

A Human-animal Organization as the Basis for Georges Dumézil's *Trifunctional Theory*: Three-Tiered Shepherd-Dogs-Sheep Hierarchy in the Herding Organization of the Proto-Indo-Europeans in the Myth Formation Period (Fourth Millennium BC)

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Introduction — Georges Dumézil's trifunctional theory and his theoretical alteration in 1950

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Introduction — Georges Dumézil's trifunctional theory and his theoretical alteration in 1950

The *trifunctionality* (*trifonctionnalité* in French) is the structure of gods in the archetype myths derived by French mythologist Georges Dumézil (1898–1986) from the comparative study of myths belonging to the Indo-Europeans. Dumézil began to advocate this idea in around 1938. At that time, he thought that there was some social three-class structure in the background, and the *trifunctionality* was formed as a reflection of this so that it was reflected in the archetype myths. However, the negative arguments have been developed widely up to now from those days when this theory was announced.

The first reproach is that the *trifunctionality* claimed by Dumézil was insufficient in proof; according to this reproach, the *trifunctionality* did not exist in the myths of every Indo-European people and, conversely, it existed in the myths of other ethnic groups. Therefore, it is not necessarily a feature that is proper and unique to the myths of Indo-Europeans.

Furthermore, the second reproach, which is more serious, is that the Proto-Indo-Europeans lived in tribal organizations in the myth formation period (the fifth and fourth millennium BC); therefore, Proto-Indo-European societies were not divided into three classes. When Dumézil formulated this hypothesis, he had an initial theoretical

assumption that there must have been some social reality supporting the *trifunctionality* and that social reality should be relevant to a three-class structure. Nevertheless, the proto-Indo-Europeans at that time were organized according to the kinship principle, and they were in the tribal stage so that they were not divided into classes. In other words, there were no social realities of a three-class-structure that could support *trifunctionality*. From an empirical perspective, this criticism was legitimate and therefore seemed to be fatal to the *trifunctional theory*.

In 1950 or so, roughly twelve years passed since advocating the *trifunctional theory*, Dumézil partly admitted the validity of the above-mentioned criticism and modified his initial argument. Previously he argued that the Proto-Indo-Europeans formed some social three-level structure at that time and developed the *trifunctional theory* in the context of that reality. He partially abandoned this hypothesis and finally admitted that trifunctionality was a theory uniquely concerning the world of myths and that it was independent from social context.

In any case, Dumézil revised his former hypothesis. We will call this theoretical adjustment that he made the *Setback in 1950*. At that moment, Dumézil had studied the myths of each ethnic group exhaustively and thought that the *trifunctional theory* was sufficiently proved in the framework of mythology itself. Thus, he had confidence in the outcome of his mythology. As he thought that the first reproach could be refuted, Dumézil did not have to forcefully stick to the existence of a social three-class structure which could serve as the basis of *trifunctionality*. Dumézil arrived at the conviction regarding mythology that *trifunctionality* is recognized in the myths of each ethnic group belonging to the Indo-Europeans, which was indifferent to the existence of social reality as a realistic background.

Furthermore, Dumézil graded his theory from the *trifunctional theory* to the *trifunctional ideology* by establishing his argument for an ideological purification of the theory.¹⁾ To our interest, Dumézil gave a positive evaluation of this theoretical alteration, which is significantly different from the negative evaluation of this article: the *Setback in 1950*. In other words, Dumézil himself recognized his theoretical alteration as a highly valued development, or even as “decisive progress,” which is far from the *Setback in 1950*. Furthermore, some advocates of his doctrine highly appreciated it as a “revolution.”

1) Georges Dumézil used *idéologie tripartite* and *idéologie trifonctionnelle* in his voluminous works. Today, tripartite ideology is much more commonly used. Both are understood to have almost the same meaning in a large framework, and are treated interchangeably on Internet search sites and the like. However, from my perspective, tripartite ideology represents the three parts as divided horizontally, whereas trifunctional ideology represents these as divided by function. Since the functions of each of the three parts have different values, the trifunctional theory implicitly means the three parts positioned in a hierarchical order. This is an important assertion of this hypothesis.

