

## P R E F A C E

I feel it would not be a bad idea to preface this volume - the eleventh in a series - with a summary of what is to be found in the ten foregoing volumes. After all, I cannot expect that many readers will be prepared to read through all of them. Of course, I hope that some will do so, and I am bold enough to suppose one could profit by it. For what I wrote so far, with the addition of this volume and the next one or two, may be read as a history of Antiquity. So many aspects are touched upon in it that I feel that this claim is justified. It is true, of course, that by no means all events and phenomena are dealt with, but no other work of this nature can hope to be completely comprehensive. A good reason to read my volumes might be that my work is fundamentally different from all other histories of Antiquity. It can give the reader an unprecedented view of the ancient world, India and China included, since it is looking at history, so to speak, from the reverse side; it considers what does not fit, what did not come together, what remained apart and separate, and why. These aspects are usually neglected by historians because they, like all other people, love wholeness and harmony.

I join to this Preface a Manual. On the premise that not everyone will feel inclined to read the work in toto, at least I can guide scholars and other interested readers to their fields of study and interest. In the Manual these fields are tabulated, with reference to the corresponding volumes, chapters, and sections.

The concept of 'dualism' is surrounded by quite a number of misunderstandings. The most popular of these is that dualism has its origin in ancient Iran, particularly in the Zoroastrian religion. To quote only one author, "Iran

## XVIII

is the classical country of dualism", so runs the very first sentence of Duchesne-Guillemin's little book on Iranian religion <sup>1</sup>. This surely is the honest conviction of many people, scholars and others; in their opinion the religion of Iran is the historical cradle of all dualisms. They feel that a phenomenon like dualism must have an origin in time and in a certain area. But I do not believe at all that dualism has such a well-defined historical and local origin. The phenomenon as such is far too wide-spread to connect its origin with some point on the time-chart or to look for it in a specific area of the world.

Furthermore, it is a widely held notion, especially among scholars, that dualism is a philosophical concept not occurring outside the field of philosophy, with the exception, perhaps, of the history of religions. Describing the Zoroastrian religion in a book published in 1700, and mentioning the Persian Magi, Thomas Hyde, a professor of Hebrew in Oxford University, spoke of them as 'dualists'; the term, therefore, began its career in the context of Iranian religion <sup>2</sup>. But in 1734, in his 'Psychologia rationalis', Christian Wolff not only spoke of 'dualists' but also of 'dualism'. And Wolff broadened the notion beyond the meaning given to it by Hyde. He transferred it to the field of philosophy by stating that the spiritual and the corporeal, the immaterial and the material, are substantially different <sup>3</sup>. From then on the study of dualism followed two lines, one in the history of religions, the other in philosophy, sometimes separately, and sometimes in one context.

There is, however, not the slightest reason for confining the study of dualism to the field of philosophy and/or that of the history of religions. If dualism means 'unsolvable oppositions', it will, indeed, occur in these fields. But I cannot see why similar oppositions should not occur also in other sectors of human life, for instance, in politics or in political ideology. If people ask me for an example of what I mean by 'dualism', I always mention Hitler's idea that Jews were vermin that had to be destroyed; this was the theory that he turned into a horrifying practice.

Not rarely I hear people dub every opposition, of whichever kind, as 'dualistic'. As soon as two things are opposed, there obviously is dualism. But if the term is used in this very broad sense, it becomes so vague that it

loses all significance; it would then be utterly impossible to write a work on it. For there are endlessly more oppositions that are connected by intermediate terms than irreducible ones. Oppositions of the first kind are extremely frequent; everyone of us uses them hundreds of times a day : warm and cold, old and young, strong and weak, and so on. Most of them have shifting meanings. A young man may find some person old whereas this person does not consider himself old at all.

There is, however, yet a far more serious misunderstanding. I can best present it in the words of Mr. R.W. Jordan who reviewed volumes II and III of this work in the 'Classical Review' (1989, X, pp. 268-269). Mr. Jordan, while admitting that there are dualistic tendencies in Greek thought, reproached me that I do not try to place dualistic thought in the context of non-dualistic or anti-dualistic thinking. My main failure seems to be that I do not present dualism as a coherent system (or anti-system). In my reviewer's own words, I do not make out my case that 'dualism' is a key-concept for historians of culture. But I never attempted to make out such a case.

Varying a famous dictum by Karl Marx, I must state that, in my opinion, the history of mankind is not the history of dualism. Dualism is neither a concept nor an ideology. The prevailing mania of our time is to turn everything into an ideology. We are fond of -isms. By coining the term 'dualism', we are putting it on a par with liberalism, Marxism, nominalism, historicism, and other ideologies and intellectual systems ending in -ism. But it cannot be stressed often enough that dualism is nothing of this kind. It is not an intellectual system, not a philosophy, not a concept, not a religion. It is something quite different. Therefore, it cannot be set against non-dualistic systems, for then we would be comparing things of a different order.

What I am doing is looking at the back of a tapestry. People gaze admiringly at the beautiful picture presented to them on the front. They do not bother to look at the other side. For there they would see nothing but a confused mass of threads. Now human history, although not a tapestry but a mobile process (like a movie), has its own loose threads. Seen from the back, history displays disconnectedness. Historiography is "especially well suited to the notions of continuity, wholeness, closure, and individuality that every

'civilized' society wishes to see itself as incarnating against a merely 'natural' way of life", writes Hayden White <sup>4</sup>. But studying the political, social, mental, and intellectual implications of the rougher, more fragmented, more disunified side of world history may yield unexpected results.

