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Two Amali Triads and Georges Dumézil— Can Jordanes's Getica Reflect the Tripartite Ideology of the Indeo-European Societies?

Georges Dumézil is one of these scholars whose life and work will continue to be a subject of scientific debate long after their deaths.[1] For many researchers he is a fascinating character, an unfailing source of intellectual stimuli, and even a model of a scientist-comparatist whose extensive erudition commands respect even among his scientific antagonists. Although Dumézil owed his scientific achievements chiefly to his own industriousness, one must not pass over those who had a profound influence on his scientific development. Dumézil made his first scientific peregrinations under the guidance of the famous French philologist, Antoine Meillet. In the number of other researchers who influenced his intellectual development one must include Marcel Granet and Marcel Mauss, who goes behind Dumézil's methodological connections to the sociological thought of Emil Durkheim.[2] The scientific heritage of Dumézil, over twenty thousand pages long, has been broadly commented. His achievements received both

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[1] Useful guides to the life and work of G. Dumézil are: C.S. Littleton, *The New Comparative Mythology: An Anthropological Assessment of the Theories of Georges Dumézil*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 1982 and D.A. Miller, *Georges Dumézil: Theories, Critiques and Theoretical Extensions*, "Religion," 2000, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 27-40. In writing this sketch, I made use of the following works by G. Dumézil: *The destiny of a King*, Chicago–London 1973; *Mitra-Varuna: an essay on two Indo-European representations of Sovereignty*, New York 1988; *Les dieux des Germains: Essai sur la formation de la religion scandinave*, "Mythes et religions," Paris 1959; *The plight of a sorcer*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 1986.

[2] See C.S. Littleton, *op. cit.*, p. 37-40 and *idem*, *The Comparative Indo-European Mythology of Georges Dumézil*, "Journal of the Folklore Institute," Vol. 1, No. 3 (1964), pp. 147-166.

a warm welcome from a part of the scientific world[3] and a harsh criticism, often based on not quite substantial objections.[4] Beyond doubt, Dumézil can be considered an extremely controversial scientific personality.[5] And yet his ideas influenced scholars belonging to various branches of humanities. One of his critics—an American historian of religion Bruce Lincoln—mentions in his paper researchers, such as Claude Lévi-Strauss, Mircea Eliade, Marshall Sahlins, Rodney Needham, Jean-Pierre Vernant, Georges Duby, and Jacques LeGoff, who abundantly drew from the work of the French scholar.[6] This

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[3] On the "American support" for the French researcher's theses, see: D.N. Knipe, *American Aid to Dumezil: A Critical Review of Recent Essays*, "The Journal of Asian Studies," 1974, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 159-167. A peculiar combination of Dumezilian functionalism and Claude Lévi-Strauss's structuralism can be found in Algirdas Julien Greimas, see: *idem*, *O bogach i ludziach. Studia o mitologii litewskiej*, przeł. B. Marszalik, Biblioteka Klasyków Antropologii, Cieszyn 2007. Dumézil did not consider himself a structuralist and cautioned against his being too hastily included in that trend. This attitude is not quite clear to many researchers who often see themselves as continuators of the French scholar's ideas. See the explanation of this issue in C. Scott Littleton, *Je ne suis pas structuraliste: Some Fundamental Differences between Dumezil and Levi-Strauss*, "The Journal of Asian Studies," 1974, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 151–158.

[4] Of his two fiercest critics who exceeded the limits of substantial argumentation in dispute, it is worth to cite a contribution by A. Momigliano: *Georges Dumezil and the Trifunctional Approach to Roman Civilization*, "History and Theory," 1984, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 312-330. The same paper can be found in: *idem*, *On Pagans, Jews and Christians*, Chicago 1987, pp. 289-314 and in: *idem*, *Ottavo Contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico*, Rome 1987, pp. 135-159. Conf. *idem*, *Introduction to a Discussion of Georges Dumezil*, [in:] A.D. Momigliano: Studies on Modern Scholarship, ed. G.W. Bowersock, T.J. Cornell London—Berkeley—Los Angeles 1994, pp. 286-301 (an English version of a paper published earlier as: *Premesse per una discussione su Georges Dumezil*. "Opus," 1983, Vol. 2, pp. 329-341). An apology of G. Dumézil was offered by G.G. Stroums in: *idem*, *Georges Dumézil, Ancient German Myths and Modern Demons*, "Zeitschrift fur Religionswissenschaft," 1998, Vol. 6, pp. 125-136.

