. That is why we cannot consider *Hawara Dicleyê* the historical novel in the western sense of a historical novel based only on events ordered by linear time concept. Uzun uses Yezidi oral and religious tradition to uncover deeper and not only historical meanings. He aims to describe the human soul condition by the prism of both quantitative (historical) and qualitative (periodical) time concepts. According to Anna Pawełczyńska both concepts are connected to two kinds of cognition. The first is based on analitical and the latter on an intuitive way of understanding the world (1986; 22-27). This doubled perspective creates important aesthetic and ethical values which deepens the literary vision of the book. Time and principles of cognition complete each other in order to make man wiser and more susceptible to the attitudes, feelings and circumstances of others.

3.b. To hear and understand Satan and the meaning of Evil. Hesenê Metê's main literary idea.

The motif of a "good Satan" has been undertaken many times by Hesenê Metê in much of his works. It is regarded as the modern continuation of Sufi but especially Yezidi motifs. As it was mentioned earlier it is the Yezidi cultural heritage to which Metê is refering to with the help of selected images. In *Gotinên gunehkar*, the main character Behram, during his night journey travels to the Mirê Mezin (or Ahriman[17]) in order to know the Truth. It is not the official God but the rejected Mirê Mezin, who reveals the desired knowledge to Behram. According to him God created man to feel and exercise superiority over him. It was the basic reason for the world's tragedies. By experiencing God's superiority man has followed Him in disregarding and humiliating all surrounding people. Afterwards, Behram declares that he loves equally both God and Satan, but it is his beloved Demora who constitutes the sense of life for him. Thus, the love for the human being (and not God or Satan) is understood as the main value to follow. This motif is undoubtedly the modern continuation of folklore, Yezidi, as well as classical Kurdish tradition. In the novel *Labirenta Cînan* (The Labirynth of Jinn) the teacher Kevanot believes education and reason to be the only means to eradicate Evil. However, he fails due to his fear of ghosts, which he considers an inconceivable and frightened Evil. They may be understood as Kevanot's painful experiences hidden deep in his subconscious. He has no will or courage to hear what they want him to say or do. Metê deliberately shows that human fear is worse than Evil itself. A similar meaning the story entitled *Tofan* (The Storm) carries where Ehmede Khani's Bekir (Beko) rises from the dead in order to visit Cazira and its modern inhabitants. He becomes frightened when he notices that it is his own name "Beko" that has become the stigma to exclude, destroy or even kill other people. Again, it is the human not Satan who is responsible for bad deeds. But it is the presence of Satan or Evil which makes it possible to see man's weakness and failures. Hesenê Metê's ideas refers to the old tradition of *coincidentia oppositorum* and Mephistopheles exemplified by Eliade with the help of many examples from world religious and folklore heritage (1970; 201-208). According to Eliade *coincidentia oppositorum* is the secret

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[17] Metê uses both names.

of completeness and perfection. It is based on the coexistence of opposites and implies the close relationship between God and Satan which sometimes used to be called brotherhood (1970: 202-203). Moreover, Eliade recalls Goethe's *Faust* and Mephistopheles who was called the "Father of all Obstacles"[18]. His role was to oppose Faust and his will to go further, to grow, to develop. Mephistopheles was trying to hinder life, God's main product but not God himself (Eliade, 1970: 198). Similarly in Metê's *Gotinên gunehkar* Mirê Mezin objects not to God but his idea of creating man in order to be admired by someone[19]. Moreover, God wishes to keep it a secret from man, which to Mirê Mezin is a simple lie. We do not know why Mirê Mezin reveals the hidden truth to Behram. Maybe he has no reason at all, maybe he wants to let Behram know the Truth? Maybe he wishes him to stop loving God and Truth itself? But Behram does not care much about Mirê Mezin. He claims his love for Demora to be his new God, the most important value to follow. That is why life and its changes can not be stopped. The obstacle created by Mirê Mezin turns out to be only a new door to open.

Eliade remarks that the dualistic model of the world was about to be overcome by different cultures which were seeking the unifying element to gain final unity and perfection, to be able to look at itself from a distance[20]. Analysing the diverse Kurdish cultural heritage from the perspective of time and variety of its sources we have to admit that the crucial power which could have – enabled to overcome or unite the eternal *coincidentia oppositorum* of the world was often defined as Love or God-Love. It can be found in folklore, Yezidi religious texts, classical tradition (especially *Mam û Zîn* by Ehmede Khani) and modern Kurdish literature. Hesenê Metê and his understanding and application of Yezidi religious heritage is one of the best examples in this field.

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[18] "Der Vater aller Hindernisse", Faust, (Eliade, 1970: 198)

[19] More on this topic see: *The Hidden True of a Colonial God. Some Reflections on Edward Said's Orientalism and Hesenê Metê's Sinful Words*, (Bocheńska, 2013: 13-21)

[20] Eliade refers first of all to Zurvanism (1970; 203)

CONCLUSION

As we have heard Kurdish contemporary literature takes on, develops and reinterpretes Yezidi religious and philosophical concepts. They are, in fact, direct inspirations taken from Yezidi sacred texts as well as indirect ones which have penetrated modern literature from folklore and classical works. Modern Kurdish writers are not very consequent in using the Yezidi cultural and religious borrowings. They conform the Yezidi motifs to their own aesthetical and ethical ideas. However, they treat the Yezidi background as an inseparable part of Kurdish cultural heritage, the still unexplored and forgotten but extremely rich source of inspiration. Mehmed Uzun, Jan Dost and Hesenê Metê's attitudes to the Yezidi background are of national, ethical and literary character. First of all it corresponds with Kurdish nationalistic ideas which compounds the role of the non-Muslim background of the Kurds. Appreciation of Yezidi culture can also be percieved as an attempt of moral satisfaction after years of persecution conducted by Muslims because all three writers come from Muslim families. Finally, Yezidi religious concepts are expressed in the sacred texts have considerable aesthetical and literary value. Being told and then recorded in Kurmanji dialects they form a unique treasure for writers who are searching for their lexicon, style and ideas especially when we take into account the situation of the Kurdish language which for many years was condemned to die by the chauvanistic policies of many Middle Eastern countries and by native speakers' neglect.

One of the most important topics that has been undertaken by modern Kurdish literature guided by Yezidi mystical concepts and images is the *coincidentia oppositorum,* interlinked nature of Good and Evil. The mature understanding of Evil opens the door of cognition and unity. It is however, impossible to achieve this without the consolidating component which in Kurdish culture is defined as Love. It can overcome the dualism of the world, unifying its multiple and diverse character.

Adequate reading and interpreting of Kurdish modern literature demands a good knowledge of Kurdish and Middle Eastern culture including diverse religious and mystical traditions. It cannot amount to the socio-political situation of the Kurds, to their modern history or style of living. Contemporary Kurdish literature conceals

the wide repertoire of deeper meanings which are revealed by the inter-textual context too. The literary work cannot be treated exclusively as the product of modern times and modern ideas. It goes without saying that national ideas have had its important impact on Kurdish modern literature, but certainly it has not emerged on the bare land. To understand it adequately we have to look for its inter-textual background. Such an analysis can give us the more thorough understanding of aesthetical and first of all the ethical meanings. The deep research on the process of ethical changes of different cultures is of considerable importance for the contemporary world especially when perceived from the perspective of postcolonial studies. But something else is also important, the adequate understanding of the inter-textual background can create the high quality comparative platform linking Kurdish literature with the outside world.

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MARCIN RZEPKA

Discovering Communities, Inventing Beliefs

Christian Missionary Attitudes towards the Yezidis in the 19th century

1.

I would like to open this article with a reminder of the report published as a kind of proceedings after the Inter-Church Conference held in Hamadan, Persia in 1925 (LPL, Davidson 213, ff. 53-60). The documentation is in the possession of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the archives of the Lambeth Palace Library in London (with probable other copies held in other missionary archives too) and they constitute part of a huge collection of documents concerning the missionary activity in the Middle East. In the report, which is composed of a collective achievement by Presbyterians and Anglicans working at that time in Persia, a proposition issued by the American missionaries was included to stress the necessity to intensify the missionary efforts among the heterodox religious communities scattered in North-Western Persia and Kurdistan. Despite the fact that the Yezidis were not mentioned, it showed a broader and constant tendency of the American missionaries to work among non-Muslim and heterodox groups in Persia as well as in the Ottoman Turkey from the 19th century.

It is necessary to emphasise the importance of Persia and, in particular, its western parts with the city of Urmia, which – after the positive opinion given by Smith and Dwight (Smith, 1833) – became a missionary station for the Americans and allowed them to work among the so-called Nestorians, and later to extend their activity to central Kurdistan, and finally made acquaintance with the Yezidies possible. Such activities were undertaken by Justin Perkins who gave particular attention to

the Yezidi question (Perkins, 1843:5) nearly a century before the above-mentioned report was released.

In this article I would like to raise several questions, and, I hope, to find at least a few answers. Yet deliberations on the role the Yezidis played in missionary imagination and their representation in the missionary writings from the 19th century should be placed in the context of studies on the 'gathering, interpreting, disseminating, circulating and employing' the knowledge, highlighting the Yezidi contribution. The term *yezidology* used in reference by missionaries, I prefer to adopt the term yezidi-oriented-missionary-mind instead.

My studies are predominantly of historical character and, to some extent, depend on the sociology of knowledge and cultural history. I am indebted to numerous scholars and their ideas such as Peter Burke (2012) and many others who worked on the American missionary initiatives among the subjects of the Sultan, like Usama Makddisi (2008), Samir Khalaf (2012), and, above all, the Swiss historian Hans-Lukas Kieser (2010), among the historians of the Yazidis I include John Guests (1993) and Nelida Fuccaro (1999).

I deal with the history of the Christian missions in the Middle East, and the history of the Bible translations among Middle Eastern people and such studies have determined my approach to the Yezidis.

2.

The missionaries gained their knowledge not only from their discoveries or imagination but as the result of their attempts to communicate with the Yezidis as well. The questions are: how the missionaries communicated with the Yezidis, what kind of questions they asked, and which answers they chose to be written down, which ones they ignored and why, and on what assumptions or predictions they relied. It indicates the problem of the clash of two completely different cultures: the missionary culture – orientated on the only printed book worth publishing, re-publishing, transcribing and translating into various languages – namely, the Bible, and the orally transmitted Yezidi culture.

I am convinced that the American missionaries with their narratives played a mediative role between the American public opinion and the people the missionaries were intended to represent at that time. Missionary cognition reflects pre-academic knowledge but it is also far from being classified as highly stereotypical and completely wrong as that shared by many Americans, inspiring American popular culture and American ghost stories to which the story of the Yezidis cutting the heads off all who dare to use the word "satan", we find in 19th century American culture. My paper is a postulate for further studies on the stereotypes or auto-stereotypes of the Yezidis, their self-categorization and stigmatization made by the neighbouring groups – Muslims and Christians. All of these can be found in the missionary writings from the 19th century.

3.