In my work I am not presenting an harmonious picture of continuity and wholeness, quite the contrary! I consciously take the risk that my work will, to some extent, hit on the blind spot of many scholars. True enough, "it is part of our human condition to long for hard lines and clear concepts. When we have them, we have to either face the fact that some realities elude them (i.e. the concepts) or else blind ourselves to the inadequacy of the concept" <sup>5</sup>.

There is a last argument that should be refuted. It is a constantly recurring theme of western thought that dualism is the exact opposite of monism. The term 'monism' was created by the Christian Wolff whom I mentioned already; he was highly instrumental in inventing new terms. He divided philosophers into 'scepticists' and 'dogmatists', and then the dogmatists into 'monists' and 'dualists'. In this way he popularized the notion (which has itself become a dogmatism) that monism and dualism are opposed ideologies. But in fact monism and dualism are chips of the same block, generated by the idea that all that exists can be grouped under one unified concept, either monism or dualism.

The only philosopher who understood that they are not opposed but, on the contrary, belong together, is Ludwig Stein. He expressed this in the following terms. "Monism and dualism are two types of thought that both have their foundation in man. But, in the antithesis 'monism-dualism', the issue is not that they are contradictorily opposed but rather that they are a contrasted pair of concepts connected with each other in the manner of correlation" <sup>6</sup>. Monism can very easily give rise to dualism, since, because of its exclusiveness tending to one-sidedness, it always leaves a residuum that finds no place in the prime concept and cannot be explained by it. This residuum sometimes reasserts itself by opposing itself to the monistic concept, even to such a degree that a dualistic opposition originates; in such a case the opposition monism-dualism becomes dualistic itself. Many dualistic

systems have a monistic starting-point; dualism then sets in one stage lower. This is particularly the case in Gnostic systems, for instance in Simonianism with its monistic prime concept of the Boundless Power (Vol. VII, Ch. III.1f), and in Valentinianism where it is the Depth that is the primal cause of Being (Vol. VIII, Ch. VIII.5a).

I hope the field has been sufficiently cleared now to present a description of what dualism really is. In all the Prefaces of 'The Light and the Dark' I have given the same definition. There is dualism when we are confronted with two utterly opposed conceptions, systems, principles, groups or kinds of people, or even worlds, without any intermediate terms between them. They cannot be reduced to each other; in some cases the one is not even dependent on the other. The opposites are considered to be of a different quality - so much so that one of them is always seen as distinctly inferior and hence must be neglected or destroyed.

The final statement by the Congress of Messina on Gnosticism in 1966 spoke of "two principles that are the foundation of everything that exists in the world" <sup>7</sup>. The main influence on the composition of this declaration was that of Ugo Bianchi. Elsewhere this scholar expressed himself as follows. "Dualistic are religions and views of life according to which two principles - both of them having been there, it seems, from all eternity - are the foundation, really or apparently so, of everything that exists or presents itself in the world" <sup>8</sup>. The reader will understand that I find the application of the term 'dualism' to principles, religions, and views of life only, too restrictive. My own scope is considerably larger. However, in another essay Bianchi enlarged his definition so much that it approaches mine. Dualistic is "every system in which the creation of the world and its legitimate control are the work of two forces which are thought to be in contradiction to each other, sometimes, however, in a complementary way" <sup>9</sup>.

There is some sort of a typology of dualism possible, although one should use its terms only sparingly; there are so many variations mentioned that the wood might easily be lost in the trees. But one important variation is entirely relevant, namely that of absolute and relative dualism. In absolute (or

radical) dualism the two principles are coeval; they are from eternity and their origin defies every explanation. This is the case, for instance, in Orphism where there is an unbridgeable opposition in man who belongs to two worlds (Vol. I, Ch. IV.10), in the philosophy of Empedocles with its two eternal principles of Love and Hate (Vol. I, Ch. II.9), in Iranian Zervanism with its opposed coeval gods Ormuzd and Ahriman (Vol. V, Ch. I.5), and in Manichaeism with its primeval and coeval principles of Light and Darkness (Vol. IX, Ch. IV.10).

Cases of radical dualism are, however, rare. This brand of dualism requires thinking in terms of two utterly distinct and separated worlds of which only people with a very special turn of mind are capable. And then, it will be justified to ask whether this mode of thought is a real possibility, for, when all is said and done, the two worlds somewhere connect, namely in the brain of the dualist.

The most common type of dualism is the 'relative' or 'moderate' form which occurs when the second principle, the lower, inferior one is deduced from the first and is dependent on it. This term can be applied to the Pythagorean ideology, since this starts from a concept of unity (Vol. I, Ch. I.11,12), to the philosophy of Heraclitus in whose doctrine the Logos-Fire is primary to anything else (Vol. I, Ch. II.6), and to that of Parmenides for whom Being precedes Seeming (Vol. I, Ch. II.8).

Dualistic ways of thought can also be referred to in terms of their attitude regarding the difference in quality of the two principles. Dualisms built on the opposition between good and evil may be dubbed 'ethical' which is the case in most Gnostic systems; if in the end the good principle triumphs over the bad one, we may call this 'eschatological' dualism. The dualism of the Essenes, which is essentially ethical, is also eschatological (Vol. VII, Ch. V.9). But if the two systems continue to exist alongside each other, then 'dialectical' dualism would be the better term. To quote an example, in Parmenidian philosophy Being and Seeming go on existing together, as 'frères ennemis'.

Finally, one can draw a distinction between procosmical and anticosmical tendencies. In a procosmical system evil enters the cosmos from outside; in an anticosmical one it is an integral part of the cosmos itself.