[5] See the substantive criticism raised by Jan Gonda—*idem*, *Some Observations on Dumézil's Views of Indo-European Mythology*, "Mnemosyne," 1960, Vol. 13, Fasc. 1, p. 1-15 (reprinted in: *idem*, *Selected Studies. Volume I: Indo-European linguistics*, Leiden 1975, pp. 531–544) and *idem*, *Dumezil's Tripartite Ideology: Some Critical Observations*, "The Journal of Asian Studies," 1974, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 139-149. B. Lincoln, *Rewriting the German War God: Georges Dumézil, Politics and Scholarship in the Late 1930s*, "History of Religions," 1998, Vol. 37, No. 3, pp. 187-208, in a revised version as *Dumézil's War God*, [in:] *idem*, Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship, Chicago–London 1999, pp. 121-137. B. Lincoln, *Myth and History in the Study of Myth: An Obscure Text of Georges Dumézil, Its Context and Subtext*, [in:] *idem*, Death, war, and sacrifice: studies in ideology and practice, Chicago–London 1991, pp. 259-268. C. Grottanelli, *War-time Connections: Dumézil and Eliade, Eliade and Schmitt, Schmitt and Evola, Drieu La Rochelle and Dumézil*, [in:] The Study of Religion under the Impact of Fascism, ed. by Horst Junginger, Leiden 2008, pp. 303-314.

[6] B. Lincoln, *Rewriting the German War*, p. 189, n. 5. See C. Lévi-Strauss, *De Grées ou de force*?, "L'Homme," 2002/3, No. 163, pp. 7-18; M. Eliade, *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion*, Chicago—London 1969, particularly pp. 32-34; M. Sahlins, *The Stranger King: Or*

list, obviously limited to the most well-known names representative of their respective disciplines, shows how far the ideas of the French researcher had spread.[7] Even in mediaeval history, his results are being used more and more often. In his work on the three classes of mediaeval society, Georges Duby employed a Dumezilian model, seeing its origins in the old Indo-European social division into priests, warriors, and tradesmen.[8] In this contribution we shall discuss the tripartite model, constructed by Dumézil, in the context of Jordanes's narration of the Amali rule over the Ostrogoths and attempt to find an answer to the question if the manifestations of this model can be found also in *Getica*.[9]

Let us begin with an attempt to present the methodological framework of Dumezillian interpretation, or to illustrate the essence of the tripartite model.[10] Dumézil held that Indo-European societies formed a particular "mode of thought" called the tripartite model.[11] Within this mode myths, stories, etc. were grouped according to three functions: of sovereignty, the military function, and fecundity. According to Dumézil, this trifunctional

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Dumézil among the Fijians, "The Journal of Pacific History," 1981, Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 107-132 (reprinted in: *idem*, *Islands of History*, Chicago—London 1987, pp. 73-104); R. Needham, *The Left Hand of the Mugwe: An Analytical Note on the Structure of Meru Symbolism*, "Africa: Journal of the International African Institute," 1960, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 20-33; J.-P. Vernant, *Le mythe hesiodique des races. Essai d'analyse structurale*, "Revue de l'histoire des religions," 1960, Vol. 157, No. 157-1, pp. 21-54; G. Duby, *The Three Orders. Feudal Society Imagined*, Chicago–London 1980, most importantly pp. IX, 5–9. J. Le Goff , *Medieval Civilization*, Oxford—Victoria 1990, pp. 258-261.

[7] E. Lyle, *Which Triad? A Critique and Development of Dumezil's Tripartite Structure*, "Revue de l'histoire des religions," 2004, Vol. 221, No. 1, pp. 5-21 and *idem*, *Narrative Form and the Structure of Myth*, "Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore," 2006, Vol. 33, pp. 59-70. From among Polish researchers one should name the works of A. Gieysztor, see *idem*, *Mitologia Słowian*, in: Mitologie Świata, Warszawa 1982, and his student J. Banaszkiewicz (*idem*, *Podanie o Piaście i Popielu. Studium porownawcze nad wczesnośredniowiecznymi tradycjami dynastycznymi*, Warszawa 2010).

