

Satan and Social Regulation: Exploring Socio-Political and Economic Dimensions in Jewish-Christian Thought

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Abstract

This article explores the concept of Satan within Jewish-Christian society, arguing that it extends beyond mere metaphysical representation to reflect broader social, cultural, religious, and political dynamics. It highlights how the personification of Satan can shape societal organization and social structures, especially in the context of evolving economic production modes. This study posits that Satan functions as a regulatory tool within societies, helping to maintain social stability by providing a clear moral framework. This regulatory function of Satan influences behavior and the stability of the overall system. Belief in Satan can instill and perpetuate specific values, ideologies, and social structures, demonstrating its role not only as a metaphysical entity, but also as a mechanism for social regulation. Analyzing Satan's role as a regulatory tool illustrates how societies manage and transform their social order, using belief in Satan to either sustain or challenge existing social structures.

Keywords: Satan Concept; Gospel of Mark; Regulation Theory

Introduction

The concept of Satan has long been an integral part of various cultures and religions, including Judaism. In ancient Jewish texts, there are numerous references to Satan, who is often depicted as a malevolent being opposed to God. Izak Spangenberg (2013) argues that the concept of Satan emerged from exclusive monotheistic religions that developed from the polytheistic faith of Yahwism, because monotheism was unable to satisfactorily explain the problem of suffering experienced by the Jewish people during the Hellenistic and Roman

periods. As a result, the Jewish community was "compelled" to adopt the belief in Satan (Belial/Lucifer/Iblis) as a means to make sense of their world.

Louis Jonker (2017) similarly posits that Satan is a newcomer in the evolution of religious thought, emerging from monotheistic Jewish beliefs of the Old Testament and impacting early Christianity, as evidenced in the New Testament writings from the Roman era. Scholars agree that the dualistic worldview that began to develop at the end of the Achaemenid period played a significant role in the personalization of evil into the figure of Satan during the pre-Christian era (Spangenberg 2013).

Although Spangenberg and Jonker provide a thorough explanation of the origins and development of the concept of Satan in Jewish society, their approaches have certain limitations. First, their analyses are overly focused on theological aspects and fail to consider the social and political dimensions of the concept of Satan sufficiently. Second, they do not adequately explore how power ideologies are embedded in the concept of Satan and how this concept was used to legitimize the evolving social structures of the time, particularly the development of slave relations. This article aims to offer an analysis of these power ideologies within the concept of Satan in first-century Jewish society. Furthermore, examining the context of the emergence of the concept of Satan in Jewish-Christian society also has implications for the interpretation of the New Testament. The Gospel of Mark in particular, which is the earliest of the four Gospels, contains numerous accounts of Jesus casting out evil spirits.

This research employs a comprehensive approach to investigate the role of the concept of Satan within the Gospel of Mark, examining both its religious significance and its function as a mechanism of social regulation. The primary method involves a detailed textual analysis of the New Testament, focusing on passages related to Satan, exorcisms, and healing miracles. Scrutinizing these texts reveals how the concept of Satan is portrayed in relation to societal norms and stability, and uncovers the ways in which the Gospel's narrative reflects and addresses the social and economic issues faced by its first-century audience. It also situates the Gospel of Mark within the broader historical and socio-political context of the Roman Empire during the first century, including the impact of Roman rule, economic disparities, and public health challenges. Understanding the historical backdrop illuminates how these factors may have influenced the development of the concept of Satan and its use within the narrative.

Incorporating Roland Boer and Christina Petterson's (2017) regulation theory, the research analyzes how the concept of Satan functions as a regulatory tool within the society depicted in the Gospel of Mark, serving to maintain social stability and regulate behavior. Examining Satan as such a mechanism highlights the dual role of this concept in both reflecting and reinforcing social order. This study does not reject divine revelation, but rather seeks to

understand how the concept of Satan interacted with its early social context through the lens of social scientific hermeneutics.

Additionally, a comparative cultural analysis will be employed to draw connections between the concept of Satan in the Gospel of Mark and similar ideas in other cultural contexts, such as the dualistic systems of ancient Persia. This elucidates how cultural exchanges and theological ideas influenced the development of the concept of Satan. By integrating these cultural comparisons, the study aims to demonstrate that the concept of Satan is not merely a religious symbol, but also a tool influenced by and responding to the socio-economic and political conditions of its time.