Gnostic systems are invariably anticosmical; during the gestation of the cosmos something goes wrong, with the result that the world, mankind included, must be described in negative terms. Perhaps it may sound disquieting to classical scholars, but I do not believe that Greek systems were procosmic. Mostly they tend to be anticosmical; this is at least decidedly the case in Orphism <sup>10</sup>.

Dualism may occur everywhere and at any time, but dualistic trends always appear in dispersed order. Large segments of society may be 'holistic' but here and there some cracks, some deep fissures may be detected. However, neither do these hang together nor do they offer a coherent picture of a dualistic counter-society. I believe that the expression 'dualistic society' would be a *contradictio in adiecto*, since its application would imply that there were two societies. All the same, dualistic ideologies have sometimes attempted to combine opposite elements into some sort of system. This remains a very rare occurrence. I found only a few dualistic systems : the Pythagorean fraternity (Vol. I, Ch. I.15), the Orphic religion (Vol. I, Ch. IV.10), the doctrines of Empedocles, Heraclitus, and in particular, Parmenides (Vol. I, Ch. II.6,8 and 9), those elements in Plato's teaching that show a strong tendency towards dualism (Vol. III, Ch. III.20-22), the Gnostic systems (Vols. VII, VIII and IX), Zoroastrianism (Vol. IV, Ch. IV.8,9) and still more Iranian Zervanism (Vol. V, Ch. I.4), Indian Yoga (Vol. V, Ch. II.22) and finally Chinese Daoism (Vol. V, Ch. III.25). This seems a lot but it is in fact a rather meagre harvest for all the long periods and many civilizations I have studied. Furthermore, the impact of these systems was not great. Pythagoreans and Orphics remained small, élitist groups, like Yogis and Daoists. Most dualistic philosophies did not become popular or widespread; of these Platonism had the widest dispersion. The greatest success was for Zervanism and Manichaeism.

Where do we find the origin of dualism? I have already expressed my disagreement with the popular notion that it is Iranian dualism. There was already dualism before anyone had ever heard of Zoroaster; there always was and there still is dualism that is in no way connected with the Iranian

prophet. Nor should we think of Manichaeism, although this is for many people the dualism par excellence. Mani the dualist was preceded by many older dualists. No, the real fountain-head of dualism is human nature; it is something in man himself. In other words, it is an anthropological phenomenon. If this is correct, it will not surprise us that it keeps occurring everywhere and always.

This does not imply, however, that everyone is a dualist, secretly or openly, consciously or unconsciously. Quite the contrary! Most people, almost all people, love harmony, connectedness, some sort of 'holism'; it is only a minority that thrives on oppositions, a minority that can be vociferous, influential and powerful. I am thinking here of Hitler as an outspoken dualist<sup>11</sup>. In my opinion dualism, like beauty, exists in the beholder's eye; dualists prefer to view reality in terms of opposites. This does not mean that it is only conceptual or mental; it has a secure footing in theory and practice. Hitler's destruction of the Jews was only too real.

We should not think of dualistically minded people as psychiatric cases. They are, more often than not, quite normal. There may be personal circumstances that turn people into dualists. But perhaps they also feed on less personal and more general experiences. I am not thinking here of abstract philosophical reasonings or the impact of certain religious doctrines. It could rather be that the acceptance of peculiar creed, a Gnostic one, for instance, is the result, first of circumstances in the personal sphere, and secondly, of a confrontation with 'existential' issues, I mean such as concern humanity in general. The question is whether there is something in the construction of the world, something really present, that might give rise to dualism, something that does not wholly fit, I am thinking here of loose ends, gaps in fundamental explanations, unsolved contradictions, anomalies.

There are, for instance, paradoxes. A paradox, according to R.M. Sainsbury, is an "apparently unacceptable conclusion derived by apparently acceptable reasoning from apparently acceptable premises"<sup>12</sup>. A paradox, therefore, is a logical derailment. Many paradoxes, like that of Achilles and the tortoise, are not really paradoxical, but some are unsolvably so, like the paradoxes of Grelling and Russell. Still more disquieting is Gödel's theorem,



the so-called 'incompleteness theorem', which implies that no logico-mathematical system carries in itself the means to solve its anomalies; for this one should refer to the one-higher system which, however, copes with the same problem. And so on. Which means that mankind will always remain saddled with contradictions, inconsistencies, and anomalies.

A combination of more general and more personal causes of a dualistic mentality can be found in the male-female opposition. If man's philosophy of life begins with man himself - "the proper study of mankind is man", wrote the English poet Pope -, then his basic starting-point would inevitably be the fact that human beings are anatomically different and that this distinction leads to very different functions in life. Hence an observer can draw the conclusion that the whole order of the world must, in consequence, be twofold, and furthermore, that there are higher and lower orders of existence which are hard to reconcile with each other. A case in point would be, again, Adolf Hitler, a dualistic thinker and politician if there ever was one. I sincerely believe that the difficult relationship between his parents encouraged and stimulated his innate tendency towards dualism. If this is correct, then Hitlerite dualism had its origin in the man-woman structure.

In the physical sphere we see that the human body is not symmetrical; its two halves are not identical. The right hand has a definite prevalence over the left which is not a harmless difference. In the less personal, historical sphere we find that world-history is punctuated with wars, even in our century which has hardly seen a year without war. There seems to be a curious tendency at work in humanity to turn order into chaos, as though chaos were the easier and more self-evident thing by far. With this anomaly we have to live. Louis Menand calls this 'the incommensurability of the world' which, according to him, is the basis of dualism <sup>13</sup>. But the greatest and most painful anomaly is the fact of death. This eats into the very core of our existence. Death is a non-concept; the idea of life is incompatible with that of death. The opposition of life and death which we all experience is a dualistic one.

