

## **Bardaisan's '*Book of the Laws of the Countries*': A Re-Examination of Fate, Free Will, And Christian Doctrine - Reading the One Text We Actually Have**

**Lukas Jansen**

Tilburg University, Netherlands

### **Abstract**

This paper offers a comprehensive exploration of Bardaisan's 'Book of the Laws of the Countries (BLC)', juxtaposing it with contemporary interpretations and drawing upon Quentin Skinner's methodology for a nuanced understanding. Delving deep into the thematic elements, historical context, and broader implications of Bardaisan's work, the study aims to discern its significance within the Christian tradition. Through a critical engagement with modern scholarship, the paper highlights potential pitfalls in current readings of Bardaisan's work and underscores the importance of understanding the author's 'illocutionary intention'. The study concludes with a call for a demythologization of doctrinal studies in theological humanities.

**Keywords:** Bardaisan, Book of the Laws of the Countries, Quentin Skinner, illocutionary intention, Christian tradition, free will, apocalypticism, demythologization, doctrine