Discussion

Origins: The Concept of Satan as an Ideological Apparatus of Rulers

One similarity between Judaism and Zoroastrianism is their mutual dualism, which posits the existence of two opposing forces in the universe: good versus evil (Heckert 2023). Both religions acknowledge an ongoing struggle between these forces, and though they emphasize and narrate this concept differently, the fundamental notion of dualism remains a crucial element in their theological understandings. As one of the oldest religions in the world, Zoroastrianism influenced early Jewish and Christian beliefs and traditions. However, Jason Silverman (2014) argues that Persian influence on the formation of the concept of Satan stems from entirely different foundations and sources. His argument is based on Zechariah 3, which he suggests should be understood as part of a narrative that employs the legal structure and power ideology of the Achaemenid Empire to ensure and maintain loyalty within their vast realm. In this view, the concept of Satan in Zechariah 3 is a reflection of an administrative structure designed to prevent local officials from betraying their rulers.

According to Silverman's analysis, the Satan figure in Zechariah 3 aligns with the role of satrap officials who would raise legal objections against prospective officials within the satrapal administration. This mirrors the mechanisms described in the Tiribazus court, the logistical needs implied in Pherdates, and references to such offices in the Bactrian archives. Joshua is depicted as receiving royal favor based on loyalty, but this occurs in the presence of royal representatives and the angel of Yahweh, paralleling the role of satraps as representatives of the Great King. Demonstrating loyalty would involve oaths of allegiance and possibly a special ceremony (Silverman 2014).

Thus, the concept of Satan in Zechariah 3 is understood as a representation of an administrative function aimed at ensuring loyalty and obedience to the ruler, rather than as a malevolent supernatural entity. Consequently, Zechariah 3 can be viewed as part of an ideological apparatus used to reinforce the authority of the ruler and secure the allegiance of

their subordinates. This concept reflects the influence of the Achaemenid Empire's power and administrative structure on the understanding of hierarchies and the obligation of loyalty within the society. This is not to claim that Zechariah 3 was written originally with the deliberate intent of serving as a tool for control and regulation within the Achaemenid Empire, but rather, that the text reflects the administrative and ideological structures of its time and how it could have been understood within that socio-political framework. That the imagery in Zechariah 3 aligns with known administrative practices of the Achaemenid period suggests that the passage may have been interpreted in a way that reinforced existing power structures.

Generally, Judean literature is characterized as a literature of resistance (Horsley 2008). However, this view is not entirely accurate. Jewish literature may also be seen as a product of local elite culture, serving as a mechanism for interacting with imperialism in ways that are acceptable to both parties (Silverman 2014). Furthermore, early Achaemenid kings had policies that encouraged the production of elite culture to serve the empire. Therefore, the book of Zechariah can be understood as a reflection of the Judean local elite's response to this phenomenon, with some ancient Judean elites supporting the Persian Empire (Silverman 2014). The behavior of these Jewish elites is related to the concept of hybridity, also known as mimicry. As a concept introduced by Homi Bhabha (2012) and derived from Jacques Lacan (Chung 2019), mimicry refers to the process where the colonized assimilate and imitate the culture and practices of the colonizers (such as accents or dress styles) to gain privileges within the empire.

Additionally, Spangenberg's and Jonker's views that the personified concept of Satan emerged from the strengthening of monotheism need to be considered more comprehensively. To fully understand the emergence of Satan as the principal actor of evil in the world, it is essential to examine the socio-political conditions that shaped this concept. The polytheistic aspects of ancient Israelite religion are evident from the tolerance Israelites showed towards the goddess Asherah. Mark Smith (2002) notes that symbols of Asherah, such as sacred wooden poles (asherah poles) and inscriptions referring to her as the divine consort of Yahweh, were commonly found among the Israelites. Furthermore, inscriptions at Kuntillet Ajrud reveal the presence of a goddess who was considered a consort of Yahweh.

In several instances in the Old Testament, local Canaanite deities are acknowledged by the Israelites. For example, Solomon, despite being a wise king of Israel, fell into the worship of other gods as revealed in 1 Kings 11:33, where it is noted that he worshiped deities other than the God of Israel in violation of the Torah. Dagon is mentioned in Judges 16:23 and 1 Samuel 5:5-7, indicating that some Israelites also worshiped gods of neighboring nations. Additionally, Chemosh is mentioned in 1 Kings 11:7 and Jeremiah 48, suggesting that the worship of surrounding deities had also permeated Israeli culture at that time. This indicates that despite

being a chosen people, the Israelites were also susceptible to the influence and worship of surrounding gods.