Considering the impact of the Christian missionaries on the Yezidis I am narrowing my interests to the Americans only. I am aware of the differences between various missions, missionaries, strategies and ideas, but I am not alone in my opinion, the so-called Orientals from the 19th century could also observe such differences. One of them assumed that:

> The English Christians have knowledge but no faith; not like the American; who, like the primitive Christians, are all faith and love (Martyn II, 1837:161).

I propose to examine three problems:

- Firstly: The history and appearance of Christian missions among the Yezidis.
- Secondly: The differences between British and American missions.
- Thirdly: The essence and specific character of American missions and missionaries.

4.

Let us start with some observations on the Christian missions among the Yezidis in their historical context. Christian missionaries for the first time showed their interest in Christianization of the Yezidis in the 17th century (Guest, 1993:51; Blincoe, 1998:23-28), when some of the Capuchin monks came into contact with them (by the way, it is worth mentioning that the 17th century was a golden age of the Capuchins missions). The Catholics opened missionary stations in Mosul and Aleppo and a few years later they turned to the local Christians with plans to unite them with Rome. In the 19th century, however, the intensive and active Protestant missionaries started to dominate in the Ottoman Turkey. Slowly and gradually with permanent discoveries of the ethnic and religious subjects of the Ottoman *villayets* they established a network of schools, hospitals and churches covering and enlacing Kurdistan. But not a single missionary group, neither ethnic nor confessional, made any effort to include the Yezidis in their missionary agenda in the 19th century. In the 20th century the situation changed slightly, especially after the world missionary conference held in Edinburgh in 1910, when the Kurds became a missionary target of the Lutherans and later after the collapse of the Ottoman empire when the Yezidis in mandatory Iraq became a British political concern. Thus, in the 19th century as we are informed by the *Encyclopaedia of Mission*, published for the first time in 1891, different Protestant groups conducted their missions among the Yezidis separately.

Missionary engagement with the "mysterious" Yezidi people resulted in the production and distribution of a number of articles, notes, letters by authors such as Maurizio Garzoni, Justin Perkins, George Percy Badger, Alpheus Andrus, Rufus Anderson and many, many others. It is easy to understand why the Yezidis were portrayed in so many ways with so many vague ideas. The differences between missionaries were rooted in different Church affiliations and their goals were enhanced by a rivalry between them and by prejudices they believed in. At this point we reach the following question: what was the difference between missionaries, especially British and American, in their missionary strategies towards the Yezidis?

5.

The opinion that the differences between the British and American missionaries are based on the perceptions of the political authority may be too simplistic, but it is useful. Indeed, the British relied on political support more than Americans. The British missionary narrations from Kurdistan are interweaved with geographical or military reports (Ainsworth, 1888; Guests, 1992), while the American ones are predominantly religious, of course with some geographical, historical or anthropological notes, but all that is subordinated to the religious idea. I will try to explain some American missionary ideas.

6.

The protestant missionaries in the 19th century – no matter whether British, German, Swiss or American – had a lot in common. The nineteenth century missions were rooted in the Evangelical revivals as a trans-Atlantic phenomenon. Ward, a historian of the 18th century changes and challenges Christianity, pointed out that the strong religious revival created a new missionary ethos providing him with a new missionary weapon – immovable and inflexible belief in the Bible. Such changes in the USA shaped the main character of the dominant religious American or rather messianic myth based just on the evangelical concepts. Especially among the puritans of New England, where "heroes of faith" such as Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Hopkins initiating the New Divinity movement laid the foundations for the missionary agency – American Board of Commissioner for Foreign Missions. Dawid W. King (2004) successfully proved the connection of this missionary agency with evangelical ideas. What does it mean for the missionary attitudes toward the Yezidies? – one may ask.

While analysing the American approach to the Kurdish Alevi groups and the shifting attitudes toward them in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Hans-Lukas Kieser (2002) observed patterns changing from eschatological to utopian. What seems to be the most characteristic for the American missionary movement is the incredible ability to interpret current affairs and events in the light of a bib-

lical prophecy. Kieser underlined the three most important elements in the early eschatological and millennial imagination, which encouraged them to go to the Middle East to seek, discover and save the people of the East: 1) strong expectation for the collapse of Islam, 2) conviction of the fall of Catholicism and 3) the certainty that Jewish people would return to Palestine.

After the initial missionary expedition to the people of Turkey their expectations were modified when the missionary faced problems and obstacles: the mission to the Jews became the mission to the Armenians, and instead of working among the Muslims, the heterodox groups including the Yezidis attracted their attention.

Millenarism or postmillennialism as missionary eschatological beliefs brought optimism and enthusiasm in the first period of the missionary activity. Schools, especially – Andover Theological Seminary, played a substantial role in strengthening such ideas. Approximately thirty missionaries in Turkey received their training in this school during the period of 1819-1850 – Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and even Episcopalians (General Catalogue).

7.

The first time the Americans came into contact with the Yezidis was after Justin Perkins established a mission in Urmia in 1835. They focused on the Nestorians, but gradually extended their exploration to central and northern Kurdistan, where they met the Yezidis in the areas of Sinjar, Mosul and Bitlis.

In the recorded documentation of their contact with the Yezidis and the Kurds two important periods can be distinguished: firstly, when the Sultan gave permission to establish a Protestant millet, which, in fact, changed the position of the Protestants in Ottoman Turkey helping them to intensify their efforts, and secondly, the policy of Abdul Hamid II banning all missionary activity among heterodox groups and enforcing islamisation or sunnisation of these groups (Gölbaşı, 2013).

Over this long period we can observe a change in the attitudes towards the Yezidi – from at first simple and rather naive descriptions to the highly specialized definitions of their beliefs and rituals. Four of the numerous American missionaries present there deserve special attention. They published important papers on the

Yezidis, all different by choosing specific themes. They are: Asahel Grant, Henry Lobdell, Horatio Southgate and Alpheus Andrus. Horatio Southgate – was not involved in the work with ABCFM, but he paid a visit to Turkey in 1830s as an Episcopal missionary and bishop, presenting his account in the book entitled *Narrative of a Tour through Armenia, Kurdistan, Persia and Mesopotamia* (1840). In the second volume he enclosed a description on the Yezidies (Southgate II, 1840:317-321). Using historical information correlated and gathered by other missionaries such as Thomas Hayde to Mauricio Garzoni, he tried to explain their thoughts and eventually writing his own new interpretation of the Yezidi religion. He, in fact, shared the common beliefs of British Anglicans who used Catholic literature was absolutely unacceptable to the Americans. The true value of this account is in the awareness of the limitations previous studies of the Yezidis were subjected to and the explorers' perceptions at that time.

Both Asahel Grant and Henry Lobdell visited the most holy places of the Yezidis at a 10-year interval, Grant in 1842 and Lobdell in 1852, both died in Mosul as medical missionaries.

The last of the above mentioned missionaries, Alpheus Andrus, wrote several valuable journals on the Yezidis and an article for the *Encyclopaedia of Mission* published in 1891 where he, for the first time in missionary writing, quoted some fragments from the Yezidi book – *Jelwa*. He is the most academic in style and the most influential scholar on missionaries studying the Yezidi religion, for example, Isya Joseph, the author of the book *Devil Worship: The Sacred Books and Traditions of the Yezidis* (1919), admired Andrus as his teacher.

Without deeper examination of the concepts, ideas and propositions made by these missionaries we can underline several common features in their writings:

– All of them collected original source information visiting the villages inhabited by the Yezidies and talking with them. They were aware of the special position which distinguished them from other travellers, who, as Grant put it: "received their information merely from report". They received information as eye-witnesses. The problem which cannot be neglected is the quality of communication, what the missionaries really heard while listening to the Yezidis answers and their stories. A statement by Francis Ainsworth constitutes a good example: "We now asked the Yezidis present concerning the peacock, of which they at once declared

their ignorance" (Ainswoth, 1841:24). In a highly oral culture words are connected to deeds, and not everything should be explained verbally. The missionaries were looking for any sort of evidence of the existence of the books among them. Grant said: "They profess to have a book in a language of their own, and that only one family is allowed to read it" (Grant, 1841:218).

– All of them tried to trace the path between Christianity and the Yezidi beliefs, or rather interpreted the Yezidi on the Christian base. In some of their own interpretations they included the opinions expressed by the neighbouring Christians. Grant said:

> The Nestorian claim them as a branch of their church; and there are other reasons why they might well be included in our labours for the improvement of that people. Many of the Nestorians speak the Koordish language, which is spoken by the Yezidees, and they would prove most important and valuable coadjutors in our labours for their conversion (Grant, 1841:31).

He also pointed out several similarities between Christians and Yezidis in his self-assessment: they practise the right of baptism, make the sign of the cross, take off their shoes and kiss the threshold when they enter a Christian church, and it is said that they often speak of wine as the blood of Christ, hold the cup with both hands, after the sacramental manner of the East, when drinking it, and, if a drop chance to fall on the ground, they gather it up with religious care. Such evidence – according to him – allowed them to see Christian religion in a positive way. Henry Lobdell, however, gave a longer description of the connection with Jesus and Christianity, which he heard from one noble Yezidi.

> When Christ was on the cross in the absence of his friends, the devil, in the fashion of a dervish, came and took him down and carried him to heaven. Soon after the Marys came, and seeing their Lord gone, inquired of the dervish where he was. They would not believe his answer, but promised to do so if he would take the pieces of a cooked chicken, from which he was eating, and bring the animal to life. He agreed to do so, and bringing back bone to his bone — the cock crew! The dervish then announced his real character, and they expressed their astonishment by a burst of adoration. Having

informed them that he would henceforth always appear to them in the shape of a beautiful bird, he departed. The peacock (taoos) was henceforth chosen as their chieftain's symbol (Tyler, 1859:223).

This fragment has been quoted several times in different missionary books or press such as The *Missionary Herald*. The distribution and circulation of missionary knowledge seems to be an interesting area to explore.

Asahel Grant wrote a book titled *The Nestorians Or The Lost Tribe*, in which he presented his core idea that the Nestorians are a 'lost Jewish tribe', discovered, of course, by him. He also adopted this idea to the Yezidies giving some examples of their Jewish origin in his book (Grant, 1841: 300-307). The book found its audience in 1841 both in New York and London. In one of the letters to his mother he counted positive reactions to the book in America, while he did not receive any from the British 'community of readers', which is really of great significance (Lathrop, 1847:133). In 1853 the *New York daily tribune* published a text by Henry Lobdell, which in fact, was a kind of report from his visit to the Sheikh Adi shrine. These two examples may be considered as a popular presentation of the Yezidies in a positive way.

In conclusion I may express my doubts on whether the analyses of missionary writings from the 19th century shed a new light on the problems of Yezidi religion or their practices but under further scrutiny they may become useful in analysing the relations between different groups, their self-categorization, studies devoted to stereotypes, and to some extend their origins. They may also show the Yezidis subject in defining the reality from their perspective, as Asahel Grant forwarded the Yezidis opinion on the Druzes. They were Yezidis. As evidence he explained the name: *dur – yazata*, far from *yazata*, "separated from the Yezidis".