However, when we try to put it in a wide-ranging theme such as “the origin and basis of the world dominance by the Europeans,” Dumézil’s revision that we term the *Setback in 1950* created negative effects in future academic research. When he presented trifunctionality as the common character of the Indo-Europeans’ myths, Dumézil arrived at the fundamental cause of human history. Nevertheless, with the *Setback in 1950* that he made, he has confined the scope of its research in the comparatively small area of comparative mythology. Consequently, by placing *trifunctionality* in a side that deviates from the main course of the history of European civilization leading to world conquest and domination, one of the ways to elucidate its essential character has been avoided.

So, when the *Setback in 1950* occurred, Dumézil was exposed to the basic criticism mentioned above (there was no social three-class structure in the organization of Proto-Indo-Europeans in the myths formation period); he and his advocates finally conceded to this reproach. We wonder if Dumézil could not overcome such criticisms. The three-tiered social organization did not exist in that period?

We want to note the human-animal organization which was created in the steppes when the Proto-Indo-Europeans began shepherding in the fourth millennium BC on a large scale. In this human-animal organization, a solid three-class structure consisting of “shepherd→dogs→sheep” was constructed and it served as a solid foundation of trifunctionality in the myths. If our hypothesis is acceptable, the trifunctional theory should be regarded as a theory of which area is largely extended beyond the framework of comparative mythology; it should also be regarded as the cause and base of European world conquests.

After all, an ideology is not just an imaginary concept but rather a view of the world applied to reality. Accordingly, trifunctionality must have been regarded as the core European conventional idea inherited to the present age beginning with the philosophy of Plato and the trinity theory of Christianity, for example. It has been also regarded as fundamental, social organization which is reflected in the three medieval occupations, and the organization of modern enterprises. Furthermore, as trifunctionality was the reflection of the human-animal relationship specific to the herding practice of the Proto-Indo-Europeans, which was also the origin of social classes, the *trifunctionality* should have been regarded as the basis of the *function-based principle*,²⁾ the origin and foundation of European domination. In this sense, the emergence of a function-based principle due to sheep herding by the Proto-Indo-Europeans must have been considered as the watershed of history.

2) In this paper, the author uses the function-based principle to qualify the modern principle of organizations in contrast with the kinship-based principle which is conventional and existed from the hunter-gathering age for the organizations.

I . Criticisms of the *trifunctional theory*

1 . Georges Dumézil's trifunctional theory

The *trifunctionality* is Georges Dumézil's hypothesis based on his comparative study of myths of the Indo-Europeans. Dumézil's theory can be summarized as follows from many related books.³⁾

In the myths of Indo-Europeans, (1) gods are to be classified into three categories of functions "sovereignty → battle → production"; (2) gods are ranked according to the functions "sovereignty → battle → production"; (3) the *trifunctionality* of such gods was seen in the myths of the common ancestor of Indo-Europeans; (4) in the myths of non-Indo-Europeans, there is no such trifunctionality (if trifunctionality exists, it was created under Indo-European influences); and (5) the common ancestors had some social three-class-structure, so it reflected in trifunctionality in mythology.⁴⁾

3) The outline of the trifunctionality of G. Dumézil described by C. Scott Littleton forty years ago remains effective today. "In its bare essentials, Dumézil's thesis can be summarized as follows: Most, if not all, of the early Indo-European speaking communities were characterized by a hierarchically ordered, tripartite set of ideological principles or "fonctions," as he terms them. The first of these (i.e., the "first function") concerned the maintenance of juridical and cosmic sovereignty and was typically represented respectively by a pair of gods, such as the Vedic figures Mitra and Varuna, the Norse gods, Týr and Odin, and the Roman divinities Dius, Fidius and Jupiter. The second principle (i.e., the "second function") concerned the exercise of physical prowess and was represented by such warlike figures as Indra, the Norse god Thor, and the Roman Mars. The third principle, that which governed fertility, physical well-being, wealth, and a host of associated phenomena, was typically represented by a pair of divinities (frequently defined as twins), such as the Vedic Aśvins, the Norse Vanir divinities Njorðr and Freyr, and the Greek *Dioscuri*; at Rome, which otherwise serves as an anchor point in Dumézil's comparative analysis; the "third function" was canonically represented by a single figure, the god Quirinus, although several other figures, among them Ops and Consus, lurk in the background, as it were. ...At the level of social organization, the three "fonctions" are best evidenced in the fundamental structure of the Aryan caste system, that is, in the distinctions among *Brāhmaṇ*, *Kṣatriya*, and *Vaiśya*, although bits and pieces of a tripartite social system can in fact be detected elsewhere among the ancient Indo-European communities, such as the persistence of a priest-class among the Celts (the Druids), the three founding tribes of Rome (the *Ramnes*, *Luceres*, and *Titienses*), and the traditional Ionian *bioi*. (It should be emphasized, however, that Dumézil does not at present consider the tripartite ideology to have been of much importance in the definition of social reality....)" (LITTLETON 1974: 152).