[8] Le Goff and Duby are not the only members of the Annales School to have employed the Dumezillian model. E. Le Roy Ladurie, *The Ancien Régime: a History of France, 1610–1774*, Malden Mass., 1998, p. 4 believed the 1610 coronation rite to be related to the 'three functions'.

[9] Jordanes, *De summa temporum vel origine actibusque gentis Romanorum*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH AA 5, 1, Berlin 1882, further cited as: Jordanes, *Romana*. Jordanes, *De origine actibusque Getarum*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH AA 5, 1, Berlin 1882, further cited as: Jordanes, *Getica*.

[10] Conf. D.A. Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[11] We are following a line of reasoning presented by Cristian Grottanelli, see: *idem*, *Dumézil, the Indo-Europeans, and the Third Function*, [in:] Myth and Method, Studies in Religion and Culture, ed. L.L. Patton, W. Doniger, Charlottesville 1996, p. 128-146: "trifunctionalism is not necessarily a complex ideological system; indeed, it would be better described as a simple mode of thought" (*ibid.*, p. 130). Por. E. Lyle, *Wchich Triad?*, p. 8.

pattern was reflected in the social structure of the Indo-European speaking peoples. Therefore myths mirrored the social organization which was to be based on the division of the Indo-European peoples into three classes corresponding to three functions: priests, warriors, and tradesmen. The three functions can be described as follows:

(1) Sovereignty. There are two aspects here, named Varunic and Mitraic by the French researcher. The former is related to a magical and religious sovereignty, represented by the Vedic god Varuna, archetypical to this plane. Why the latter—the Iranian god Mitra is the archetype here—relates to the legal character of sovereignty. For Dumézil, sovereignty is often simply related to royal power.[12]

(2) Belligerence. This function is connected to strength, in particular to its use in combat.

(3) Fecundity and fertility. This function, as Dumézil points out, is distributed between various phenomena, without any clear or strict boundary between them. These include, above all, abundance, fertility, both of people and goods, plenty of food, health, peace, as well as sensual satisfaction etc.[13]

The protagonists of our discussion, who may mirror the tripartite model, are three Amali brothers, Valamir, Thiudimer, and Vidimer, who ruled over three groups of the Ostrogoths in the 5th century. It is time to present our first triad.

The First Triad

Valamir assumed power over the Ostrogoths after a forty year interregnum, when after the death of King Torismund, his son left his people and went to the brother Visigoths. Valamir, as we learn from Jordanes's work, succeeded in the kingdom of his ancestors. The new Ostrogoth king had two younger brothers, Thiudimer and Vidimer. Each brother assumed power over one of

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[12] C.S. Littleton, *The New Comparative Mythology*, p. 72.

[13] G. Dumézil, *The Destiny of a Warrior*, p. IX; originally published as: *Heur et malheur du guerrier: Aspects mythiques de la fonction guerrière chez Indo-Européens*. B. Lincoln, *The Indo-European Cattle-Raiding Myth*, "History of Religions," 1976, Vol. 16, No. 1, p. 42-65, particularly p. 50; B. Lincoln, a student of M. Eliade, understands the third function differently from G. Dumézil—"I do differ with Dumézil on the nature of the so-called Third Function and regard it as something of a catchall class for anyone not belonging to the upper classes." (*ibid.*, p. 42, n. 2) C.S. Littleton, *The New Comparative Mythology*, p. 5: "sovereignty, force, nourishment."

three groups of the Ostrogoths.[14] As we can see, Valamir was a king of his people and a sovereign of his brothers. The relations between the brothers were very cordial and, although Valamir was the king, not one of the brothers was deprived of his kingdom. Jordanes describes it as follows:

> Eratque tunc in tribus his germanis contemplatio grata, quando mirabilis Thiudimer pro fratris Valamir militabat imperio, Valamir vero pro altero iubebat ornando, Vidimer servire fratribus aestimabat. Sic eis mutua affectione se tuentibus nulli paenitus deerat regnum, quod utrique in sua pace tenebant.[15]