Ours is a world full of fissures, contradictions, and oppositions. We are fundamentally incapable of coping with this world, with our existence,

with ourselves, unable as we are to manage the affairs of this world as they should be managed by homo sapiens. We have neither the brains not the practical ability for it. However, by far the greater part of humanity succeeds in getting along reasonably well in an imperfect world. But some people, everywhere, in all times, in every culture, are viscerally unable to follow this example. I am not suggesting that they have, for instance, carefully studied Gödel's theorem, or that they have deeply pondered on war and peace, life and death. But they are vaguely but at the same time strongly and painfully uneasy about the state of the world and the human condition <sup>14</sup>.

To return now to the more personal sphere. When trying to comprehend the world, we interpret it and we summarize it. Summarizing is necessary since the world presents itself to us as a confused welter of phenomena and events. We have two ways of creating order in this bewildering chaos : we group and we separate. We bring phenomena, persons, and events together under headings and general concepts, like world, universe, history, mankind, nation, town - the list is endless. We use such concepts many times every day. The other way of ordering is opposing phenomena, events, persons, which we do just as frequently : day and night, summer and winter, love and hate, young and old, man and woman. Mostly such oppositions are only relative. A man coming out of the polar cold of a winter night and entering an unheated room may find it comfortable. In our own period the frontiers between old and young are shifting.

It may happen, however, that opposites such as these grow more virulent; then they become harsh, bitter, and irreconcilable. The man-woman relation may serve as an example. In the Jewish, Christian, and humanistic traditions the sexes are seen as equal but different. This difference can be stressed to such a degree that women are considered distinctly inferior and not fit to play a part in public life. This was the case in the Athens of the classical period (Vol. II, Ch. IV.4) and in ancient India (Vol. V, Ch. II.14, 16, and 20).

The gap between opposites may become so wide that it is finally unbridgeable. Then we are in the presence of dualism. The most rampant dualistic oppositions are those between life and death, good and evil, the One

and the Many, male and female, and being and seeming. We are all of us confronted with such oppositions, but there are people who feel attracted by them, who thrive on them. We can say that they have an innate tendency to dualism. In Antiquity we are poorly served with detailed biographies; only very rarely do we get a glimpse of personal developments. I have described the apostle John as somebody with a penchant to dualism (Vol. VII. Ch. IV.5b). He and his brother James were called 'the sons of the thunder' by Jesus <sup>15</sup>. When the inhabitants of a Samaritan village refused hospitality to Jesus and his company, these two fiery young men wanted Jesus to bid fire come down from heaven and destroy them <sup>16</sup>. The apostle John was probably influenced by his ambitious mother Salome, the driving force behind him <sup>17</sup>. The Dutch professor Chorus characterizes John as a man of passion, living in a strong tension between reality and ideality <sup>18</sup>.

We may also cite Plato as a person with a distinct proclivity towards dualism. Decisive stages in his development were that he, wanting to become a tragic poet, realized that all had been said already, and still more, his disillusionment with Athenian democracy which had condemned his venerated master Socrates to death (vol. II, Ch. III.1a and c, 22). In the case of Mani, we can detect the starting-point of his dualism in the breaking up of his parents' household. When living in Ctesiphon, his father Patek was converted to Mughtasilism. This sect did not approve of relations with women, not even in marriage; in consequence, Patek left his wife and went south in order to join a Mughtasila community, taking young Mani with him. The relationship of his parents is of decisive importance for a child. If this is harmonious, it teaches him that all is well with the world. But if there is discord, or even a divorce, the result may easily be catastrophic; it can totally disrupt the child's view of life. This may apply to Mani who saw his father reject his mother (Vol. IX, Ch. IV.9b). Born radicalists, stimulated by experiences in the personal sphere, can become aware of the adverse elements in the fabric of the world; when they come into contact with a dualistic group, such as a Gnostic sect, its doctrine may then give body and substance to their perhaps still vague perceptions.

## XXVIII

The notion that there are people with an innate tendency for intensifying normal oppositions into unbridgeable ones, not only in philosophical thought or in religious conceptions but also in daily life and in the most common relationships, is also valid for nations and civilizations. Let us focus our attention on ancient Iran, seen by many as the cradle of all dualism, in the shape of the Zoroastrian religion. Religious dualism, however, occurred in Iran long before the great prophet. Several older and more recent authorities are of the opinion that this dualism originated in the physical nature of the country. Arriving from the steppes of Central Asia, the invading tribes found a land marked by strong oppositions. In Iran there are forbidding mountain ranges but also fertile plains, and such habitable stretches alternate with burning waterless deserts. Whereas the summers are usually stiflingly hot, the winters bring severe cold. We may, therefore, agree with Mary Boyce that "these sharp contrasts tended ... to foster a dualistic way of thought, a tendency to see the opposition in things which was to find such profound and sharply defined expression in Zoroastrianism itself" <sup>19</sup>.

In an overview of the ancient world it might be possible to draw up a hierarchy or a scale on which we place the civilizations of that world according to the degree of dualism and the number of dualistic oppositions found in them. It must be remarked, however, that no civilization, no nation is ever free of dualism. At least one or two forms of it are present even in the most 'holistic' of them; there are 'loose ends', anomalies, contradictions in everyone of them.