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SIDQÎ HIRORÎ

Bi kurtî li ser kurdnasiya polonî

Abstract

Few Remarks on Kurdish Studies in Poland

The author of the paper is Kurdish. While studing in Poland in the 80thies he made a research on Polish literature on the Kurds. Alexander Chodżko, Karol Brzozowski, August Żaba and the two brothers Alexander and Władysław Jabłonowski were not only the first Poles, but also one of the first Europeans who visited Kurdistan in the nineteenth century and wrote about it and its people. August Żaba (Jaba) collected many manuscripts of the Kurdish classics. That led to the development of Kurdology and the revival of the Kurdish classical litterature. The paper presents 29 Polish resources written by Polish people about the Kurds and their country in 19th and 20th century. In particular it refers to articles by Karol Brzozowski, Jan Raychman, Maria Paradowska and Leszek Dzięgiel.

Ez di 21.09.1986ê ji bo xwendina rojnamevaniyê li zanîngehê hatibûm Polonyayê. Min li xwendingeha hînbûna zimanê polonî ya ser bi zanîngeha Łodź li bajarê Łodź dest bi hînbûna zimanê polonî kiribû. Poloniya min ya wan rojan têra beşekê jiyana min ya rojane dikir.

Rojekê mamosteya zimanê polonî ya klasa me Małgorzatayê nivîseka bi navê *Kurd* ya Jerzy Jastrzębowski ku di rojnameya hefteyî Tygodnik Powszechny (1986: 8) de belav bûbû da min û got: "Pêdivî ye tu vê bixwînî". Poloniya min ne ew qas baş bû ku ez bi rehetî wê nivîsarê bixwînim û naveroka wê fehim bikim. Lewma dostekê min ji rojavayê Kurdistanê ku navê wî Nasir e û berî min li Polonyayê bû, ew xwend û ji min re bi devkî kir kurdî. Nivîsar dirêj bû û xwediyê wê bilez gelek zanyarî, bê ku zêde li dû rastiya wan biçe, tê de bicih kiribûn. Nivîskarî li ser binyatê kurdan û ji hemî versiyonên heyî ya Firdewsî hilbijartibû ji bo ku ji bo xwendevanê polonî diyar bike ka çima kurd çiyayî ne û bes li çiya hene. Rast e mebesta nivîskarî nasandina kurdan bû û gelek zanyariyên rast jî tê de hebûn, lê

kesê ku nivîsar dixwend hest pê dikir ku kurdan xwe li çiyayên bilind asê kiriye, kurd nikarin xwe biguhorin û nikarin ji cîranên xwe zanatir bin û ew bes dostên çiya û tivengê ne û qîmetê nadine xwendinê. Ew di nivîsa xwe de xwendevanî bi şik dixe ku kurd bikarin wek milet berdewam bin û di wê bawerê de ye ku ew dê di dormandorê de bihelihin. Nivîskar di nivîsara xwe de bi îsrar e ku kurd dê di çiyayên asê de bimînin û dê bi xewn û duayan bijîn û ew weha dinivîse: "Ew danakevin. Kurd ji wan mirovan in yên ku dikarin bi tenê li çiyayan bijîn. Evca ew dê hêj di nav dehlên xwe yên çiyayî de dua bikin. Ew dê li benda mucîzeyekê bin".

Çi jêderên li ser kurdan bi kurdî û erebî û farisî, ku ew ziman bûn min dikaribû pê bixwînim, di wî wextî de li ber destên min nebûn ji bo ku ez bi alîkariya wan nivîsareka bersivdayînê li ser îdiayên di nivîsara Jerzy Jastrzębowski binivîsim. Lê min hemcar biryar da ku ez hinek zelalkirinan li ser pirsiyar û îdiayên di nivîsarê de hene bi kurdî binivîsim û ez wê bi alîkariya kurdekê ku poloniya wî baş be bikim polonî û ji wê kovarê re bişînim. Lê çend rojan piştî derketina nivîsarê Jerzy eynî mamosteyê nivîsareka din ji eynî kovarê ji min re îna û got: "Vaye poloniyekî bersiva nivîsara Jerzy Jastrzebowski da". Nivîsar ya Leszek Dzięgielî (1931-2005) bû û ew bi navê *O Kurdach bez egzaltacji* (1987: 5)

Leszek Dzięgiel di wê nivîsara xwe û di destpêkê de îşaretê li wê dike ku ew bawer nake ku kurdek li Polonyayê hebe ku bikare bi zimanê polonî bersiva nivîsara Jerzy Jastrzębowski bide û şaşiyên ku di nivîsara wî de li der heqê kurdan hatine nivîsandin rast bike û ji ber wê jî ew xwe bi berpirsiyar dibîne ku wê bersivê binivîse. Ew di nivîsarê de behsê wê dike ku wî di salên 1977, 1978 û 1980an de lêkolînên etnografî li bêtir ji 80 gund û bajarên kurdan li Kurdistana Îraqê kirine. Ew îdiayên di nivîsara Jerzy Jastrzębowski de red dike û dinivîse ku welatê kurdan ne bes çiya ne û cihê kurd lê dijîn welatekê berfereh e û kurd bi hejmara xwe nêzîkî 20 milyonan in û ew li her dera dunyayê jî belavbûne. Ew diçe ser behsê dabeşkirina Kurdistanê bi alîkariya ewropiyan li ser çend dewletên ku nû hatibûn avakirin. Ew qala jiyana kurdan û şehrezahiyên wan di warên çandin û karên destî de dike û intelegensiya kurdî li Kurdistanê û li derveyê wê jî bi nav dike. Bê şik min dê qet nivîsareka çêtir û weha têr zanyarî û objektîv ji ya Leszek Dzięgielî nenivîsandiba.

Min biryar da ez li nivîsên kevn û nû yên polonî yên li ser kurdan û welatê wan bigerim û demê min li Warşo dest bi xwendina xwe ya rojnamevaniyê li zanîngehê kir, min:

1. xwe kir aboneyê jêderokên rojnamevanî (Wycinki prasowe) yên li ser kurdan û cîranên wan
2. da dû nivîsarên kevin di çapemeniya polonî de
3. biryar da mastera xwe bi arîkariya materyalên ez dê kom bikim li ser *Wêneyê kurdî di weşangeriya polonî* de binivîsim.

Û min weha kir, ez bûm aboneyê jêderokên rojnamevanî her ji dawiya sala 1987ê û dunyayeka nivîsarên kurt û dirêj ku navê kurdan û welatê wan tê de bû her çendekê ji min re dihatin. Min her weha jî dest bi lêgerînê li lêkolîn û nivîsarên polonî yên kevin li ser kurdan kir. Mebesta min jî ew bû ku ez wan hemiyan di têza xwe ya masterê de bi kar bînim. Li destpêkê mamosteyê min yê têzê qebûl kir ku ez li ser wî babetê min li jor bi nav kiribû binivîsim, lê paşî, di sala 1991ê de wî dîtina xwe guhart û xwest ez li ser dîroka rojnamevaniya kurdî tiştekî binivîsim, ew jî ji ber ku pêwsîtiya wan li zanîngehê bi çavkaniyeka di wî warî de hebû. Evca, min piraniya materyalên li ser kurdan yên ku min ji weşangeriya polonî kom kiribûn, dan hevalekê kurd ku salekê piştî min dest bi xwendina rojnamevaniyê kiribû, ji bo ku ew têza xwe li ser eynî babetê min berê hilbijartibû binivîse. Êdî ew materyal heta roja îro jî li min nehatin vegerandin û neketin destê min. Lê hinek nivîsar û zanyarî, yên ku mabûn li cem min, heta niha jî di destên min de ne.

Wextê ez di destpêkê de hatim Warşo hîngê sal 1987 bû, ne înternet û ne kompiyuter hebû û ji bo ku mirov nivîsarên bi polonî yên li ser kurdan û welatê wan bi dest xwe bixe diviyabûya mirovî yan bi rêya kesên di wî warî de şehreza û bibliografiyeka wî babetî li cem heyî ew çend kiriba yan jî divya mirov ketibûya nav kitêbxaneyan û bi rêya kartan, yên li gor nav û paşnavên nivîskaran yan yên li gor babetan tertîbkirî, li xwesteka xwe bigerha. Vê jî wext û sebir pê diviya.

Berî ku ez bihêm Polonya, ji kurdnasên polonî min bes navê Aleksander Jabayî (yanî August Kościesza Żaba) dizanî. Êdî min jî lêgerîna xwe li ser materyalên bi polonî yên peywendî bi kurdan heye bi wî dest pê kir. Ez di wê lêgerînê de rastî nivîsareka Maria Paradowska ya bi navê *Rękopis kurdyjski ze zbiorów Augusta*

Kościeszy- Żaby (Destnivîseka kurdî ji koleksiyonên Jabayî*)* bûm, ku di sala 1971ê de di Etnografia Polskayê de belav bûbû (1971; 225-250) . Ev nivîsar ji bo min gelek wecdar bû ji ber ku ew pêk dihat ji:

- gelek zanyariyên li ser Aleksander Jabayî, li ser kar û xebatên wî yên kurdnasi-yê.
- lêkolîneka berfereh li ser destxetekê ji nav koleksiyonên Jabayî û ew jî *Adat û risûmatnameê ekradiye*
- nav û çavkaniyên din yên li ser kurdan û welatê wan; wek Karol Brzozowski, Aleksander û Władyslaw Jobłonowoski, Jan Reychman.

Min da dû nivîsarên din yên Maria Paradowskayê yên li ser kurdnasiyê û nivîsara wê *Problematyka kurdyjska w polskich opracowaniach okresu powojennego (lata 1945-1969)* (Pirsgirêka kurdî di lêkolînên polonî yên qonaxa piştî şerî (salên 1945 – 1969) (1970; 147-155) de dît. Vê nivîsarê wêneyê nivîsîna li ser kurdan di çapemeniya polonî de li ber min zelaltir kir. Jê diyar bû ku heta derketina kitêba A. R. Qasimloyî *Kurdystan i Kurdowie* (Kurdistan û kurd), di naverasta sala 1969ê de çi kitêbên taybet li ser kurdan nehatibûn nivîsîn, ji bilî nivîseka dirêj ya Andrzej Bartnicki ya bi navê Kurdowie *Kurdowie* (Kurd, 1966) ya li ser dîrok û xebata kurdan ya ji bo rizgarbûnê. Paradowska di vê nivîsa xwe de behsê gelek nivîsên salên 1945 – 1969ê yên bi taybet li ser kurdan di çapemeniya polonî de derketine dike. Em pê gelek navan nas dikin wek Jerzy Lichodziejewski (1962), Maciej Popko (1969), Jan Dziedzic (1969) û xuya dibe jî ku nivîsên piraniya vê qonaxê li ser kurdên Îraqê bûn. Maria Paradowska herweha balê dikişîne ser behsê kurdan di nav pirtûkên geografî û geroknameyan de, mîna di pirtûkên E. Neefa (1959), J. Baker (1959), K. Moszyński (1953). Marek Gdański (1963), Lukasz Hirsowicz (Hirsowicz, 1963), Jerzy Lichodziejewski (1964), Georg Bidwel (1956), Jerzy Leliwa (1964), Kazimierz Dziewanowski (1963) û Teresa Brzozowska (1966). Lê çavkaniya herî bala min di wê nivîsarê de ket ser Karol Brzozowskî (1821 – 1904) û gera wî di nîverasta sala 1869ê de bo Kurdistana Îraqê bû. Paradowska nîva duyê ya nivîsa xwe bo behiskrina naveroka kitêba Qasimloyî terxan kiribû. Bi xêra van herdu nivîsarên Paradowskayê haya min ji gelek çavkanî û nivîsarên din çêbû û ez ketim dû bidestxistina wan.