The strongest evidence of polytheism is found in Deuteronomy 32:8, which states that Yahweh is the son of Elyon, translated as "The Most High." Polytheism at that time was significant because, in politics, it could unite various peoples under a belief in multiple deities, which in turn could strengthen the ruler's authority. Religion would become centralized, regulated, and overseen by a single governing power. By controlling the way people think, resistance would be perceived as increasingly negative, and leaders could focus on defending their territory against external threats. An example of this is Prince Akhenaten, who attempted to centralize worship in Egypt around the sun god Aten (Snell 2011). He succeeded in consolidating his power so effectively during his lifetime that there are no records of opposition. Similarly, Ahura Mazda in Zoroastrianism functions like Yahweh in monotheism—the creator, benevolent deity, and supreme divinity (Rose 2011).

Cyrus, the king of the Achaemenid Empire, conquered Babylon in 539 BCE. With this conquest came the introduction of Zoroastrianism and the liberation of the Israelites from Babylonian hegemony, and Israel's gratitude is documented in Ezra 1:1-8. Ezra recounts the decree of King Cyrus of Persia, which allowed the exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple that had been destroyed by the Babylonians, and his account reflects the deep gratitude of the Israelites toward Persian rule for enabling their return to their homeland and the revival of their religious and cultural life in Jerusalem. King Cyrus is viewed as an instrument used by God to fulfill His plans for the Israelites, resulting in profound thankfulness for the permissions granted by the Persian government. The Persian administration established a new hegemony over the Israelites and accommodated them exceptionally well. During the period of the Second Temple, monotheism was reinforced with the return of the Judean elites.

Zoroastrians adhere to a dualistic worldview, exemplified by their recognition of two primordial beings: Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu. While Ahura Mazda serves as the creator of the world, Angra Mainyu acts as the malevolent being. Ahura Mazda embodies ideals of virtue, creating everything that is good and orderly. In contrast, Angra Mainyu aims to corrupt creation with his evil.

Ahura Mazda represents all that is just in the world (Sutardji 2015). Persian kings often associated themselves with Ahura Mazda, adopting the title "king of kings" and elevating themselves to a divine status (Dezhamkhooy, Papoli-Yazdi, and Roustaeeyanfard 2018:26; Jennifer Finn 2011). Conversely, the concept of Angra Mainyu also served to legitimize the Persian monarchy; anything opposed by the king was deemed evil in the world. To protect the Persian state by in essence combating and eliminating the corruption and damage caused by

Angra Mainyu to that governance, was considered imperative (Howe, Müller, and Stoneman 2017).

Again, this analysis of the concept of Satan from a socio-historical and political perspective makes no theological claims about its revealed nature. True, within Jewish and Christian traditions, Satan is often understood as part of divine revelation, evolving alongside social changes and interactions with other cultures. However, it is not influenced solely by cultural factors, but has a strong political background as well. The Persian Empire under King Cyrus played a crucial role in the emancipation and restoration of the Israelites from Babylonian oppression. The Persian administration facilitated the return of the Israelites to their land and the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, fostering a sense of gratitude and dependence on Persian rule. Additionally, the influence of Zoroastrianism, which emphasizes the dualism between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu, also impacted the concept of Satan in Jewish belief. Persian rulers frequently associated themselves with Ahura Mazda to legitimize their authority. This indicates that the political factors of Persian power played a significant role in the development of Jewish religious beliefs and theological concepts.

The Concept of Satan within the Framework of Boer and Petterson's Regulation Theory

Boer and Petterson (2017) argue that economic activities are inherently social, and contradictions and crises are commonplace. In such situations, stability must be maintained, and is facilitated by the institutional, behavioral, and ideological practices which highlight the importance of regulation. As such, regulation refers to the social, institutional, and ideological factors that influence the overall stability and transformation of a social system. It encompasses not only the rules established by governments or legal authorities, but also considers various other social, cultural, ideological, and institutional aspects that impact behavior and the dynamics of the system.