The least dualistic of all ancient societies was ancient Israel. Jewish religion which dominated and governed the life of the Jewish nation collectively and individually, took an essentially optimistic and harmonious view of human existence. This was based on an intimate relationship between the Creator and his creation, between God and his people. The Bible presents a 'whole' in which God, world, nature, man, belong together, what the German philosopher Wilhelm Schapp would call an 'All-Geschichte'.

None the less, even this monotheistic and religious society had its 'loose ends'. There was, for instance, the 'nomadic ideal', the idea that the

desert was the purer country where Israel 'in her youth' had been alone with Jahve. By contrast, the Canaanite soil, the home of so many idols, was seen as somewhat polluted. Deeply religious persons like the Essenes, John the Baptist, and Jesus, returned to the desert in order to be alone with God. There existed in Israel an at times rather sharp dualism between what Fohrer calls (in German) a 'restaurative' attitude to existence and the general historical acceptance of 'Canaan' <sup>20</sup>.

The communal and daily life of Israel was dependent on the unity of creed and cult, secured by the stipulations of Mosaic Law. The priest, the servant of the community, acted as the objective executor of the communal rites; he did not owe his function to himself. There was, however, a certain residual fear that certain forces of creation could turn themselves, not against God, but against mankind. There existed a strong tendency to lay such dangerous forces by magic. Now magic is the exact opposite of cult. The magician is serving his own interests or those of his principal; he is gratifying his own egotistic impulses. The theological problem is that magic denies the omnipotence of God; man is trying to exploit the powers of nature regardless of God's rule of the world. The Old Testament quotes numerous instances of the use of magic by Israelites. The Law and the prophets constantly fought this tendency; the victorious attitude was finally the cultic one (Vol. IV, Ch. II.10b).

The religion of Israel was monotheistic. The stand it took regarding other gods was uncompromisingly dualistic. It denied any form of contact, even any form of compatibility, between Jahve and the gods of other peoples; consequently, religious commerce of his people with the creeds and cults of other nations was strictly forbidden. Foreign gods are idols; they are constantly derided and vilified. Nevertheless, Israel always felt the lure of idolatry. The prophets conducted a running fight against idols. In fact, the castigation of idols is one of their great preoccupations. One is sometimes tempted to suspect that this ferocity betrays a certain fear that such gods might really exist after all, and that they might even succeed in taking Jahve's place in the hearts of his people (Vol. IV, Ch. II.9).

XXX

On the non-theological level we see the opposition of the two kingdoms, Juda and Israel, that were so often locked in bloody, internecine warfare, and that of the Jews and the Samaritans (Vol. IV, Ch. II.14).

Egyptian society too was, on the whole, non-dualistic. But here also we find dualistic elements. There was the difference of the Two Lands, north and south, the Delta and the Valley of the Nile. Although they became united under a common Pharaoh, they always remained different, even in their manner of expressing themselves in language. There was even a difference of quality for the Valley seems to have had a kind of precedence over the Delta; the populations never forgot that they were different. Of course, they were connected by the one Pharaoh. But Pharaoh was in fact two kings in one person, the king of Upper and the king of Lower Egypt; he wore two crowns and was crowned twice (Vol. I, Ch. I.2e).

We also detect a sharp opposition between the desert and the habitable country along the Nile, the Red Land and the Black; in Egyptian consciousness the contrast between these two areas meant the contrast between death and life. Corpses were buried in the desert sand, the 'eternal habitat of the dead'. The distinction was carried over into mythology, with the terrible enmity between Seth, the doglike guardian of the desert, the Red Fiend, and Osiris, the protector of the black, fruitful soil, the benevolent Master (Vol. IV, Ch. I.1).

We should also mention the opposition of the 'true men' as the Egyptians saw themselves, and the lesser breeds, including all non-Egyptians. The Egyptian people, highly content with themselves and living in splendid isolation, looked down in deep contempt on all others, whom they considered less than human (Vol. I, Ch. I.3). But the fiercest form of dualism was that of life and death. The Egyptians took incredible pains in order to survive in the afterlife. Death as an existential fact was simply denied by them. Who does not know of the rites to secure a place in the hereafter, of mummification, for instance (Vol. I, Ch. I.7)?

Ancient China has its place among non-dualistic societies. The basic Chinese world-view does not imply a fundamental dualism. We should, however, not overlook an important element of dualism. To be civilised, to be

human, to live in harmony with Heaven, means to be Chinese. China is congruent with the Universe. This implied that non-Chinese do not possess a fully human existence (Vol. V, Ch. IV.15d).

Almost everybody seems to think that the famous pair Yin and Yang is dualistic. This is a misunderstanding. Yin and Yang are not ideas but matter, albeit of the most ethereal sort. Yang is Left, and Yin is Right; Yang is the stuff of which light and the sun are made; Yin is to be found in the moon and in darkness. As such they are complementary, together making a whole (Vol. V., Ch. IV.15e).

The two most dualistic societies in all Antiquity were those of Greece and India. Both were riddled with unsolvable oppositions. This will not please the lovers of all that is Hellenic. We all prefer to consider existence, if not as perfectly harmonious, yet in any case as a congruent whole. Classical scholars, in my opinion, seem to have preserved something of what I might call the 'Hölderlin-vision', the favourite notion of nineteenth-century neo-humanism. I mean the idea that the Greeks were a luminous people, the forerunners of a new, creative, and highly intelligent human race, of an harmonious world. It is still somewhat hazardous to suggest that even the Greeks knew tragedy and failure in their social and political life. Of course, present-day scholars are quite ready to admit that the Greeks were coping with fierce oppositions but these were obviously all for the best. A Dutch professor of ancient history wrote to me that she did not combat the idea that the Greeks knew polary, even unbridgeable oppositions. In her opinion, however, these are no indications of an (existential) crisis nor did they obstruct the human fulfilment of the Greeks. On the contrary, they are indispensable in the course of historical development. But unbridgeable, that is, dualistic oppositions are not wholesome at all. They have a negative influence on society and people, they retard developments and may even be destructive. There is no good in dualism.