Min di lêgerîna xwe ya li dû nivîsara Karol Brzozowski de li Kitêbxaneya Zanîngeha Warşoyê nivîseka Stefan Przeworski *Z polskich badań naukowych w Azji Zachodniej* (Ji lêkolînên zanistî yên polonî li Asyaya rojava, 1932) dît. Ew wek mikrofîlm bû û min ew bi destxetê xwe jê nivîsî. Min ew hejmara rojnameyê di van rojan de ê bi rêya înternetê bi destên xwe xist. Ew behsê gera Karol Brzozowski û herdu nivîsên wî; *Wspomnienia z Kurdystanu* (Bîrînanên min li Kurdistanê) ya di hejmarên 211 – 219an yên sala 1899ê de ya Gazeta Lwowska ya li Lwowayê[1] derdiket û nivîsa wî ya duyê ya bi fransî *Itineraire de Souleimanieh a Amadieh* ya di "Bulletin Societe de geographie" de dike. Herweha Maria Pardowska di nivîsara xwe de *Karol Brzozowski – podróżnik i badacz Bliskiego Wschodu* (Karol Brzozowski – gerok û lêkolînvanê Rojhilata Navîn) bi dûr û dirêjî li ser jiyan, xebat û berhemên Karol Brzozowski radiweste (1967; 208).

Min li destpêkê nivîsa Karol Brzozowski ya di Gazeta Lwowskayê de peyda nekir, lê min li ciyê wê çapeka dî ya wê nivîsê bi navê *W Kurdystanie* (Li Kurdistanê) di hejmarên 32 – 34an yên sala 1907ê yên rojnameya Tygodnik Ilustrowany de ya ku Li Warşoyê derdiket dît û bidest xwe xist (Brzozowski, 1907). Min paşî ya di Gazeta Lwowskayê de jî, di van salên dawiyê de, bi rêya Înternetê bi dest xwe xist. Girnigiya nivîsa bi navê *Bîrînanên min li Kurdistanê* ew e ku ew endazyar, helbestvan û şervanê azadiya Polonyayê Karol Brzozowski bi xwe wek polonî û ewropiyê yekê, wek şîretkarê waliyê Îraqê Medhet Paşayî (1869 – 1872) çûye Kurdistanê û li ser wê geryana xwe nivîsiye. Karol Brzozowski di wê nivîsra xwe de behsê geryana xwe ji Bexdayê bo Silêmaniyê bi rêya Kifrî dike. Wesfa xelkê xwarin, kinc, rêgir, çiya û çûna serê çiyayê Pîre Mekrunî dike.

Maria Paradowska di nivîseka xwe ya din de *Rękopis Władysława Jabłonowskiego i jego znaczenie dla historii etnografii polskiej* (Destxeta Władysław Jabłonowski û qîmeta wê di dîroka etnografiya polonî de) balê dikişîne ser giringiya bîrînanên vî poloniyê ku bi xw çûye Tirkiyeya Osmanî û Bexdayê û di nîva duyê ji sedsala noydehan de kurd û welatê wan ji nêzîk ve dîtiye û çûye Kirmanşah, Xaneqîn, Kerkûk, Silêmanî, Helbece û cihine din. Ya herî giring jî di bîrînanên vî mirovî de ew e ku ew bi hûrgilî behsê jiyana xwe ya rojane li wan deran û hertiştê li ser

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[1] Di wê demê de Lwów ya ku niha wek Lviv tê naskirin û yek ji bajarên Ukrainayê ye bû bajarê Polonyayê

radiweste dike. Ew wesfa kinc û pêça jina kurd li Mûsilê dike, behsê wê rewşa nexweşxaneya li Kerkûkê dike û hwd. (Paradowska, 1968: 162-172).

Nivîseka din ku ronahiyê dixe ser poloniyên ku di sedsala nozdehan de lêkolîn li ser ziman û folklora kurdan kirine bi navê *Z nieznanych kart orientalistyki polskiej XIX wieku: Polscy badacze języka i folkloru Kurdow* (Ji rûpelên nenaskirî yên rojhilatnasiya polonî ya sedsala nozdehan) ya Jan Reychmanî ket destê min. Nivîseka dirêj û ji Aleksander Chodźkoyî dest pê dike û bi dirêjî behsa Żabayî (Jaba) dike û li ser xebatên wî yên li ser folklor û destxetên kurdî radiweste. Ew herweha behsê Leonard Zagórski (1827-1891) û xebatên wî û ferhenga wî ya kurdî-rûsî dike. Ew qala herdu birayan Aleksander û Władysław Jabłonowski, Karol Brzozowski jî dike. (Reychman, 1969: 49-59).

Min herweha ji bo pitir zanyariyan li ser xebatên kurdnasên polonî di sala 1990ê û 1991ê de seredana Leszek Dziegielî li Krakowê li cihê karê wî Katedra Etnografii Słowian li Zanîngeha Yagiellonski (Uniwersytet Jagielloński) kir û ez her carê nêzîkî du seetan pê re rûniştim. Rûniştin û sohbeta bi wî mirovê pir zana, mirovşirîn û objektîf re gelek xweş û wecdar bû. Min li wê derê zanî ku ew li ser pirtûka xwe ya *Węzeł Kurdyjski* (Girêya Kurdî) kar dike û kes nîne çapkirina wê fînanse bike. Wî ji min re behsê gerên xwe yên etnografî li Kurdistanê kir. Wî li wê derê kopiyên çend nivîsên xwe yên belav bûbûn dan min wek *Problemy nowoczesnej oświaty szkolnej w dzisiejszym Kurdystanie irackim* (Problemên perwerdeya nûjen ya xwendingehan li Kurdistana Îraqê ya îroyîn, 1980), *Kurdowie klęski i nadzieje* (Kurd, şkestin û hêvî, 1980). Ev ji bilî wan nivîsarên wî yên min bi xwe bidest xwe xistibûn yên wek nivîsa Kraj Kurdów (Welatê kurdan, 1980) ku ew di sê beşan di sê hejmarên Poznaj Świat de li pey hev belav kiribibûn. Min ji wî û ji nivîsarên wî yên ku wî li wê derê nîşa min dan û ji kopiyên wî dan min û yên min berê dîtibûn zanî ku ew mirov bisporekê jêhatî ye û wî gelek lêkolînên meydanî li ser kurdan, welat, jiyan û rutf û adetên wan kirine û gelek nivîs jî di wî warî de di çapemeniya polonî de belav kirine û paşî naveroka piraniya wan lêkolînan ketin nav kitêba wî *Węzeł Kurdyjski* (Girêya Kurdî) ya ku di sala 1992yê de derketibû. Ew kitêba wî berhema yekê ya berfereh ya bi polonî li ser kurdan û welatên wan bû. Min di seredana xwe ya duyê de hevpeyivînek bi Leszek Dziegielî re kiribû û ew di hejmara 6 ya sala 1991ê ya Tygodnik Universytecki ya beşê rojnamevaniyê

li zanîngeha Warşoyê de belav kir. Bê şik babetê kurdnasiyê li Polonyayê warekê ji bo lêkolînan berfereh e û min li vir bes xwest balê bikişînim bo ser destpêka peywendiya min bi vî babetî re.

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FERZAN ŞÊR

Li Keleha Vegotinê Vebêjerekî RastGo

Abstract

The Reliable Narrator At The Castle of Narration

The effective use of Kurdish language in the last three decades of the 20th century resulted in abundance of literary works. The classical narrative forms have been changed into new ones. Şener Özmen was born in Şirnex (North Kurdistan/South-Eastern Turkey). He is one of those writers who have taken an active part in the process of modernization. Özmen is the author of many works which have contribute considerably to the modern Kurdish literature narrative forms changes. The paper refers to one of his short stories entitled *Keleh* (The Fortress), where the author uses "go" instead of "got"(English: "said") in dialouges. "Go" is the coloquial version of "got" in Kurdish language and seems to be applied deliberately by Özmen. It makes the implied author visible to the readers' eyes. Inspired both by native tradition of storytelling and by foreign literary influences the Özmen's approach to narration seems insightful not only for Kurdish but also for world literature.

Di destpêka sedsala dawîn de ji bo wêjeya kurdî agirê geşbûnê pêket. Piştî kovara *Hawar* ango ekola *Hawarê* agirê ku Celadet Elî Bedirxan û hevalên wî dadabûn heya salên heşteyî yên sedsala bîstemîn di hemdê xwe de pêket. Lê di pey re bîst sî salên dawîn ên sedsala bîstemîn re nifşekî nû tevlî nifşên kevn ji xeweke giran vejiyan. Nexasim li bakûrê Kurdistanê kovara *Nûdemê*, *Rewşen-name*, *Azadiya Welat* û nivîskariya Mehmed Uzun têsîreke mezin li vê zindîkirinê kir. Destpêkên sedsala bîstûyekemîn jî ev geşedan teqleke nû li xwe da; em dikarin bibêjin ku di vê serdemê de pêşveçûneke mezin biqasî têsîra ronesansê di wêjeya kurdî de pêkhat. Di nav teqlê de romannûsên mîna Şener Özmen cihên girîng girtin. Helbet ev tiştên ez behs dikim ne xalên teqez in, belkî civaknasiya wêjeyê ango dîroknûsiya wêjeyê gelek tiştên dîtir jî dê tevlî van navan û pêvajoyan bikin. Lê ji bo destnîşankirina xalekê atmosfera demî û pêvajoya dîrokê girîng e. Yek ji

balkêştirîn hêmanê di vê pêşveçûnê de şêweyên nû li wêjeya kurdî aj dan. Şener Özmen jî yek ji kirdeya vê pêvajoyê bû, şêweyên nû li wêjeya kurdî, li vegotina kurdî zêdekir. Di vê gotarê de em ê li ser çîroka wî ya bi navê *Keleh*ê bisekinin, di çîroka wî ya navborî de li ser vegotina wî ya taybetî bisekinin.