The above passage shows a strict hierarchy among the Amali brothers. Valamir gave orders to his brother Thiudimer. He in turn served as a soldier to his brother and his dominion. Whereas Vidimer appreciated serving both his brothers. Although it is possible to read into the military sphere of our triad's activities, where one brother gives orders, another serves him as a soldier, and finally the third serves both his older brothers, let us consider the passage above in the context of the three functions. As we know, the Ostrogoth king Valamir can be seen to fulfil the first function. Thiudimer, serving as a soldier, is a warrior *par excellence* and beyond any doubt fulfils the second function of the tripartite model. What about the youngest brother, Vidimer, however? Only the third function remains for him but it is not apparent form the quoted passage in any way that Vidimer might be connected to fertility or plenty. It raises a question: Is our triad actually not a reflection of the Dumezillian tripartite model? Is it the conclusion that the three Amali do not subscribe into the rules constituting the explanation proposed by the French scholar and that our search was doomed to fail from the beginning? There may be a way out of this methodological stalemate.

The point is that Dumézil himself never thought that the presentation of his explanation as a system of sovereignty—military—fecundity/fertility requires a downright canonical understanding of his model, which would preclude any modifications to the explanation. The continuators of his ideas performed complex operations to shape the model in ways they found most appropriate, in order to include in it the empirical material they analysed.[16] The French researcher often showed a very flexible approach to his model, having sometimes bent the empirical material to a lesser or greater extent

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[14] G. Dumézil, *The Destiny of a King*, p. 12. The division of a kingdom or a people into three parts plays an important role in the Dumezillian system.

[15] Jordanes, *Getica*, c. 252-253.

[16] E. Lyle, *Narrative Form*, p. 63.

so that he could force it into the framework of his interpretation.[17] The best example is how he crammed into the tripartite model five brothers, alleged sons of King Pāndu, known from the Indian epic *Mahabharata*.[18] The oldest brother, Yudhisthira, fulfils the first function—he is a king and, naturally, a sovereign of the other brothers. The next two sons of Pāndu, Bhima and Arjuna, personify the two aspects of the warrior function, brutal and chivalrous, respectively. Finally, the twins Nakula and Sahadeva personify the third function. As the French researcher remarks in his book *Les dieux des Germains*, Nakula and Sahadeva are first and foremost the "serviteurs de leurs frères."[19] And it is precisely this servitude towards the rest of the brothers which, according to Dumézil, makes them fulfil the third function. Nakula and Sahadeva are characterised by such traits as kindness, humility, readiness to serve, and in addition skills at breeding cattle and horses.[20]

Let us return now to the question of Vidimer's place in the tripartite model. Having compared him to Nakula and Sahadeva we can tell that the Amal is essentially but a servitor of his brothers, Valamir and Thiudimer.[21] Thus if servitude is included in the third function, there can be no objection whatsoever to see Vidimer as its representative as well.[22] Therefore in terms of methodology Vidimer can be placed within Dumézil's tripartite model as fulfilling the third function. The three Amali can be seen as the representatives of the three functions, which can be visualised as follows:

Valamir	sovereignty	issuing orders
Thiudimer	function of a warrior	subjection to Valamir
Vidimer	function of servitude	subjection to both brothers

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[17] As noticed by, e.g., J. Gonda, *Some Observations on Dumézil's Views of Indo-European Mythology*, p. 15.

[18] G. Dumézil, *The Destiny of a Warrior*, p. 5.

[19] G. Dumézil, *Les dieux des Germains*, p. 86.

[20] G. Dumézil, *The Destiny of a Warrior*, p. 5.

[21] G. Dumézil, *Les dieux des Germains*, p. 86.

[22] As C.S. Littleton reminds us (idem, *The New Comparative Mythology*, p. 200), Dumézil himself pointed out that a passage in the biblical Book of Jeremiah may mirror the tripartite model; Jr 9, 22-23: „Thus says the LORD: Do not let the wise boast in their wisdom, do not let the mighty boast in their might, do not let the wealthy boast in their wealth." It may be justified to ask how such a passage, calling the tripartite model to mind, became included in the Jewish literaturę. Some researchers say it was a result of the influence to which Israel was exposed of its Indo-European neighbours, such as Hittites. See A. Gieysztor, *op. cit.*, p. 17. Still, it is worth to quote E. Le Roy Ladurie here: "It is perhaps, however, the case that this schema was more or less implicit in the history of vast tracts of Eurasia, in zones whose ethnic origins (Indo-European, Semitic, etc.) were very varied." (*Idem*, *The Ancien Régime*, p. 5.)