4) Among numerous remarks, we will quote the text of Bernard Sergent, a leading advocate of Dumézil's theory. "Les études comparatives sur la religion primitive des Indo-Européens, relancées dans les années 1930 par les travaux et les découvertes de Georges Dumézil, ont porté leurs premiers fruits importants - à savoir, ce que cet auteur a appelé la « trifonctionnalité », l'habitude qu'avaient

2. The ambiguity of the interpretations of myths

From Dumézil's publication of the hypothesis at the end of the 1930s, tenacious criticisms against his theory have continued to be persistently cast.⁵⁾

1) Ambiguity of the Proto-myth

According to the steppe hypothesis which is widely accepted, the Proto-Indo-Europeans were generated as early as in the fifth millennium BC in the Pontic-Caspian steppes; "The Indo-Europeans have been identified with several cultural complexes existing in that area between 4,500–3,500 BCE" (BOMHARD 2019: 1). The tribes of the Proto-Indo-Europeans left the steppe individually until c.2500 BC. Regarding languages, the progenitors speaking the Proto-Indo-European language might have emerged in around the middle of the fifth millennium BC, followed by Anatolian emigrants in approximately four thousand BC, Tocharian emigrants in approximately 3700–3300 BC, and Celtic-Italic branched emigrants in approximately 3000 BC. Later, Greek-Armenian, Germanic, Baltic-Slavic, and the Indian-Iranian separated (ANTHONY 2007: 57). Eventually, the Proto-Indo-European language disappeared around 2500 BC.

The myths of each ethnic group inherited in the oral tradition were transcribed in the historical era and passed down to the present day. The tradition that became the basis of these existing myths is defined as a proto-myth or archetype myth. Proto-myth no longer remains. A basic question remains as to whether we can assume this proto-myth as the source. First, it is not proved that the proto-myth existed. Based on the assumption that the formation of the proto-myth was in the same period with the formation of the Proto-Indo-Europeans, the proto-myth should be formed in the fifth and fourth millenniums BC. The myths which existed until now, like Greek myth, should be shaped in their present form gradually after the second millennium BC. Meanwhile, thousands of years have passed (2,000 at the shortest and 4,000 at the longest). The myths belonging to the Indo-European nations that we know were derived from the proto-myth (if any) and were formed approximately 2,000 years later. Meanwhile, Indo-European people expanded their living area and conquered others. The content of the myth may have

les Indo-Européens de classer les divers éléments du monde en trois aspects, en trois domaines hiérarchisés - grâce à un matériel indien et latin. Très vite, le pont ainsi lancé entre l'Inde et l'Italie a reçu le renfort des piliers iranien et scandinave, et, à un moindre degré, celtique. Ainsi, la plupart des peuples anciens de langue indo-européenne qui ont laissé quelque masse d'écrits fournissent des preuves que leurs ancêtres communs, quelque part en Russie méridionale, possédaient une idéologie commune, fortement structurée, et dont des « maîtres de la mémoire », d'abord parmi les spécialistes du sacré évidemment, ont su maintenir la tradition durant plusieurs millénaires" (SERGENT 1983: 131–132).