VEGOTINA (NE)RAST"GO"

Di derbarê vegotinê de berhema herî lihevhatî û berfireh bêgûman kitêba Wayne C. Booth a bi navê *Rewanbêjiya Tevnsaziyê[1]* ye. Di vê kitêbê de em pêrgî çend cureyên vegotin û vebêjerê jî dibin. Vegotinên şexsî û derşexsî(neşexsî) serek cureyên vegotinê; vebêjera pêbawer, vebêjera pênebawer û vebêjara nixûmandî (nivîskara nixûmandî) jî sereke têgînên vebêjeriyê ne. Helbet em ê nekevin nav pênasîna van têgînan lê di vir de ji ber ku bi mijara me re têkildar e, pênasîneke kurt ji bo vebêjera nixûmandî divêtiyek e. Vêbejera nixûmandî herçiqas em di bin sîwanê vebêjeriyê de binivîsin jî esil kategoriyeke di navbera vebêjera esil û nivîskar de ye. Di berhama navborî a Booth de li gor ew ji Kathleen Tillotson vediguhese "ezbûna dûyemîn" a nivîskar e (W.C. Booth, Stenbol;81). Her wekî din Booth wiha diyar dike: "[j]i ber ku têgînên hîn çêtir nîn in, ez ji bo vebêjera ku li gor normên berhemê (normên vebêjera nixûmandî) dipeyive ango tevdigere dibêjim pêbawer, a ne li gor in jî pênebawer dibêjim" (W C. Booth, Stenbol;170). Li gor vê danasînê vebêjera nixûmandî di heman demê de diyarkira vebejêrên din e jî.

Di wêjeya Şener Özmen de *zêhişî* (stream of consciousness) wek ji her du romanên wî yên dawî jî xuyaye cihekî girîng digre. Di çîroka bi navê *Keleh*ê de ev yek teqlek bilindtir li xwe daye, vegotin û vebêjeriyeke nû derketiye. Hesenê Dewrêş di nivîsa xwe ya bi navê *Keleh Bilind Dibe* de çend taybetmendiyê vê teqlê diyar kirine. Li gor Hesenê Dewrêş "prosesa ku bi Erebê Şemo re destpê kiribû û di dû re jî navên fena Egîdê Xudo, Mahmut Baksî, cî bi cî Hecîyê Cindî û Mehmet Uzun hwd. domandibûn, ew pêvajoya ku bi hevokên kinî ku pirr tişt nedidan hev, erê, ew prosesa ku bi hevokên sade û mitewazî ji me re bûyer neqil dikirin" (Dewrêş, 2012; 37) bi kurteçîrokên di *Keleh*ê de bidawî dibe. Kirdebûna Şener Özmen a di vegotina kurdî de bi vê jêrderka Hesenê Dewrêş re dirûva

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[1] The Rethoric of Fiction

rastiyekê bi sedemgerî li xwe dike. Bi vê sedemgeriyê Hesenê Dewrêş berê me dide peyva "Go"yê, li gor wî ev peyv di vegotinê de cihekî girîng digre, wek pireke di navbera çanda devkî û nivîskî de ye û bi ser de bi vê peyvê re qadeke berfireh li ber vegotinê, li ber kurmanciyê vekiriye. Teqez wiha ye lê bi ser de di heman demê de pêdiviya teknikî jî di hundirê xwe de çareser kiriye. "Go" di vegotina devkî de pirr tê bikaranîn lê di nivîskî de piranî "got" tê bikaranîn. Îcar ji ber ku Şener Özmen xwe dispêre *zêhişiyê* û em baş dizanin ku *zêhişî* ji Joyce û modernîstên ewil vir ve wekî çalakiyeke hişî û di esasa xwe de li ser serobinokirina gramerê radibe, "go" jî vê yekê dike. Hinek nivîskar van daxwazên xwe yên hişî di nîşaneyan de didin der. Lê "go" him monologên bê-rastnivîs (derî-gramatîk) derbasî metnê dike, him jî rûmeta çanda devkî û çîrokbêjiya çanda devkî bi wan dide. Di encama vê kiryarê de "ew prosesa ku" Hesenê Dewrêş diyar dike dikeve proseseke nû. Ji bo fahmkirina vê jêderkê û hayjêbûna ji çîroka *Keleh*ê pasaja duyemîn balkêş e:

> Go, ji dûr ve, anku dema ku ji bo hêsabûna xwe ya dawî –go, soz û bext dabû ji rêberê xwe yê zîrek re- li serê riya kelehê ya çiv dayî, bi helkehelk sekinîbû û bi çavên xwe yên ku hinekî din hûr û kûr çûbûn, go, li gir nihêrîbû û ji wê navbeynê de kelehê mîna wan kaşxaneyên derebegên Ewropayî yên di gravûrên curecur de dîtî, di nava xelekeke ji mij û moraneke cûn î tarî pêk hatî de xuya kiribû ku bi tenê çend ejdehayên çavsor ên çîrokî ji esmanê wê yê neftî kêm bûn û vê yeka han, go, tatêla wî ya ku hê bi ser hemdê xwe ve dihat, zêdetir kiribû di nava wan kêliyan de. (Özmen, 2012; 9)

Ji jêgirtina jorîn em fahm dikin hevokek dirêj bi hemû derfetên rêzimanî û rastnivîsê di hundirê xwe de bi hosteyî helandiye. Dema em li ser hûrtir bibin em ê bibînin hêmayên di vê hevokê de wek lehiyekê ji çavkaniyekê bibeze diherike. Ev çavkanî bêgûman "hiş" e, herikîn jî "Zê"ya wê ye. Lowma wekî dîmenên çalakiyên ji hişê ev jî bêyî rêzîman û rastnivîs lidarketiye. Di van hûrgiliyan de em dibînin ku peyva "go"yê çar caran hatiye bikaranîn. Tiştê ku em dizanin peyva "go"yê piranî di devên çîrokbêj, nemaze jî di yên dengbêjan de wekî beniştê tê bikaranîn. Hem ji bo neqilkirinê hem jî ji denglêkirina çîrokê ev peyv û yên mîna vê peyvê dengên girîng hene. Lê dema nivîskarê me Şener Özmen be –wekî ku em dizanin Mehmed Uzun hunera xwe dispart dengbêjan û piranî jî dubarekirina dengan bikardianî-bibe nebe em bi tenê vê ravekariya dengbêjiyê û taybetmendiya wê dertên, tiştinên

din digerin. Lowma ev peyva "go"ê ne tenê nîşaneya dengbêjî, çîrokbêjî û pira di navbera çanda devkî û nivîskî de ye, tiştinên din dihundirîne.

Li gor zanista vegotinê (vegotinnasî, *narratology*) dema em li vebêjerekê di vê çîrokê de bigerin em ê bibînin vebêjereke diyarkirî nîne. Yek heye dibêje, lê wekî ku Hesenê Dewrêş jî heman pirsan dike kî ye û kengê dibêje ne diyar e. Bibe nebe mirov dikeve pey vebêjerê. Di çîroka *Keleh*ê de sereklehengekî bênav ango bi navê X.'yê heye. Tiştê ku xuya dike em serboriya X. a tevlîbûna kelehê û nakokiyên li derdora wê kelehê diqewime dixwînin. Rûdana di vê çîrokê de ji aliyê dengê sêyemîn, ji aliyê kesekî gîştzan ve tê qal kirin. Lê ev deng bi tevahî ji hebûna xwe ya "gîştzaniyê", ji vê erka xwe ya xwedahî ne razî ye. Lowma jî dixwaze hinek hêzên xwe parve bike, qeweta xwe ya vegotiniyê bispêre derekî dî. Dema vê yekê dike belkî piraniya hêza xwe ya zanînê dispêre vebêjera hevalê xwe. "Go" û kirdebêja "go"yê ji neqilvanê vê erkê digrin. Dema mirov Wayne C. Booth dixwîne û wî senifandina wî ya bi sê tebeqeyan –nivîskar, nivîskara nixûmandî, vebêjer- tîne ber çavê xwe di vegotina Şener Özmen a di *Keleh*ê de ev yek kirasekî cudatir li xwe dike. Tiştê ku em ji metnên Wayne C. Booth ên derbarê mijarê de fahm dikin nivîskarê nixûmandî wekî ji navê wî jî diyar e nixûmandî û veşartî ye.

Neqilvan nêzî nivîskar, ezbûna wî/ê ya dûyemin e, xwediyê go jî an ku ê dibêje jî nêzî vebêjer e. Ev ferq bi ya min heya neha di tu berhemê de ewqasî eşkere nîn bû. Ev di warê wêjeyê de ji bo çîrokê, li warê rexneya wêjeyê jî ji bo vegotinnasiyê gavekî girîng e. Ev ji çend xalan ve xwe di pratîka metnê de dide der. Bi zanîna vê agahiyê re, ango diyarbûna vê nûansê re baweriya me ya metnê, pêbaweriya vebêjerê jî xurttir dibe. Em wekî xwîner di çalakiya xwe ya xwendinê de, wekî kiryareke navmetnî (*intetextuality*) êdî navê nivîskar ji bîr dikin. Ji me xwîneran nivîskar "dimre" (*the dead of author*). Em bi neqilvan û vebêjer re rû bi rû dimînin her çiqas em nizanibîn bê "ê/a ku dibêje" kî ye, çi kes e, temenê wî/ê çi ye hwd. Yek ji girîngtirîn taybetmendiya "Go"yê jî pêdiviyên diyalogan ji destê neqilvan negre jî, ji dest û zordariya formalîzma rêzimanî rizgar dike. Bi ya min dema di vegotinnasiyê de forma neqilkirina diyalogan tê pêşkêşkirin em ji pêlîstokên rêzimanî û formalîst hin caran tên xapandin, ango belaheq tên westandin. Ji bo fahmkirina zordariya formalîst û rêzimanî di em ji ser mînakan biçin dê çêtir bibe. Dema di metneke wêjeyî de em diyalogekê dixwînin piranî wiha tê pêşkêşkirin;

dunikek tê dayîn, li pey wê peyva "got, dibêje" tê bikaranîn. Di çîroka *[…]Akîo* ya Şener Özmen de, çîrok vê diyalogê dest pê dike:

"Bavê min çi qasî dişibe wî masîgirî, ne wisa?"

"Çi?"

"Hîç…"

"Çawa hîç? Te tiştek got, qet nebe dawiya gotina xwe bîne"

"Min got, hîç!" (Özmen, 2012; 40)

Di vir de em dibînin ku rasterast axaftin di navbera du kesan de pêktê, nîşana "!" nehesîbinin em ne destê neqilvan ne jî yê vebêjer dibînin. Lê di hin metnan de dibe ku wiha jî bihata pêşkêkirin:

"Bavê min çi qasî dişibe wî masîgirî, ne wisa?" got Akîo.

"Çi?" got diya Akîo .

"Hîç…" got Akîo.

"Çawa hîç? Te tiştek got, qet nebe dawiya gotina xwe bîne" got diya Akîo.

"Min got, hîç!" got Akîo.

Ev yek hinek din dikare bê firehkirin jî mînak:

"Bavê min çi qasî dişibe wî masîgirî, ne wisa?" got Akîo bi dengê xwe yê bigir, û li diya xwê nêrî. Diya wî jî "Çi?" got, bê ku hay ji hestiyariya wî hebe.