First of all, there is the dualistic opposition of Greeks and barbarians. In the opinion of the Greeks the polis was the exact image of the cosmos, the fundamental ordering of existence, and this was what the barbarians lacked. The polis meant freedom, self-determination, political

participation; the barbarians only knew subjection, subservience, servitude. The greatest, the most essential difference, however, was that the Greeks had the 'paideia', the proper way of being human. This again was utterly denied to barbarians. The basic contrast is particularly reflected in language. There is Greek and there is gibberish (every other language) (Vol. II, Ch. III.3).

This opposition became historically exemplified in the struggle between Persia and Hellas. All great historical empires have known a strong, even an overpowering structure, Persia still more than all its predecessors. The traditional structure of domination and control was perfected by the Persian kings in an incredible way. Here we are confronted with a basic antagonism between the Greek world as such and that of the Middle East that may be thought of in dualistic terms. The Hellenes never cherished the idea of becoming linked together in this way. They acknowledged a moral authority (viz. of rules of conduct) but not an all-embracing political structure. This is the backdrop of their resistance to the Persian onslaught (Vol. II, Ch. I).

That the Greek world possessed no overall structure had very evil consequences. The Greek states, although sharing the same language, religion, customs, and the same basic attitude regarding the 'barbarian' outer world, nevertheless lacked every form of cohesion or federation or confederation. Their relations with the other poleis display the clearest possible picture of an 'anti-structure' which is the exact and dualistic opposite of structure. The Greek space was an anarchistic vacuum in which the poleis, or at best their alliances, moved about like atoms and collided with each other. But their atomic weights were different, and this is the deepest cause of the internecine, the dualistic Greek wars of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. (Vol. II, Ch. II).

In Greek opinion the work of the free man was to govern the city, to cultivate art and science, to teach, to administer justice, and last but not least, to wage war. For the rest there were slaves. Slaves were property, part of the possessions of their master; he might dispose of them, just as he might dispose of anything he owned. Slaves were not human, they were objects, things, 'automata'. Hellas was a slave-holding society; the Greeks of the classical period simply could not have managed without slavery. So there



existed a dualistic bipartition of human beings in their world (Vol. II, Ch. IV.41,j).

This world knew the oldest élitist fraternity ever, the Pythagorean one. It was an élitist company with a special way of life, vegetarian, of course, and keeping carefully apart from the common run. Its basic ideology was profoundly dualistic. Although the Pythagoreans venerated the One as a god or as something divine, they believed in two opposite principles. These were the 'apeiron', the unlimited, and the 'Peras', the Limit (the cosmos and the surrounding void). This basic pair is followed by several others (they handle a list of ten), like the One and the Many, Right and Left, Even and Odd, Male and Female (Vol. I, Ch. I).

Dualism is also found in many Presocratics (Vol. I, Ch. II), especially in Parmenides with his two utterly opposed worlds, that of Being and that of Seeming (Vol. I, Ch. II.8). The first Greek philosopher whose work we possess in its totality is Plato. Him we may safely characterize as a dualistic thinker. A great many dualistic oppositions occur in his works. In the microcosmos we meet that of body and soul, and next that of man and society in which the individual person is almost non-existent, to say nothing of the opposition between philosophers and non-philosophers.

This last opposition leads us to the macrocosmos. The primary oppositions carry many names, the One and the Many, Peras and Apeiron, Same and Other, Monad and Dyad, all of them dualistic. From the viewpoint of the theory of knowledge there is constant talk of the intelligible and the non-intelligible, of knowledge and opinion, of Being and Seeming. Finally, there is the preeminent opposition of the Forms and concrete things. Now this last opposition was not meant by Plato to be one. Quite the contrary! But according to Aristotle, there is an unbridgeable distance between Forms and concrete things - and this is the aporia into which Plato had landed himself (Vol. III, Ch. III). In the Hellenistic philosophers, especially in the Middle Academy, many of these dualistic elements are once again to be found (Vol. VI, Ch. III).

India too is a country that is brimful of dualistic oppositions. The origin of all Indian dualism is probably the subjugation of the autochthonous

#### XXXIV

population by the invading Aryans around 1500 or 1400 B.C.; in the eyes of the conquerors the indigenous inhabitants were simply subhuman (Vol. V, Ch. II.9). It is not impossible that the slaves were, partly at least, descendants of the subjected race, the Dasyus; in India too slaves were no more than a marketable commodity (Vol. V, Ch. II.13).

The deep divisions of Indian society are mirrored in the caste system; all castes saw each other as mutually exclusive. No greater catastrophe than to be without a caste, to be casteless, an 'outcaste'. It was indeed possible to be expelled from one's caste, in case of grave and repeated misdemeanour. Nobody would help such a person, nobody would stay with him; unless his wife followed him he remained utterly alone. To be an outcaste is, however, not identical with being a 'pariah', an 'untouchable'; pariahs belonged to a caste, although a very low one. They were subjected to a system of 'apartheid' that was downright dualistic. The ordinary Hindu shunned every contact with them for fear of becoming defiled himself (Vol. V, Ch. II.15).