5) We can see the outline of this controversy in LITTELTON (1982: 240–262); MILLER (1999: 36).

changed due to the influence of other ethnic groups that they conquered.⁶⁾

First, the myths of the Indo-Europeans have changed significantly over such a long time. Second, in addition to this transformation, the influence of indigenous cultures was also significant when they intermingled with indigenous peoples in occupied regions. This occurred over at least 2,000 years. Furthermore, the influence of indigenous peoples conquered by Indo-Europeans cannot be denied. Dumézil extracted three kinds of gods from each ethnic myth and assumed the trifunctionality from them so that we may say that the method adopted by Dumézil was deductive. However, as a deductive method, the number of myths is too small to draw a convincing conclusion.

2) Uncertainty of the *trifunctional theory* in the Indo-European mythology

Dumézil advocated the trifunctional theory with conviction. Nevertheless, the gods were not necessarily classified by three functions in the myths of the Indo-Europeans. There are several cases that are not applied to the rules of the trifunctional theory about mythoi and religions. The most significant examples of this are probably Greece and Rome.

Ancient Greece had a wealth of materials concerning myths, rich in quantity and quality. It is quite difficult, however, to find clear traces of trifunctionality in ancient Greek myths and religions.⁷⁾ The origins of Greek mythological gods are not essentially anchored in the Indo-European tradition.⁸⁾ Neither the names of the gods nor their definition has much in common with other Indo-European nations. Therefore, it is difficult to indicate the presence of trifunctionality in Greek mythology explicitly.

Furthermore, a difficult problem called the “Roman impasse” had also arisen about ancient Romans. In his “*Jupiter, Mars, Quirinus*” (published in 1941), Dumézil claimed that the legendary three *tribus*, that is, Ramnes, Luqueres, and Titiès in the early days of Rome corresponded to the three functions in the trifunctional theory. *Tribus* originally meant a bloody tribe or district in ancient Rome. However, it was exposed to intense criticism because these three *tribus* did not correspond to the three functions claimed by Dumézil’s hypothesis. To deal with the challenge of this “Roman impasse,” Dumézil finally assigned only the nobles of each *tribus* to three functions, prescribing that the

6) “Ce système a ses origines dans un lointain passé, certainement préhistorique. Nous ne pouvons donc pas avoir accès à l’origine de l’idéologie trifonctionnelle, mais seulement à des expressions tardives de cette pensée, qui prennent l’allure d’un héritage intellectuel très varié” (PUTTER 2009: 7).

7) “C’est d’abord, sur les points essentiels, le cas de la Grèce: l’essentiel de la religion et de la mythologie grecques ne reposent assurément pas sur la trifonctionnalité indo-européenne” (SERGENT 1983: 132).

8) “C’est ainsi, corrélativement, que l’essentiel du panthéon grec n’est pas d’origine indo-européenne, aussi bien dans les noms des divinités que dans leurs définitions, qui ne se prêtent que très rarement à des comparaisons avec le reste du matériel indo-européen” (SERGENT 1983: 133).

remaining common people belonging to each tribus were irrelevant (MOMIGLIANO 1984: 316; DUBUISSON 1990: 272).

Conversely, among Indo-European religions, there are religions with a non-Indo-European character like Scythian shamanism and Germanic mythology, such as Odin's magical powers (DEMOULE 1991: 187).⁹⁾ Moreover, it was criticized that the functions should not be limited to three and that the fourth function also existed.¹⁰⁾ According to the classical view of the Durkheimian School, social facts produce supernatural facts. Accordingly, some three-class-structure in society would have preceded the formation of religion. In particular, the case of India was valued as an illustration. Certainly, there were signs of a three-tiered structure in the western Indo-Europeans. However, the signs were already beginning to disappear in historical times (LITTLETON 1974: 154).

3) The presence and absence of trifunctionality in the myths of non-Indo-European people

According to some critical views of trifunctionality, similar structures existed in non-Indo-European myths. The trifunctional system might not be unique to Indo-Europeans. Such a structure could be created naturally wherever there was a division of priests, warriors, and producers. Similar structures should be frequently found even in the regions where Indo-European influence was not attested by myth. We will examine two typical cases here: the Old Testament and Japanese myths.