Di van her sê mînakan de em sê cureyên vegotinê dibînin. Di diyaloga yekser de em dengê neqilvan nabihizîn û tu danasînek jî nîne rasterast diyalog heye. Ev yek ji bo fahmkirina metnê di destpêkê de bi min ne baş e. Lê li gor diyaloga dûyemîn (a bi forma "got") jî beleheq em peyvên neqilvan dibihîsin. Ji xwe di nav dunikê de em gotinên lehengan dixwînin, ger pêdivî bi agahiyên zêde nîn be, bi ya min tu carî pêdivî bi forma dûyemîn nîne. Em wê pêdiviyê jî, wekî pêdiviya afirandina atmosferekî wêjeyî dibînin, di forma sêyemîn ("got" û pê ve agahîzêdekirin) de dibînin. Şener Özmen jî forma ewil û sêyemîn bikartîne. Rola herî mezin a "go"yê di *Keleh*ê de hevsenga vê vegotinê ye.

Wekî encam dema mirov vegotina Şener Özmen di nav serboriya wêjeya kurdî û vegotina kurdî de li derekî bi cih bike, teqez ew der trambolîn e. Alava trambolînê ji bo vegotina Şener Özmen metaforeke bi qewet e. Her çiqas em bixwazin ji zimanê "bindestî" û ji arabeskiya wê xwe dûr bikin jî divê em sûrên li derdora kurdî avabûye jî bibînin û bilêvbikin. Vegotina Şener Özmen û hemdemên wî jî encax bi alavên nûjen ên mîna trambolînê ango bi lehengên mîna Cemşîdxanê hêza firînê karin ji wan sûran biborin. Lewra ji pêdiviyeke wiha Şener Özmen bi her berhemê re xwe her hinekî bi jortir ve bilind dike. Bi kitêba *Keleh*ê nemaze jî bi çîroka *Keleh*ê re û bi ser de jî bi vegotina "go"yê re Şener Özmen di trambolîna xwe de êdî ji sûrên li derdora xwe û ya wêjeya kurdî bilindtir difire. Dema em vê mijara "go"yê di nav vegotinnasiyê de dinirxînin jî em dibînin ku bi her firê re baskekî xwe jî li wêjeya cîhanê dide.

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RENATA KURPIEWSKA-KORBUT

Cultural Policy of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq
Some Preliminary Notes.

"Culture should not be subjected to political influence" and "the main basis of the cultural policy implemented by the Kurdistan Regional Government is ensuring freedom of cultural expression", the minister of culture and youth in the Kurdistan Region has said in his interviews (Kawa Mahmoud Shakir 2012, 2013), specifying that the statements refer to the relationship between the political authority and intellectuals. As he's explained such an arrangement that relies on the use of art and culture for the benefit of people holding power – known from the Iraqi historical experience and frequently encountered in the Middle Eastern countries – is a denial of independence which is a constitutive feature of each cultural creativity. The Kurdish minister simultaneously recalls that the cultural situation is inseparable from public political affairs. Taking into consideration momentarily the Kurdish minister's opinion in the first issue remains clear and comprehensive but let's concentrate on the second one concerning connections between the cultural policy and the public sphere in which the policy is realized.

One of the first and most common definitions of "cultural policy" was articulated at the beginning of eighties by an expert of the French Ministry of Culture, Augustin Girard. The author concluded that it is "a system of ultimate aims, practical objectives and means, pursued by a group and applied by an authority […] a policy implies the existence of ultimate purpose (long term), objectives (medium-term and measurable) and means (men, money and legislation), combined in an explicitly coherent system" (Girard 1983). In subsequent years this narrow meaning – concentrated only on measures taken by ministries of culture and a set of public decisions and programs which have cultural impacts; has been expanded by many other determinants of cultural policy, notably marketplace and civil soci-

ety, but also the history of nation and state building, institutional configuration and socio-economic structure (Isar 2009).

Leaving aside descriptive definitions, in practical terms the content of cultural policy is changeable in time and differs from one country to another. The core usually includes preservation of heritage, maintaining cultural institutions such as libraries, museums, theatres, concert halls and supporting professional artists. These basic sectors are in various configurations complemented by such components as language, cultural education, amateur art, popular, regional or migrant cultures, cultural industries, media, sports, leisure and social activities at state level, as well as cultural cooperation and diplomacy on an international level.

What a cultural and arts policy includes or excludes in a specific national and historic background is a matter of many explicit and implicit variables. It reflects the mode of bureaucratic organization, the definition of culture which is promoted by public authorities, the capabilities of political and economic system, and the boundaries of the legitimate domain for public intervention in a given society (Dubois 2013). Furthermore, one of the main factors that have an impact on and forms the cultural policy is the structural weaknesses of these policy areas. Its endogenous infirmity emerges from the lack of political significance in comparison with other policies (e.g. taxation or defence), resulting from both limited interest amongst the majority of policy makers and the general public and restricted expenditures by governments in the sector.

Hence, it's an obvious and common regularity that cultural policy is the result of conscious choices made by political actors – what is emphasized by some authors is either to garner support from a particular class or political fraction or in response to a perceived need to manage the changing, and competing, pressures arising from broader restructurings within society (Volkerling 1996; Gray 1996, 2000). A policy environment creates the structural conditions within which policy makers must operate. Within these, primarily ideological, constraints decision makers are free to choose whichever strategies and tactics are the most appropriate for the particular contexts in which they are located. If social or national development, or in some cases even existence, depends upon the extent to which policy sectors can demonstrate their real contribution to a range of other questions/problems that are perceived by policy-makers to be of more serious importance, then the cultural

policy will be obligingly adapted to these non-cultural goals. The results of such instrumental approach to arts and cultural policies have serious implications both for what is produced and how it is produced in these sectors.

The brief theoretical consideration proposed above lead to the preliminary conclusions that if cultural policy of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq is to be analyzed, there is a primary need to take into account a range of contexts in which the Kurdish cultural systems exist. In this paper the main emphasis will be put on one of the segments of the context, i.e. correlation between the cultural and arts policy and its social context. The ground for further consideration is the remark that "cultural policy does not operate in splendid isolation from broader pressures within society" (Gray, 1996), so the way in which states intervene in cultural and arts policies is a consequence of other developments that are taking place within societies.

According to the remarks of subsequent Kurdish ministers of culture, directly after a primary mission of protecting the Kurdish language, folklore, arts and heritage, the KRG considers the cultural policy as a social issue and a part of public affairs. The Ministry of Culture carries out a plethora of projects in order to reduce social problems encountered in Kurdistan in the transformation period and promote or build "a more open Kurdish society". Its activities that rely on encouraging and educating members of society to be more conscious, tolerant and modern citizens are directed mainly towards the younger generation of Kurds. This is not a coincidence that the ministerial entity is called "the Ministry of Culture and Youth" (previously "Culture and Sport") because from the governmental representatives' point of view "the core of the matter is to use cultural policy for education" (Kawa Mahmud Shakir, 2013).

It should be recalled that the KRG had shown an interest in the development of widely understood culture and education from its outset at the beginning of nineties. This kind of task was introduced into the Law no. 11 of 1992 pertaining to the establishment of the first Kurdish Ministry of Culture in the Kurdish autonomous area. Provisions of the law provide that duties of the formed ministry shall be to "conserve and promote Kurdish cultural originality in a manner in which promotes the ideals of the Kurdistan Liberation Movement and its democratic aims." Other aims include direct special concern to the cultural education of the young.

Two decades later the Kurdish minister of culture explained that the proposal for the youth in the field of artistic, cultural and civic education has been in the phase of developing coordination with other ministries of the KRG. Experts from all sectors have been preparing the draft document that will take a form of a national Kurdish strategy for young people. This is to be a sort of "a government map of action" with respect to the interest of the latter. Taking into account the opinion of the target group has not been an easy task, considering the fact that there are no scientific statistics, analysis, research, polls, academic studies about the situation and perspectives of the young generation in the Kurdistan Region. However, it appears that the programming in the sphere of culture for the Kurds at an early stage of life has profound reasons.

According to the analysis of the Kurdish writer and political publicist, Kamal Mirawadeli, the Kurdish youth between the seventies and nineties, despite unfavorable circumstances, were to some extent engaged in both in arts, music and the public sphere. Nowadays, most of the youth's cultural creativity and involvement in social or political life have been replaced by social-media communities and activities (or those inspired and organized by them) which leads not only to a growing individualization and virtualization of life but also to a flagging interest in the reality and passiveness. In his opinion, while in Western countries this process happens within a framework of a strong national culture and within their historical development, for peripheral societies like the Kurdish it is an imported or imposed experience. Mirawadeli emphasizes that this phenomenon goes against their historical realities and is rooted within the vacuum of their own national culture – *Kurdawari* meaning the culture of Kurds. He argues that its richness and antiquity was shattered and marginalized by the political authorities which resulted in the separation of young people – called by him a "lost generation" – from their cultural roots (Mirawadeli, 2012).

As for now but certainly not accepting as presented earlier the critical diagnosis they make the effort to fill the cultural void, the Kurdish Ministry of Culture assumed the role of "an architect" in the cultural sector and takes responsibility for providing the infrastructure of cultural facilities, in particular, designed for the young generation. It has built "youth centers" that include swimming pools and sports fields for basketball, volleyball, football as well as theatres or music stages

for different artistic activities. An important aspect of its undertakings during the last few years was to build dozens of libraries in towns in Kurdistan and cinemas in the new residential complexes and shopping centers. In parallel, the ministry has implemented the construction of cultural institutes, also known as "cultural cities", in each city of Kurdistan, including Kirkuk. These cultural centers include a cinema, theatre, gallery, library for children, youths and adults and cafés.

The idea of the new cultural institutions is not to separate women and men which is particularly notable in Kurdish cultural policy. Apart from the youths questions the Ministry of Culture devoted itself to assist women's issues by sponsoring or organizing conferences, seminars and cultural events related to violence against women and more to general gender equality. It also makes an effort to encourage women to self-expression and participate in cultural activities by offering them financial and organizational support. The Ministry has launched, organized or co-organized a number of initiatives that aim to raise awareness of the problems resulting from the Kurdish patriarchal mentality that deprives women of personal autonomy and violates their basic rights. Particular important examples in this field of activity are screenings and film festivals such as Movie Day on November 15 to celebrate The United Nations' (UN) International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women as well as the No To Violence Film Festival that was part of the KRG's campaign called "From Peace Within the Family to Peace Within Society.

Equality between female and male – that is, according to the belief of ministers of culture, an integral part of Kurdish culture – it is a point of contention with Islamic extremists which the ministry runs a kind of "cold war". War being fought for high stakes. Despite the booming economy in the Kurdistan Region and the extensive measures towards improving the situation of women taken by the KRG or local and international NGOs evidence suggests that the status of Kurdish women has not witnessed significant improvements. Reports indicate that arranged marriages, rape, domestic violence, honor killings, female genital mutilation and self-immolation are still prevalent in many conservative areas of the region (UN-AMI 2013; Beheddin 2014).