The invasion of the Aryans meant the arrival of a 'macho' race of warriors and conquerors; this had dire consequences for the situation of women who now became decidedly the lesser sort. Sons became all-important, whereas daughters were not welcome. Polygamy was widespread, that is, for men, since women had to be content with one husband. The distance between husband and wife grew dualistically wide; a man was incapable of seeing in his wife a person of the same worth and value as himself. Women were not very much helped by Buddhism. The Buddha himself did not think highly of women; on the whole, his religion saw women as inferior to men (Vol. V, Ch. II.14).

There are strong dualistic tendencies in Indian mythology. There are powers from above and powers from beneath which are dualistically opposed. The high gods, the devas, are almost with exception benevolent; the lower divinities are demonic and malicious (Vol. V, Ch. II.17). These oppositions spill over into Indian philosophy where we find Unity and Diversity (the One and the Many), Male and Female, and above all Matter and

Spirit, as dualities which can easily assume a dualistic character (Vol. V, Ch. II.16).

In the Brahmanic religion the Brahmins were in the possession of the truth; this secured them a privileged position, the more so since this knowledge was not directly open to everyone. The Brahmins considered themselves and were considered a highly superior class. The true Brahmin renounces the world; he sets himself apart from human society and even over against it. His position vis-à-vis ordinary existence was (and is) dualistic (Vol. V, Ch. II.18-19).

In the Hindu religion we are struck by the uneasy relationship between the male and the female. Hindu mythology knew a 'Great Goddess', the Maha-Devi, the wife of Shiva. Women, especially mothers, are seen as the images of Maha-Devi, and, in consequence, must be respected. Gradually she became the dominant female divinity in the Hindu pantheon. But "the dominant woman is dangerous in Hindu mythology" <sup>21</sup>. Maha-Devi is a goddess with a dual, not to say a dualistic character since she is mild and fierce at the same time. This difference is mirrored in the attitude of Hindu men towards their wives whom they venerate as mothers and whom they fear as erotic seducers (Vol. V, Ch. II.20).

I can only mention in passing the profound dualism of Yoga with its radical rejection of the world (Vol. V, Ch. II.21). Buddhism, just like all other Indian religions, is basically built on a dualism between personal existence, fundamentally selfish and thoughtless as it is, and the state of unworldly contemplation that leads on to the final loss of all that is self (Vol. V, Ch. II.23).

Returning westward now, we come to ancient Iran, in the eyes of many scholars the cradle of all dualisms. Religious dualism in this part of the world developed in two stages, that of Zoroastrianism and that of Zervanism; when people speak of 'Iranian dualism', they are unwittingly referring to Zervanism instead of to Zoroastrianism. The core of Zoroaster's message is that there is only one god to be venerated, Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord. On the face of it we may seem to be in the presence of monotheism, perhaps even monism. Ahura Mazda is 'spenta', that is, 'working' : he is causing effects. His

spenta is realized in a number of spirits, the principal of whom is Spenta Mainyu, the Holy Spirit. But here the dualistic split begins. Spenta Mainyu has a twin, Anya (or Ahra) Mainyu, the Evil Spirit. This is not a creature of Ahura Mazda; the latter, as being all-good, cannot be the father of Ahra Mainyu who, therefore, must be thought of as uncreated (Vol. IV, Ch. IV.8). Ahura Mazda takes precedence over Ahra Mainyu, simply because the Good is superior to Evil. Therefore, Zoroastrian dualism is not radical but relative. Good and Evil, the good and the wicked, will fight each other as long as the world lasts. But at the end of time, Ahura Mazda will establish on earth the so-called 'second existence' over which he himself will reign. There the faithful will enjoy the eternal bliss of Paradise (Vol. IV, Ch. IV.9).

The Zervanite variant, in fact an heretical variant of Zoroastrianism, is much more radical than the doctrine of the great prophet. True enough, Zervanism too starts from a monistic principle, called 'Zervan' which means 'Time'. But this apparently monistic principle remains so vague and abstract that it does not really play a role. Furthermore, the uniqueness of Zervan is impaired by the fact that there is an unexplained woman about. Zervan and this anonymous woman become the parents of Ormizd (Ormuzd) and Ahriman. They share the power over the earth and mankind between them. The real source of all evil is Zervan, but Ahriman is just as bad as he. Ormizd, the good one, is a secondary divinity. The good and the bad are presented as equals; both account for one half of the universe in which, therefore, good and evil are present in equal parts. They will always fight one another inexorably (Vo. V, Ch. I.5).

I often had the occasion to observe that classical scholars and historians know next to nothing of that remarkable phenomenon, the Gnosis (Vols. VII, VIII, IX). The Gnosis originated in the same period and in the same region as Christianity. They resemble each other in the respect that both are religions of redemption. But whereas in Christianity redemption is contingent on the cross of Jesus Christ, in the Gnosis it is effectuated by Knowledge, that is, by a specific and esoteric kind of Knowledge which is given to a minority of people only. In contrast to the orthodox Christian Church, the Gnosis existed in numerous, even hundreds, of sects, mostly only small groups. But

some of them had a large following, the Basilidians (Vol. VIII, Ch. VII), the Valentinians (Vol. VIII, Ch. VIII), the Marcionites (Vol. IX, Ch. II), and above all, the Manichaeans (Vol. X, Ch. IV). To many people 'Manichaean' has become synonymous with dualistic. Only one of the Gnostic sects is still in existence, the Mandaeans in southern Iraq (Vol. IX, Ch. III).