In an economic system, contradictions include disparities or conflicts between different elements of the system, such as between the interests of social groups or between existing rules and regulations. Left unaddressed, these contradictions often become sources of instability and potential crises within the system. For instance, the Spartacus revolt during the Roman Republic illustrates such contradictions. In ancient Rome, slaves were a crucial component of both the economy and society, yet they were treated unfairly and exploited by their owners. Amid the extraordinary wealth of Roman elites, widespread poverty existed among common people, including the slaves. The Spartacus revolt, led by rebellious slaves, exposed these social injustices and created significant tensions between different social classes.

At times, contradictions within a regime can lead to structural crises, collapse, and the emergence of new regimes (Boer and Petterson 2017). Regulatory mechanisms continuously adjust to achieve temporary stability. In this context, belief in Satan can play a role in

maintaining social stability by providing a clear moral framework. People are encouraged to adhere to the norms and values set by the authorities to avoid the corrupting influence of Satan. Belief in a common enemy such as Satan can help mobilize solidarity and unity within a community. People are united in their struggle against evil forces, which can obscure the realities of their suffering and reinforce collective cohesion.

Boer and Petterson (2017) analyze economic issues in the classic Marxian terms of the base or infrastructure, the relations of production (social classes), and the crucial role of ideology, culture, beliefs, and ways of life—the superstructure or regulatory mode. They argue that the modes of production of the time included slavery, colonialism, and agrarian systems. They propose that these modes persisted from the 5th century BCE to the 5th century CE, preceded by the Asian mode of production, also known as the sacred economy, which lasted for nearly four millennia.

Within the framework of regulatory theory, cultural and religious influences such as the concept of Satan can be viewed as one of many factors shaping the superstructure or regulatory mode of a society. This regulatory mode encompasses ideologies, cultures, beliefs, and ways of life that affect behavior and the overall stability of the social system. The significance of changes in the concept of Satan, especially in the context of shifts in economic modes of production, can be observed in how this concept reflects and even influences social, cultural, and belief dynamics within a society. As such, the personified concept of Satan can affect how societies organize themselves and their social structures. In more advanced modes of production, where social and economic hierarchies become more complex, the personified concept of Satan can be used to explain or justify injustices, suffering, and evil within society.

Implications for Reading the New Testament

The emergence of the concept of Satan as presented here is evidence that this belief cannot be categorized as a purely "biblical" belief. On one hand, it can be argued that the personified concept of Satan originated during the Second Temple period under Persian rule, after which it evolved over time (Izak J. J. Spangenberg 2013; Jonker 2017; Silverman 2014). Political and economic events significantly contributed to its development. If some forms of belief in Satan contribute to obscuring realities such as injustice, oppression, and exploitation, it is important to counteract such beliefs or, if necessary, to challenge their existence altogether.

Some implications of historical concepts of Satan for interpreting the New Testament can be exemplified by using the Gospel of Mark as a case study. Unlike Spangenberg, Jonker, or other scholars who decisively reject belief in a personal Satan, the perspective that follows allows for the possibility of opposing or adopting belief in Satan, the latter done by many New Testament writers, and of course Jesus himself. The role of the concept of Satan can indeed function as a regulatory tool to maintain stability within a regime. Therefore, critiques or

opposition should be targeted precisely. In this context, criticism should focus on the economic and political systems rather than solely on the concepts or ideas about Satan. This is because it is the economic and political interests—or, as Boer and Petterson term it, the need to maintain stability within a regime—that often co-opt certain ideas (such as the concept of Satan) for their own purposes.

Criticism of the concept of Satan must transcend surface-level appearances and avoid merely targeting superficial aspects. Such an approach recognizes that there is a mechanism behind the emergence of the concept of Satan, which plays a significant role in societal phenomena. The concept of Satan can be categorized as an ideological apparatus, an instrument through which values and ideologies are disseminated and ingrained. Therefore, the emergence of the concept of Satan is deeply involved in ideological and political dynamics. Even if one believes in the concept of Satan, its justification may include political dimensions, not just spiritual ones. The concept of Satan, as Boer and Petterson define it, operates within a regulatory framework, isolating itself from broader ideological discourse. By examining the belief in Satan, we can question the teachings, values, and practices propagated through this belief and identify who benefits from it (if anyone). This perspective allows us to critically evaluate the underlying political and ideological interests that leverage such concepts for their own purposes.