Another major task in the Kurdish cultural policy agenda of targeting social cohesion is to maintain good relations between minorities in the multicultural society

and to sensitize people on all sorts of social problems through culture and arts. The Ministry ensures that working on good mechanisms for keeping cultural diversity, reviving the heritage of minorities and organizing public cultural events dedicated to tolerant exchange of cultures from Kurdish, Turkish, Arab, Syrian, Chaldean and Assyrian. An example of its activities in this respect are folk festivals such as the popular folklore festival in Christian Ankawa district organized by the General Directorate of Assyrians, the Ministry of Culture and Youth. It also publishes several magazines in the fields of arts, cinema, women, children and folklore edited in Kurdish, Turkish and Syriac languages. Furthermore, subjects such as the problems of prejudices against other cultures, social and human rights issues like the generation gap, exclusion of women or forced migration effects are highlighted which are central for the majority of performances at the Hawlêr International Theatre Festival, organized by the Youth's Theatre Department at the Ministry of Culture and the Network for Cultural Redevelopment in Iraq since 2011.

Public cultural policies globally have a wide range of specifically social policy goals, from urban regeneration to the supervision of unemployed youths in deprived neighborhoods, from the empowerment of disabled persons through the regulation of ethnic and cultural diversity to the alleviation of social exclusion (Belfiore, 2002). The Kurdish public cultural policy has similarly followed with personalised local programs to achieve goals. At the same time it should be noted that as in most developing countries, the institutionalized cultural sector in the Kurdistan Region does not have deep roots. It is a small and of relatively recent origin. For many years, Kurdistan has been subjected to social and cultural isolation from the rest of Iraq and the world and nowadays "culture" is not a commonly recognized domain of public intervention. The budget of the cultural ministry responsible is small – approximately one percent of the regional budget – regional cultural expenses are perceived in terms of investment from which social impacts are expected. This is largely the reason why public intervention in cultural matters has to shift the focus of attention away from the content of the policy itself towards the context within which it exists.

The social service aspect of cultural policy is contemporary (and was historically) a common phenomenon and its positive effects must be recognized, though it is desirable that a balance between strictly cultural objectives and non-arts or

non-cultural reasons are maintained. If the balance has moved towards the latter ones, and the policy is evidently assigned to non-cultural purposes, questions arise about the content of culture supported by public policy, freedom of cultural expression, independence of the cultural sector and its role in articulation of popular aspirations and critical positions. Certainly, in answer to these questions it does not help an enigmatic definition of culture presented by the Kurdish public authorities.

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KRZYSZTOF LALIK

The Origins and Formation of Syriac Christian Churches in Kurdistan

The Middle East is a cradle of three biggest monotheists faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. At the peak of their popularity only two succeeded in spreading to dozens of countries and millions of inhabitants. Christianity retained its dominance until the seventh century when Muhammad and his successors disseminated from Arabia to East and West by successful conquest by force of lands of Christians, Jewish and adherents of other indigenous faiths. As a consequence the number of Christians dwindled rapidly at that time but they have not obliterated from areas of Muslim prevalence. Moreover, as the 'People of the Book' they were given special law of 'Dhimmis' ('People of Protection') that provide them with more or less tolerant rights to live and practise their religion in Muslim states, which placed their social and law status under Muslim but over infields/pagans[1] (Thomas, 2007: 9). Such situation continued with some slight differences till the era of colonial conquest of European superpowers and particularly till twenty century when Muslim Ottoman Empire was divided into number of separate and independent states, which were often convulsed by many political riots and coup d'états. In states where a secular elites managed to seize the power religious minorities usually enjoyed more freedom to religious practice unless they remained loyal to the ruling party as it was e.g. in Syria, Iraq or Egypt. Usually, it was not very difficult challenge to force many Christians to become loyal to the secular regime because, firstly, secular state seemed to be a very attractive option to state based on Islamic law, and, secondly, Christians in the Middle East are divided into many denomination. And this division derives even from pre-Islamic era. The main aim of this paper is to depicture history of origins with emphasis on fundamental doctrinal differences

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[1] The word 'pagans' refers to adherents of all non-Jewish and non-Christian beliefs of the early centuries as at that time it was a term commonly used in this meaning by Christian ecclesiastics.

between Syriac Christian offshoots whose fate has been converged with the history of Iraq, Turkey, Iran or Syria, so the area called Kurdistan, as early as from antiquity and these are: the Church of the East, the Chaldean Church, the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Syrian Catholic Church.

FRAGMENTATION OF THE ORIENTAL CHRISTIANITY

In terms of geographical, historical and linguistic descent we can generally distinguished three different traditions of the worldwide Christendom: Latin-Western tradition (both Catholic and Reformation's churches), Greek-Byzantine tradition (including Slavic Orthodoxy) and Eastern tradition. The latter comprehends Christian offshoots from the North Africa to southern India, which are divided into Syriac and Eastern Africa' churches (Coptic, Ethiopian and Nubians). Thus the indigenous Christian congregations of the Middle East are arranged in eleven following confessions: the Church of the East, the Armenian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Catholic Church[2], the Maronite Catholic Church, the Greek Orthodox (Melkite) Church of Alexandria, the Syrian Orthodox Church, the Syrian Catholic Church, the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Coptic Catholic Church, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Ethiopian Catholic Church[3] (Hawkes-Teeples, 2008: 39-40; O'Mahony, 2008: 511-530).

The current Syriac Christianity is derived from Syriac-speaking Christians communities of the fourth to seventh centuries dwelt in areas now covered by Syria, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Lebanon and Palestine/Israel. These include West and East Syriac tradition. The latter embraces the following groups of congregations: the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, Malankara Orthodox Church of India, the Maronite Catholic Church, the Catholic Syro-Malankara Church and Syrian Catholic Church, while the former encompasses the Church of the East, the Chaldean Church and the Syro-Malabar Church (Winkler, 2003: 2; Murre-van den Berg, 2007: 251). The

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[2] With the number of adherents less than half million and its patriarch in Beirut (Hawkes-Teeples, 2008; 9).

[3] Historically we can found another confession in the North Africa derived from early-century Christianity the Nubian Church but following Muslim prevalence it has not survived to the present time (Bundy, 2008: 140-141)

adherents of these churches are spread all over the world but their homelands remain in the Middle East and in India, where in the region Kerala (southwest India) you can find parishes of the Church of the East, the Syrian Orthodox Church, the Malankara Orthodox Church (Syrian Orthodox rite, independent), the Mar Thoma Church (result of a 19th century reformation), Malabar Independent Church as well as the Catholic Syro-Malankara Church. All these churches in India precipitated from the Indian Syrian Church, which until the 16th century were subordinate to the patriarch (catholicos) of the Church of the East.

A FRAUGHT-WITH-CONSEQUENCES DISPUTE ON CHRISTOLOGY

It is widely believed that the church founded by Jesus Christ was initially formed in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost when the Apostles went out to preach the Good News, thereby starting their public activity. Since then the Gospel spread throughout neighbouring countries around the Mediterranean Sea, the first travelling missionaries led by "the Apostle of the Nations" – Saint Paul and by Christian merchants, soldiers and travellers who trekked along the trade routes both within and outside of the Roman Empire and told stories of Jesus and the Apostles. This led to Christian priests forming more organized Church practices. However, while Christians encountered many obstacles and suffered persecution by the Romans prior to the 3rd century, their religion still evolved more peacefully and with much less peril from the authorities of the states east of the Euphrates (Baum, 2003: 8). Although at that time Christians in Asia usually lived in regions united politically it must be said that these lands were deeply diversified in terms of culture, language, religion and ethnicity. In the early centuries Christianity reached most of Asia, including today's Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Anatolia, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Arabian Peninsula, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and India. Unlike Christians in Rome after 313 and in Byzantium, where their religion was acknowledged by supreme civil authority and guaranteed tolerance of the state law, Christians in Asia had little or no access to political power or influence the exceptions being Georgia and Armenia (Bundy, 2008: 118).

The dissemination of Christianity among communities of different religious and philosophical background as inhabitants of Hellenized Asia Minor and of Parthian empire as well as Jews dwelling Asia, contributed largely to emergence of internal later-be-called gnostic and heretic interpretations of the scripture, the Gospel and fundamental Christian doctrines. One of the most substantial, fiercest and fraught-with-consequences disputes of the early Christendom concerned the question of the nature of Christ. During the first half of the 5th century usually they consisted of two main notions on Christology: Dyophysitism and Monophysitism, which subsequently led to an inveterate and permanent division within the Church. The latter view – very popular in Syria, Egypt, Armenia and Ethiopia – claimed that Jesus has only one nature and that of divine, which absorbed the human one, whereas the former maintained that Christ possesses two natures, divine and human, which exist in the form of hypostatic union so it means that he loses none of them, that he is 'perfect in Godhead, perfect in humanity, … consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, consubstantial with us according to humanity, like us in everything except sin…' (Jenkins, 2008: 57; Norris, 2008: 90).

The two natures of Christ was also affirmed by Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople and Diodorus' disciple, but, on one hand, unlike Dyophysitism, on the stipulation that the two natures of Christ remained united only morally but not ontologically (hence coexisting separately as two persons) (Winkler, 2003: 4), and on the other hand, unlike Monophysitism, with the emphasis on that of human and the neglect of the divine nature (Timbie, 2007: 104).[4] Therefore *Nestorianists* rejected the title 'Mother of God' (Theotokos) by which the Virgin Mary is venerated in Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Churches (Murre-van den Berg, 2007: 266).

Nestorius' teaching was condemned at the Council of Ephesus in 431 and he himself deposed and ordered to live in a monastery. The reality of the Ephesus' division was far more complex than it is alleged by popular tradition. It's still vague whether Nestorius in fact held the view which has been ascribed to him – that divine and human natures were present in Jesus Christ through two distinct persons rather than one person as it was declared by the majority of bishops in the Council of Ephesus. Some scholars suggest that Nestorius, a venerable bishop of Constan-

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[4] This is also the reason why the Nestorians are sometimes deceptively called "Dyophysites" (Norris, 2008: 92).

tinople, fell victim to personal ambition of Cyril who chaired the council, hence, it led to misunderstanding between Cyril's and Nestorius' followers (Bethune-Baker, 1903: 263-269).

At the Councils of Chalcedon (451) Dyophysite's view triumphed, while Monophysitism promoted ardently by Eutyches, a prominent monk from Constantinople, and his supporter Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, was condemned as heresy. The council was outnumbered by bishops induced to express their support to the orthodox stance.[5] It approved twenty-seven canons of ecclesiastical law. Its supreme attainment was the forming the creed of Christian faith, which actually remained intact in catholic churches till nowadays.[6] Besides the council enhanced position and power of bishops towards monks and the secular judiciary. The Bishop of Constantinople received the right to ordain metropolitans in Ponuts, Thrace and Asia, embracing non-Greek-speaking regions. One of the canons postulated the extension of dioceses of the universal Church to five separate patriarchates, Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem, which was affirmed by emperor Justinian I in the 6th century. However one decision ('canon 28') was repudiated by papal legates as it assumed that patriarch of Constantinople (called

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[5] They were slightingly called by their opponents 'Melkites' – 'the emperor's men', suggesting that their main aim was to measure up emperor's expectations. It was not until the end of the fifth century when the name "Melkites" was imparted to Greek-speaking inhabitants of Egypt and the west of Levant with its patriarchs in Alexandria (now called the Greek Orthodox (Melkite) Church of Alexandria), Jerusalem and Antioch, who retained in communion with both Rome and Constantinople. (Timbie, 2007: 94: Micheau, 2008: 376-377).