If we accomodate servitude, or readiness to serve, as a trait included in the third function, we may regard Vidimer, too, as a character who fulfils the model proposed by the French scholar.

The Second Triad

The brotherly idyll of the three Amali ended when Valamir, fighting his enemies, died pierced with spears, falling from his horse. As Jordanes reports, the Goths were to retreat to his brother Thiudimer, who assuming the badges of sovereign authority (*tamen auctioris potestatis insignia sumens*) summoned his younger brother Vidimer who would share the hardships of war with him (*Vidimer fratre iuniore accito et cum ipso curas belli partitus*).[23] Thereby Thiudimer became the new king of the Goths.[24] The vacancy in the first function was thus filled—Thiudimer was the new wielder of the Ostrogoth sovereignty. But the two Amali—Thiudimer and Vidimer—do not constitute a triad at all! Do we encounter a fundamental problem here with but this simple fact that without a triad analysing the potential tripartite model among the Amali is useless? It turns out there is a way out from even this supposed cul-de-sac. In his second book, known as *Romana*, Jordanes relates the events after Valamir's death in somewhat different light. Jordanes wrote that: "Valamero rego Gothorum in bello Scirorum defuncto Theodemir in regno fratris successit cum Vidimero fratre et filio Theodorico."[25] In this passage, besides Thiudimer and Vidimer, there appears a son of the former, Theoderic, later known in the history as Theoderic the Great. So we have an Amali triad again.

Let us focus here on the figure of Theoderic in the narration of *Gethica*, where Thiudimer's son returned from Constantinople where he dwelled as an imperial hostage. The most interesting for our considerations is a passage of *Getica* c. 282. It is a description of Theoderic's first combat, analysed in one of his papers by Paweł Żmudzki, who duly remarked that in this particular narration by Jordanes Theodoric conforms to a canon of behaviour of the so-called young warriors.[26] Having considered this finding we can ask the following question: Does Theoderic belong in the trifunctional model? The answer is easy to find. Dumézil shows us clearly the place in his model

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[23] Jordanes, *Getica*, c. 278.

[24] *Ibid.*, c. 280, 281.

[25] Jordanes, *Romana*, c. 345.

[26] P. Żmudzki, *Władcy i wojownicy. Narracje o wodzach, drużynie i wojnach w najdawniejszej historiografii Polski i Rusi*, Monografie Fundacji na rzecz Nauki Polskiej, Wrocław 2009, pp. 99-100. On the subject of the so-called young warriors: *ibid.*, pp. 89-192.

occupied by the so-called bands of young warriors.[27] They belong, in his opinion, to the sphere of the second function.[28] Let us take a look now at Theoderic's first combat:

> Qui Theodoricus iam aduliscentiae annos contingens expleta pueritia, decem et octo annos peragens, ascitis certis ex satellitibus patris et ex populo amatores sibi clientesque consocians, paene sex milia viros, cum quibus inconscio patre emenso Danubio super Babai Sarmatarum rege discurrit, qui tunc de Camundo duce Romanorum victoria potitus superbiae tumore regnabat, eoque superveniens Theodoricus interemit familiaque et censu depraedans ad genitorem suum cum victoria repedavit.[29]

The passage above begins with the presentation of the young Amal's age. Theoderic had just turned eighteen and, leaving his boyhood years behind, gathered some of his father's companions and his own followers and clients from among the people. There were roughly 6 thousand warriors in his retinue he led on his first independent campaign. Without his father's knowledge (*inconscio patre*), Theoderic crossed the Danube, which was the border between the Ostrogoths and the Sarmatians. Beyond the river lay the seat of Babai, king of the Sarmatians, who grew in pride after his victory over the Roman general Camundus. So Theoderic marched against an awesome foe. The Sarmatian king was not only the vanquisher of the Romans but also an old enemy of the Ostrogoths. Theoderic's father, Thiudimer, had already fought against Babai and not without success. The final victory over the Sarmatian enemy of the Ostrogoths was to fall not to the father, however, but to the son. The young Amal emerged victorious from this ordeal. Theoderic defeated and crushed the Sarmatian king and then returned to his parent in glory carrying the spoils of war.

