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Specific Cultural Dualism in Translating Greek Philosophy into the Chaldean Oracles

1. **The Chaldean Oracles are handed down only as Greek fragments in Neoplatonic and Christian commentaries.**

They attracted attention in European culture by processes of imparting holy knowledge to Syria as “**Pagan Bible**” and since renaissance a long time as “**Wisdom of Zoroaster**” for criticism of Christianity and for Christian philosophy. In the meantime they were promoting ways of tradition in **Christianity and Islam** for a potential of cosmic mystic criticism. That is actual important today in the face of egoistic misuse of mysticism and of globalization.

Here for thousands of years humans were expressing impressions of vital significance, also in verbal **traditions with changing interpretations**. Tradition is a framework to reflect and to classify the personal experience and to legitimize the own insight. The elitist character of deeper insight asserts to be entitled to special traditions from an authoritative source, but science takes the formative power of the **social context** for granted. What is handed down as a vital wisdom by a community in myths and rules is often regarded as a **secret** not allowed for outsiders as potential enemies. But there are efforts for opening a proven tradition to the public – also with **translation** in other languages and other cultures. Provided it is about an intersubjective **discussion with arguments** for cultural cooperation including all humans, that tradition will be significant for Intercultural Philosophy, too.

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- a) possibilities of **understanding dualism the Iranian and the Greek way** as well as
 - b) on the side of **Numenius orientalism** and
 - c) on the side of the **Theurg Julian affinity to Homer and Plato**.

The **vital dualistic experience** must be proved for each level of tradition every time in the historic social context. We have to combine the respective **symbols** in the forms of its expressions from different interrelations to ascertain their sense. The goal should be an **understanding picking up** and not a simple appropriation in the adoption. The convergence takes place on the **basis of difference**. **In late phases spirituality** here results in possibilities of generalisation – together with developing a new entity in transference. In such proceedings Comparative Religion meets with Gregor Paul’s **Intercultural Philosophy** in its approach with arguments to promote the development of **ethic universals** and the justification of **tolerance** for cultural peculiarities – actually by the reconstruction of philosophies developed in separate cultures even in the face of rather **convergent development**. With regard to each tradition we have to proof the intention originally being behind it as well as the present circumstances. Tradition should be included only in a **changed form**, neither going against early days nor inconsistent with the present.

3) Therefore even the fragments handed down as the Chaldean Oracles are no parts of original documents - but adaptations.

a) In **Mesopotamia** there was the **science of the priests** observing the celestial signs for the king of the empire (with consultation of divinities and astral magic in divination associated with Ištar, the goddess **connecting** all contrasts). In the archives of the temples these documents in **Assyrian cuneiform script with Sumerian word characters** have been handed down until the time of Roman rule in Asia. For in Near East from the start the word has the dignity and the value of an attestation.

b) When the **Persians** conquered Mesopotamia they used **Aramaic as the empire's Semitic** administrative language into which they translated also the written traditions from the archives. So it was possible for the **Zoroastrian priests, the Magi**, to combine them with their **Indo-Iranian liturgies** passed on by the word of mouth (and associated, too, with Anâhitâ, the goddess of the waters **connecting** the spaces of heaven and earth like Ištar). **Translating the names** that's just comparing the strange religious experience to the own tradition.

c) When **the Greeks and the Romans** conquered Syria there was a continuation in the **identification** with the female divinity (as Hecate) **combining by magic** the spaces of heaven and earth – and in philosophical interpretation of mythology in the identification with the **principle breathing life as soul** into world an humans.

Knowledge about contexts, if not socio-ethical cooperation is replacing the loss of **common ground in experience**. **Intercultural Philosophy** can yet reckon, too, **texts of the Old Orient** were showing connections basing on verifiable experiences, basically drawn up with arguments according the **critical cognition** of that time. Generally Religious Studies and Intercultural Philosophy both will not interpret poetic language quite literally, but will **identify its metaphors**. And for a translation between cultures both of them will pay attention to distinguish the temptation, to project own ideas as regards content into a text, and the methodological necessity, for communication to take **the laws of logic** into account.