[6] The full text of the creed runs as follows: 'We believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten by his Father before all ages, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things came into existence, who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens and became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became a man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate and suffered and was buried and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures and ascended into the heavens and is seated at the right hand of the Father and will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and there will be no end to his kingdom; and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Life-giver, who proceeds from the Father, who is worshipped and glorified together with the Father and the Son, who spoke by the prophets; and in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church. We confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins; we wait for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the coming age. Amen.' (Anatolios, 2008: 444).

'New Rome') should be given the same privileges as the Pope in 'Old Rome' and thereby Constantinople should be acknowledged as a second see, after Rome, in order of precedence (Norris, 2008: 76, 91-92).

THE OUTCOMES OF SCHISM
TO THE PARTICULAR SYRIAC CHURCHES

Consequently, in the aftermath of the Council of Ephesus and Chalcedon the eastern churches split into three separate groups: Chalcedonians (those who approved the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon), non-Chalcedonians, also called Monophysites (who opposed that council) and Nestorians, who supported Nestorius's view on Christology, especially at the Council of Ephesus. The Church of the East formally accepted only the resolutions of the first two ecumenical councils (Nicaea, 325 and Constantinople, 381). Those who followed the Chalcedon's resolution were primarily Latin, Byzantines, Melkites and Georgians Churches, while the opposed group, Monophysites, encompassed Copts, Armenians, Ethiopians and Nubians and Syrian Orthodox Church.

After his denunciation at the Council in Ephesus Nestorius fled to Persia to found a harbour in the Church of the East, which had already taken to his teaching, mainly through the scriptural commentaries of another Antiochene theologian, Theodore, bishop of Mopsuestia (d. 428). The origins of the Church of the East go back to the turn of 1st and 2nd centuries and are based on three theories: the Apostle Thomas tradition, Jewish connections and the traditions of Abgar-Addai, the king of Edessa of which the two former are believed to be most credible. The theory of the Thomas tradition is lent credence by two texts: the Acts of Thomas, written in Syriac probably in the beginning of the 3rd century, and the Gospel of Thomas, presumably written by Thomas himself. Both accounts suggest that it was the Apostle Thomas who first conveyed the Gospel to Edessa. On the contrary, the theory of Jewish origins, grounded on archaeological evidence, the apologetic literature, and the *Chronicle of Arbela*, argues that Christianity was actually brought to Syria and Mesopotamia through small Christian communities converted from Judaism, who arrived in Arbela (now known as Arbil, Erbil) about 100. The third

theory assumes that the Apostle Thomas sent a messenger called Thaddaeus (in Syriac 'Addai') to King Abgar of Osrohoene, the Syriac-speaking kingdom with its capital in Edessa, and that its inhabitants became perhaps the first Christian nation (Bundy, 2008: 122). Therefore, generally, the members of the Church of the East have constantly refused the name 'Nestorians' attributed to their congregation since it was established a few centuries before the Nestorius' exclusion in 431 and not until the 5th century it officially adopted his Christology stance. Nevertheless, Nestorius, who didn't even speak Syriac, has been acclaimed by the Church of the East as a teacher and saint. One can assume that Christianity spread from Edessa and Nisibis (Nusaybin) into the Parthian empire and by establishing its patriarch see in the Persian capital Seleucia-Ctesiphon in the 3rd century was influenced by teachings of Marcion, Bardaisan (first Syriac theologian), Mani and Arius. The complex history of this church provoked a coining of its many different denotations such as the 'Persian Church', ‚Nestorian Church', 'Pre-Ephesian Church', 'Apostolic Church of the East', 'Ancient Church of the East'[7], 'Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East', 'East Syriac Church' or 'Assyrian Church of the East'. The last name was eventually adopted under influence of the rising Assyrian nationalist movement in the early 20th century and added officially not until 1976 (Winkler, 2003: 3-9). After the conquest of the Sassanid empire by Islamic Arabs the patriarch's see of the church was moved to nearby Baghdad in 775 (Murre-van den Berg, 2007: 253). Once making a prevalent Christian confession in Syria and Mesopotamia, since the late Middle Ages the Church of the East gradually dwindled mainly as a result of intensive activity of Roman Catholic missionaries in this region. Now almost half of the total number of its members can be found in the Middle East, predominantly in Iraq (115,000), while nearly 40 percent of them live in North America, Europe and Australia. The traditional see of the church was therefore its principal patriarchate is now based in Chicago. Therefore its principal patriarchate, traditionally for ages based in the monastery of Rabban Hormizd in Alqosh near Mosul, in 1976 was moved to Chicago (Baum, 2003: 113; Murre-van den Berg, 2007: 260).

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[7] Actually, it is a different group that separated from the Church of the East in 1968, among other things over the introduction of the western calendar.

Following the schism triggered by the Council of Chalcedon the next emperor, Justinian, made an effort to reconcile divided confessions and convoked the Second Council of Constantinople in 553. It had corroborated Chalcedon resolutions and Pope Leo's stance that was rejected by the Syrian Monophysites led by Jacob Baradaeus, bishop of Edessa. As a result he formed the Syrian Orthodox Church, also known as 'Jacobite' church, which became home for the majority of Syriac-speaking Christians at that time. (Aboona, 2008: 58).

In the course of 17thcentury Roman Catholic missions in the Middle East several Syrian Orthodox bishops accepted the sovereignty of Rome. A proselyte, Abdul-Ghal Akhijan, a Syrian from Mârdîn, was nominated the first Syrian Catholic bishop by Maronite patriarch in 1656. Over the next centuries the church encountered support from Rome and more directly of the Maronite Church and the French. It was the French who impelled the Ottoman sultan to grant the Syrian Catholic Church an independent *millet*[8] in 1830, a privilege that the Syrian Orthodox Church was devoid of until 1882 remained in the Armenian *millet*. The expansion of the Syrian Catholic Church was suddenly and significantly curbed the Ottoman massacres of Anatolian Christians in 1915. The present number of Syrian Catholics is estimated as many as 130,000 worldwide, living mainly in Lebanon, Iraq and Syria (26,000), while the country of the largest community of Syrian Orthodox in the Middle East remains Syria (170,000) (O'Mahony, 2008: 515-519). The number of adherents to the Syrian Orthodox and Syrian Catholic Churches in Iraq reaches 100,000 (Murre-van den Berg, 2007: 258-259) The patriarch of the Syrian Catholic Church now resides in Beirut (transferred in 1913 from Mârdîn), whereas the Syrian Orthodox patriarch lives in Damascus (Hawkes-Teeples, 2008: 7).

The Chaldean Church, forming the largest Christian community in Iraq which number as many as 200,000, derived from the Church of the East. Its history commenced in the 15th century when in the aftermath of Catholic missionaries, Dominicans and Franciscans, Cyprus' members of the Church of the East led by the archbishop of Tarsus, Timothy, accepted Catholic confession, hence forming the Chaldean Church of Cyprus. Since then the term 'Chaldean' was ascribed to those

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[8] The Christian millet was a self-governance administrative entity ruled by a patriarch subject to sultan, within which the clergy authority was responsible for civil duties such as collection of taxes and exercise of justice, mostly in ecclesiastical but to a some extent also in civil dimension.

East Syrians who entered into a union with Rome. This actually happened often in Mesopotamia from the extent of Roman missions. The union of Chaldeans with Rome was officially confirmed in April 1553 when Pope Julius III acclaimed Yûḥannâ Sulâḳa the Patriarch Shimʿûn VIII 'of the Chaldeans'. One year before Sulâḳa had been elected a patriarch by a group of Syrian bishops voicing thus their disapproval of the Church of the Easts deeply rooted custom of hereditary succession to the patriarchate. The union was partially severed in 1692 by the Patriarch Shimʿûn XIII, who returned to the Church of the East and moved his see from Urmia to Kochanes in the Hakkari Mountains. In the meantime, in 1681 the Pope acknowledged a union with a different line of Catholic patriarchs descending from Joseph, bishop of Diyarbakır (Amida/Amed). His successor, Yûsuf II, was then conferred the title 'patriarch of Babylon of the Chaldeans'. However, when the Yusuf line became defunct in 1830 Pope Pius VIII ceded the patriarchal title to the Hormizd family, whose leader bishop Yuhanna Hormizd, cousin of patriarch of the Church of the East, forsook it in the early 19th century with conversion to Catholicism. He was granted a see in Mosul and his family offshoot has become a single line of Chaldean patriarchs up to the present. The first traditional see of the Chaldean Church was Diyarbakır in the first half of the 19th century with almost an eighty-year shift to Urmia at the turn of 16th and 17th centuries, then to Mosul and from the mid 20th century to Baghdad (O'Mahony, 2008: 526-528).

CONCLUSION

In one view, the disparate understanding of the nature of the person of Jesus, who became the basis of the Christian church, paradoxically, revealed the burning embers of division among early-century Christians. But another view could take the challenge of contending with many of these different interpretations in the course of polemic discussions and writings critical to all gnostic and heretic conceptions actually compelled the leaders of the Christian church to successfully determine a precise canon of the scripture (list of books), definition of its authority as well as to clarify and conclude the Credo and orthodox doctrinal norms. The official stances of the church towards controversial gnostic ideas were adopted and announced

during irregular and exceptional meetings of bishops called *synod* or *council* (an ecumenical synod). However, in pursuit of adjudicating theological arguments and defining coherent doctrines the prominent bishops pay less attention to preserve the unity of Christendom and made less effort to reconcile feuding sides. Moreover, we have to concede that any later so called heretic understanding of the Gospel such as Monophysitism or Nestorianism, contrary to the resolutions of the early ecumenical councils, was largely facilitated in the early centuries, on one hand, by paucity of clear, cohesive and comprehensive Christian creed and, on the other, by inheritance of widespread gnostic interpretations of the Gospel such as Manichaeism, Marcionism, Montanism, monarchianism and Arianism. Accordingly, all these factors led to toughening different views on trinitarianism, particularly Christology, that precipitated ruptures between Eastern and Western Christians and even among Eastern Christians themselves. Moving away from Rome and Constantinople the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of the East, as well as other Oriental non-Chalcedonian Churches became by the same token deprived of assistance and advantages of mediation that particularly the emperor of Constantinople and to some extent the Pope could provide them. Hence, the Syriac Christians entered the Islamic era bereft of steady support of the local state authorities and therefore susceptible and vulnerable to outside threats. However, seeking the provision of the pope and European countries as early as the Middle Ages, paradoxically, contributed frequently to the deterioration of indigenous Syriac Christians situation. Nevertheless, over a last few centuries one can observe an apparent and constant trend of reunification of Middle East Syriac Christian communities with the Roman Catholic Church.

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