There has been much discussion on what 'Gnostic' means and what not. Even experts do not agree on what is the main characteristic of the Gnosis. Is it the redeeming Knowledge? The Fall? The Saviour? The elect? The rejection of the world? The eschaton? The problem is that not all systems dubbed 'Gnostic' (by no means all of them call themselves 'Gnostic') display all these features simultaneously, and/or emphasize them in different ways. There is, however, one Gnostic element on which all scholars agree : its dualism. This does not mean that these scholars all consider dualism the distinguishing feature of the Gnosis. But to quote Karl Prümm : "One should always insist on a metaphysical foundation of dualism as the true characteristic of what Gnosis is" <sup>22</sup>.

Prümm is speaking of 'metaphysical' dualism. This is correct but it is not enough. Gnostic systems are always poised on two types of dualism. First, there is metaphysical dualism : the upper world, the Pleroma, is essentially different from and opposed to the nether, material world, the cosmos with mankind. This is horizontal dualism. Next there is anthropological dualism, between the elect, the chosen, the saved, the Gnostic pneumatics (a minority), and the hylics, the matter-people, who will not be saved. This is vertical dualism; it is only present in the nether world (Vol. VIII, Preface p.15). Gnostics prosper on radical oppositions; with them it is always either-or, with nothing in between. Metaphysically, there is the opposition of the good God who, however, remains a 'deus absconditus', and the bad Demiurge with his helpers who created this world - a world that has been evil since its inception. Then there is the ethical dualism of Good and Evil. This leads to the anthropological opposition of the few elect, of those who 'know', and the 'massa damnata', the great mass of people who unwittingly go to their doom.

## XXXVIII

Finally, a few paragraphs must be devoted to a special brand of dualism, imperialistic dualism. The most simple meaning of 'imperialism' is that of building an empire; by 'empire' I mean a state in which more than one or several nations that formerly led an independent existence are now united under one rule. Toynbee uses to call such political entities 'universal states'. In his opinion, "a universal state is ex hypothesi alone within its own world"

23.

Empires attribute to themselves qualities that are lacking in other, more simple states. Not only do they believe themselves to be immortal - which means possessing a godlike nature -, but they are first and foremost 'universal', that is all-embracing. In fact, all empires tend to be world-empires encompassing the whole world; no empire is ever content with its own frontiers. The uniqueness of an empire implies that it does not acknowledge other states whose ratio existendi is to be engulfed by it. Empires virtually deny the right of existence to other states; they consider them non-existing. In consequence, there runs a sharp dividing line between fully authentic states and the non-existent ones. This constitutes a form of dualism with far-reaching political and historical consequences (Vol. IV, Ch. III.1).

It is a highly intriguing historical fact that the region stretching from central Anatolia to the Delta of the Euphrates and the Tigris, along an axis running from the north-west to the south-east, saw the birth of the first real empires. The oldest of these is that of Sumer in southern Mesopotamia (Vol. IV, Ch. II.2). Its king around 2435 B.C., Luzalzaggisi, stated that the god Enlil "threw down the lands under his (the kings's) feet; he conquered from where the sun rises to where it sets". North of Sumer lay Akkad (vol. IV, Ch. III.3). Its king Sargon conquered far and wide. The first lord of all Mesopotamia was Hammurabi (1793-1750), the founder of the Babylonian Empire (Vol. IV, Ch. III.5). Next came the two Hittite Empires, the old (17th century B.C.) and the new ones (14th-13th cent. B.C.) (Vol. IV, Ch. III.6). Assyria, one of the greatest aggressor-nations of the ancient world, reached its apex between 900 and 612 (Vol. IV, Ch. III.7) in which year it was thrown down by Babylonia; the New Babylonian Empire, made famous by its king Nebuchadnessar II (Vol. IV, Ch. III.8), was overrun by the Persians in 539 B.C.

The Persian Empire (Vol. IV, Ch. IV.3) was the inheritor of all the imperialisms of the past; at its greatest extent it stretched from the Indus to the Aegean and from the Nile to the Caspian. Its kings styled themselves 'King of Kings'. Its claims were taken over by Alexander the Great when he conquered the whole Middle East (Vol. IV, Ch. IV.3e).

The greatest imperialistic power of all Antiquity was, of course, Rome. The Roman Empire (the subject of Vol. X) was the largest ever; its rulers never paid the slightest regard to the right of independent existence of any other state or nation whatsoever. In its later later days, however, this truly 'universal state', found on its path a truly 'universal church', the Christian Church, and with this encounter a new and long struggle began.

With this volume too business was as usual. Dr. J.R. Dove, a native English speaker and an emeritus professor of English and American literature in the University of Oulu in Finland, corrected the English of this book, from time to time pointing out an inconsistency, a contradiction or an omission. My daughter, Dr. Resianne Smidt van Gelder-Fontaine, a philosopher, although having a full-time job and a full-time family, found the time to read through the whole volume and present me with a number of useful and sensible remarks. My dear wife Anneke corrected the one-but-last version on typing errors. As always, I stress that the responsibility for all that the book contains is my sole responsibility, scholarly contents, English, typography, and lay-out. Mr. J.C. Gieben, my friendly publisher, steered the thing through the press as quickly and efficiently as ever. I am grateful to all of them.

Volume XII will describe the conflicts Christianity had with the Roman Empire and Judaism.

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NOTES

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11. See for Hitler's dualism Vol. VI, Preface pp. XXVIII-XXIX, and Vol. VIII, Preface pp. XXV-XXXII.
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17. Mt.20:20-24; Mk.10:35-41.
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