An example of this can be seen in the practice of exorcism—the expulsion of demons—in the Gospel of Mark. Jesus demonstrates authority over evil spirits that control individuals in a destructive manner. In the narrative, Satan acts as an agent opposing the word of Jesus (Mark 4:15). Jesus then confronts these spirits, expels them, and restores the well-being of those afflicted (Mark 1:21-28, 32; 3:20-27; 7:24-30). Notably, these demons are also portrayed as forces actively aligned with the military power of the Roman government (Shively 2015). In Mark 5:1-20, the demon possessing the Gerasene man, who lives among the tombs, identifies himself as "Legion." A Roman legion was a central unit of the Roman army, comprising approximately 5,000 to 6,000 soldiers. By casting out "Legion," Jesus asserts his authority over these demonic forces, symbolically challenging the power of the Roman Empire and affirming his dominion over evil (Liew 1999; Moore 2006; Myers 2008).

Exorcism can be seen as a means of regulating behavior and social norms within a community. Evil spirits are depicted as forces that cause chaos and instability. By casting out these spirits, Jesus restores order and social stability. Interestingly, the source of instability originates from the ruling regime of the time, the Roman government and its representative apparatus of violence, the Legion. Exorcism can be interpreted one way of legitimizing Jesus' authority. By demonstrating his power over evil spirits, Jesus asserts that he holds a higher authority than other worldly powers, including political and military forces. Thus, the author of Mark portrays Jesus using the concept of Satan to maintain the stability of his Kingdom.

Exorcism can therefore be viewed as a critique of oppression and injustice, because evil spirits are often associated with oppressive forces, such as the Roman government (Liew 1999; Moore 2006; Myers 2008). By expelling these spirits, Jesus aligns himself with the oppressed and opposes their suppression (Liew 1999; Moore 2006; Myers 2008).

Social and political instability likely underpinned the writing of the Gospel of Mark, which is generally dated around 70 CE (though this depends on whether Markan priority among the Gospel accounts is accepted), especially in light of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, as noted by the author in what is termed *Vaticinium Ex Eventu* (prophecy after the event) (Wright 2020). First, the great fire in Rome, followed by accusations against Christians as the culprits, created significant social and political instability. The fear and anxiety over divine retribution and Nero's immoral actions led to the persecution of Christians, fostering an atmosphere of instability and terror among them (Tacitus 1937). This event resulted in the loss of countless lives; Dio, a historian of Rome, mentions an incalculable number of deaths (Lange and Madsen 2016). Second, the political instability of 65 CE, including the civil war and Piso's conspiracy to overthrow Nero, further intensified the political turbulence in Rome. These events contributed to a volatile environment that influenced the context in which the Gospel of Mark was written. The civil war and the struggle for power among various factions led to widespread social chaos, with its effects felt throughout the city. Third, the outbreak of epidemics and natural disasters further exacerbated instability and anxiety within society. The epidemic of 65 CE, coupled with natural disasters such as storms, contributed to a pervasive sense of instability and dread. The interpretation of these disasters as manifestations of divine wrath against Nero's regime heightened tension and uncertainty. Finally, the rebellion in the province of Judea, along with civil strife and internal conflicts in Rome, deepened the existing political and social instability. The uncertainty regarding security and political stability in Rome, coupled with fears of divine punishment, created even greater anxiety among the populace, including Christians.

In Boer and Petterson's theory of regulation, such social and political instability creates conditions where religion, including Christianity, can function as a mechanism for regulating and controlling society. In times of uncertainty and anxiety, religion can offer hope, comfort, and moral guidance to affected individuals. However, it can also be utilized by rulers or authorities to maintain power or further exert control over the population. For example, Rome at the time was overwhelmed with foreigners, widespread poverty, and various urban dangers, including heavy traffic, accidents, fights, drunkenness, harassment, theft, and murder (Fagan 2011). These conditions were accompanied by strict social surveillance, frequent conflicts, and violence.

Amid this instability, the gospels narrate numerous miracles of healing and exorcism performed by Jesus, notably carried out even on the Sabbath. Why are there so many accounts

of illness in the Gospel? It turns out that living conditions in Rome were detrimental to many, especially the poor, as estimates indicate that approximately 65-70 percent of the city's population lived below the survival threshold (Scobie 1986). Housing construction practices often neglected proper lighting, ventilation, water supply, and waste management, and a significant portion of Rome's inhabitants resided in densely populated, deplorable, unhealthy slum areas (Brunt 1966) fraught with open sewage disposal in kitchens, inadequate facilities for cleaning and disposing of human waste, public defecation and urination in the streets, water contamination with carcasses and waste, lack of fly control, inadequate street cleaning, the presence of disease-carrying animals and insects like vultures and dogs, the emptying of chamber pots into the streets, and the use of human waste as fertilizer for crops and gardens (Scobie 1986). This highly unsanitary environment explains the prevalence of diseases and high mortality rates during that time.