The narration about Theoderic may be compared with the story of the first combat of the greatest mythical Irish hero Cúchulainn, which we quote after Dumézil. It is a typical war initiation story.[30] The young hero, still in his childhood years, sets off towards the borderlands of Ulster, his country, with the chariot driver his only company. There he provokes a fight with three sons of Nechta, who were a constant threat to the Ulaid. Doing so he faces an enemy who is not only more numerous but also more experienced in the art of war. What additionally compounds the danger is the fact that Cúchulainn

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[27] G. Dumézil, *Les dieux souverains des Indo-Européens*, p. 118.

[28] *Ibid.*: „La second fonction, sous sa forme indo-iranienne, était vouée à former une des cibles le plus vigoureusement visées par Zoroastre: le morale libre, héroïque, violente, des bandes de jeunes guerriers n'était pas celle des prêtres et des sages, auteurs de la réforme."

[29] Jordanes, *Getica*, c. 282.

[30] G. Dumézil, *The Destiny of a Warrior*, pp. 10, 114, 133-137.

does it without his guardians' supervision.[31] The first trial ends with success. In combat rage Cúchulainn kills his enemies and returns in triumph to the seat of King Conchobar, Emain Macha, carrying three cut off heads of the sons of Nechta.

Dumézil believed the "initiatory combat" was an initial test for the rest of life: the first deed which introduces the young warrior as an adult into his earthly existence and does not differ much from his further achievements. This first victory brings the period of minority to an end.[32] A successful trial also serves as a confirmation of the hero's glory. It is so because the hero succeeds in destroying a powerful of fearsome foe. What is most important, however, is that the "initiatory combat" takes place without supervision of an adult— guardian or parent. The hero acts on his own. The story of Cúchulainn's first combat contains similar themes as the narration of Theoderic's first campaign. Both heroes set out for their first combat without the supervision of their guardians, Theoderic does it without his father's knowledge. Both direct their steps towards the border. Finally, both face terrible foes, who took their toll on the heroes' kinsmen. They both emerge victorious from combat, their enemies are obliterated, and the heroes return to their compatriots in triumph. Therefore Theoderic the Great, as a young warrior, indubitably fulfils the second function in the Dumezillian system.

Let us try to analyse our second triad now. Thiudimer, as king of the Goths, is a sovereign of both his brother and his son. Theoderic is a typical young warrior who represents the second function. Vidimer, who more and more eludes the scope of Jordanes' narration, may be conceived a representative of the same function as in the first triad. Let as have a look at the second triad:

Thiudimer	sovereignty	issuing orders
Theoderic	belligerence	the so-called young warrior's sphere of activity
Vidimer	auxiliary function	a king's brother share in the hardships of war (function of servitude in the previous triad)

Thus considering all modifications, made by Dumézil himself in order to fit the five alleged sons of King Pāndu into the tripartite model, we may assume as well that our triads can fit the Dumezillian model. They may also

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[31] *Ibid.*, p. 114: "Cúchulainn's victory over the three sons of Nechta is the very model of the initiatory combat, one of the macnimratha that the child accomplishes, for the first time away from the supervision of his preceptors .."

[32] *Ibid.*

be considered its manifestations. Therefore the three Amali brothers can be recognised as heroes fitting Dumézil's tripartite model.

Conclusion

In this sketch, we aimed to find an answer to the question if two Amali triad can be recognised as manifestations of Dumézil's tripartite model. The answer is positive but only if we consider a whole gamut of what can be included into the framework of the third function and what has actually very little in common with fecundity and fertility. In his presentation of Nakula and Sahadeva, Dumézil made a considerable modification of his idea in order to be able to fit both "servitors" into his model. So it was with his interpretation of *Rígsþula*, which Dumézil believed to be a material confirmation of the existence of the tripartite model in the medieval societies of Scandinavia.[33]

Rígsþula is a story about how a god named Heimdall travels the world incognito under the name of Ríg. In a poor hut of Great-grandmother and Great-grandfather he fathers Thrall—a serf. Setting off again, Ríg reaches a house of Grandmother and Grandfather, where he fathers another son, Karl—a freeman. Finally Ríg arrives at the mansion of Mother and Father, where he fathers Jarl—a noble. He adopts the latter and participates in his education. For Dumézil this story is nothing but a confirmation of the tripartite model's existence in Scandinavia. However, as noticed by a critic of Dumézil Arnaldo Momigliano, it is not possible to find any confirmation for the tripartite model in the narration of this story, it only explains the origins of the division into the serfs, freemen, and finally the noblemen, who stand highest in the hierarchy.[34] It is yet another example of how the French researcher bent the framework of his model to find source premises which could confirm it.