Disease, poverty, and social instability can be understood as manifestations of systemic evil, which in the Gospel of Mark is associated with Satan who represents the forces that oppose the Kingdom of God. Structures that cause suffering, exploitation, and illness can be seen as part of these opposing forces. Sickness and suffering affect not only the physical body but also the mind, which, in the context of the Gospel, can be linked to demonic possession. In the ancient world, including the social environment of first-century Rome, there was no clear distinction between physical illness, mental disorders, and the phenomenon of possession (Iosif 2011). Prolonged mental distress caused by poverty, violence, and life uncertainty could lead to conditions that, in the understanding of that time, were perceived as spiritual disturbances or demonic possession (Adderley 2022).

The daily struggle for survival was further exacerbated by uneven access to food; the elite in Rome generally enjoyed a sumptuous diet, while those without power and wealth had limited access to food. Thus, access to food highlighted the hierarchical structure of Roman society. Additionally, the fire disaster in 64 CE and the civil wars of 68-69 CE further disrupted food supplies.

Consequently, survival was a daily struggle, and stress levels during that time were notably high. Jerry Toner identifies various sources of stress (2009); high infant mortality rates, strenuous physical labor, widespread malnutrition, various economic challenges (debt, failed businesses, fear of deeper poverty, irregular income for urban day laborers), urban dangers (crime, overcrowding, fires, lack of social networks), and natural disasters (floods, fires) were all significant stressors. Additionally, household pressures (subordination of women, domestic violence), many slaves (hard labor, beatings, limited food, sexual coercion, pregnancies, humiliation), and the associated diseases exacerbated the stress. One of the consequences of such living conditions was the rise in diseases within the community. Vitamin deficiencies, muscle weakness, skeletal deformities, diarrhea, dysentery, cholera, and typhus were

prevalent, affecting both elite and non-elite individuals, but more severely impacting the latter due to their poorer immune systems. Why are there so many sick people in the Gospel? Because there were so many sick people in the Roman world of the readers; the Gospel simply reflects the society of its readers. The living conditions during the imperial era caused sickness and suffering. The bodies of the sick in the Gospel of Mark embody a world characterized by harsh physical conditions, vitamin deficiencies, and high levels of stress (Scobie 1986).

Of course, the Markan gospel does not promise immunity from the challenges of life amid social suffering. However, the Markan gospel depicts scenes where Jesus restores and reverses the damage inflicted by the imperial structures of the time. The frequent acts of healing and exorcism performed by Jesus address both the physical and mental harm caused by these structures. The movement of Jesus' followers was tasked with continuing His work of repairing and reversing the damage to bodies and lives inflicted by the practices and structures of the empire (Mark 1:32-34; 5:1-20). Healing, exorcisms, and feeding the hungry are expressions of the Kingdom of God on earth; they represent the presence of God's Kingdom among the people, and realize God's vision of restoration for all, aimed at maintaining the stability of God's Kingdom in a broken world.

From Mark's perspective, the author (and most New Testament writers) can be seen, according to Boer and Petterson (2017), as part of the elite who play a role in regulating the mode of production characterized by slavery, agrarianism, and urban-rural imbalance. However, the vision of the Kingdom of God which seeks to bring well-being to all could potentially challenge and address the root causes of these issues using the analytical tools available to us today.

Conclusion

Given the foregoing analysis, the concept of Satan in Jewish-Christian society is not merely a metaphysical representation, but also reflects social, cultural, religious, as well as political and economic dynamics. The personification of Satan can influence how societies organize themselves and their social structures, particularly in the context of changes in modes of economic production. The concept of Satan can function as a regulatory tool within society. Belief in Satan can help maintain social stability by providing a clear moral framework. Thus, the concept of Satan serves not only as a metaphysical representation, but also as a social regulatory tool that impacts behavior and the overall stability of the social system. Through belief in Satan, certain values, ideologies, and social structures can be instilled and upheld in society. Therefore, Satan as a regulatory tool can affect how societies organize themselves and their existing social structures, and can be used to sustain or alter the current social order.

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