Many continuators of the French scholar's ideas also treat their source material in a similar fashion. So does Emily Lyle, who is not a very orthodox

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[33] Let us quote G. Dumézil: "In looking more clearly at *Rígsþula*, the famous Eddic poem in which this structure is exposed, or rather formed under our eyes, I should like to show that it can nevertheless be explained on the basis of the Indo-European functional tripartition." (*idem*, *Gods of the Ancient Northmen*, "Publications of the UCLA Center for the Study of Comparative Folklore and Mythology," Berkeley – Los Angeles—London 1973, p. 119). The analysis of *Rígsþula* was originally published as a stand-alone paper: *idem*, *La Rígsþula et la structure sociale indo-européene*, „Revue de l'histoire des religions," 1958, Vol. 154, pp. 1-9.

[34] A. Momigliano, Georges Dumézil and the Trifunctional Approach, s. 329, p. 4. On the function and essence of the historiographical metaphor known as the origins, see: W. Wrzosek, *O myśleniu historycznym*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Epigram, Bydgoszcz 2009, pp. 37–41.

follower of Dumézil's theory herself, in her analysis of the story of Lugaid of the Red Stripes. She finds this Celtic hero a personification of the three functions because, among other things, his three fathers, who were brothers, can be functionally and philologically related to the three functions.[35] The name of the first brother Nar—a representative of the first function—means as much as "noble." The second brother Bres is etymologically "warlike." Finally the name of the third brother Lothar, whom the researcher connects with prosperity and fertility, means "washing tub."[36] Although E. Lyle claims that "the names Nar, Bres and Lothar fit his theory perfectly," one may wonder how a bath tub can be a symbol of fertility or prosperity. Regardless of our scepticism in this matter, however, it seems quite certain that Lugaid's fathers are just one more example that the interpretations of source material in the light of the tripartite model do not necessarily need to agree perfectly with the canonical explanation of the three functions.

It is worth to compare our considerations with those presented by E. Lyle. It seems that Vidimer is functionally closer to the third function than Lothar is etymologically. So finally, we can attempt to summarise our work on the Amali triads. If we follow the French researcher's lead in shaping a model through methodological operations in a way which makes it possible to find further proofs of the ubiquity of the trifunctional model among various Indo-European societies, we may recognise both Amali triads, without much hesitation, as its manifestations. If "the names Nar, Bres and Lothar fit [the requirements of the] theory perfectly," we can assume that Valamir, Thiudimer and Vidimer fit this theory functionally to the same extent.

Two Amali Triads and Georges Dumézil—Can Jordanes's Getica Reflect the Tripartite Ideology of the Indeo-European Societies?

by Robert Kasperski

Abstract

The main aim of this paper is to analyze the text of Jordanes's Getica in the context of Georges Dumézil tripartite ideology and to argue that the two triads of Amals (Valamer—Thiudimer—Vidimer and Thiudimer—Theoderic—Vidimer) can reflect three functions. Our examination of Jordanes's narration shows that the first person in both triads—the kings Valamer and Thiudimer—can be regarded as representants

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[35] E. Lyle, *Narrative Form*, p. 63.

[36] *Ibid.*

of sovereignty. Also the function of warrior can be reflected by the second person—Thiudimer and Theoderic—of both triads. The question arises whether the third function can be ascribed to Vidimer? Vidimer's role as servant of his brothers hardly fulfills the third function, connected mainly with fertility and fecundity in Dumézil's tripartite ideology. This issue can be yet resolved by comparing Vidimer to the role of two heroes of Mahabharta, the brothers Nakula and Sahedeva, who are in Dumézil's view representant of the third function. Like Vidimer they are no strictly connected with fertility, but they are servants of their elder brothers. If readiness to serve according to Dumézil can be located within the sphere of the third function, so we can place there the person of Vidimer as well.