A bitter criticism expressed by John Brough, a British Indology scholar, is well-known. In his paper, Brough raised the issue by using the Old Testament (BROUGH 1959).¹¹⁾ As Brough stated, the trifunctionality of gods was not necessarily attributed to the Proto-

9) "Symétriquement, certaines religions « indo-européennes » sont pour l'essentiel hors normes, la plus notable étant la grecque – malgré des démonstrations sur les marges (DUMÉZIL 1982, 1985; SERGENT, 1979; BRIQUEL, 1982). D'autres comportent de larges aspects non « indo-européens », tel le chamanisme, souligné par Dumézil lui-même, des Scythes et des Germains, par exemple dans les pouvoirs magiques d'Odin" (DEMOULE 1991: 186).

10) "There are many reasons why Dumézil's work is controversial. Some of them are good, or at least reasonable, and relate to real issues on which he may have been wrong. For instance, I have argued elsewhere that his notion of a 'trifunctional' Indo-European ideology was incomplete: in addition to his three main categories or clusters of ideas (pertaining respectively to the sacred, to force and to abundance), we need to recognize a fourth, pertaining to 'otherness' and covering both transcendence/totality (which is valued) and exclusion/nothingness (which is devalued). Such an addition opens the way to certain other revisions (ALLEN 1991, forthcoming a). But the present discussion concentrates on the 'bad' reasons why Dumézil is too little appreciated" (ALLEN 1993: 2). MILLER (1999: 39) also refers the fourth function prescribed by Allen.

11) We can understand the outline of the polemique by the observations of LITTLETON (1982: 257-260) and Eric de PUTTER (2009: 23), among others.

Indo-European myths only. For example, God was depicted in various ways in the Old Testament. It should be possible to classify these depictions of God into three categories according to the three functions in the Dumézilian style.¹²⁾

Dumézil retorted Brough's argument without delay, and their exchange aroused further discussion. However, both arguments followed parallel lines. The first issue of the polemic between these scholars was the presence or absence of trifunctionality in the Semitic bibles. Brough argued that he found three kinds of functions in the Bible and Dumézil replied that this was not true. The way that Dumézil reposted is quite interesting. The reasoning given by Dumézil was that Brough did not understand the particular character of trifunctionality; three functions were not merely existing, but they were integrated as a homogeneous entity to be dependent on each other.¹³⁾

Indeed, Brough's above-mentioned interpretation would be misleading. The reason for

12) "It would seem that if any worker in this field still wishes to maintain that the three 'fonctions' are significantly Indo-European, he should first show that, in terms of the procedure, my analysis of the Old Testament material is incompetent and radically wrong; or, accepting my results in principle, show that they are due to direct Indo-European influence upon the Hebrews. The latter alternative should then be followed by further control experiments upon other literatures of non-Indo-European peoples. The present experiment suggests that any sufficiently extensive and diversified body of literature might be expected to produce significantly comparable results. The indications are at least sufficiently strong to make it senseless to proceed further without extensive and thorough testing. The experiment also suggests that the Indo-European 'tripartite ideology' could be due very largely to bias in the selection of data combined with 'la nature des choses'. If it does not prove this with the certainty of a mathematical demonstration, it does at least prove that, up to the present, no very strong reason has been given for thinking otherwise" (BROUGH 1959: 84-85).

13) Putter emphasized the coherent system of trifunctionality: "J. Brough, dans un article offensif et sarcastique, s'attacha à retrouver toutes les utilisations possibles de répartitions trifonctionnelles dans la Bible, surtout pour critiquer la méthode dumézilienne en voulant démontrer qu'elle ne pourrait donner que des résultats aussi faciles qu'extravagants; G. Dumézil réagit à cet article, de façon tout à fait justifiée et sérieuse, puisque J. Brough fit mention de faits qu'il manipula à son avantage (tripartition appliquée indifféremment à Dieu, aux douze tribus, aux Juges, à Jacob, à David, à Job, au roi dans les Psaumes de bénédiction, à Sédécias, à Israël, aux nations voisines d'Israël par malédiction prophétique) et en oublia d'autres, qui sont pour nous les plus flagrants. Cette polémique entre J. Brough et G. Dumézil a donné lieu à beaucoup de commentaires, mais le plus important dans cette bataille reste la différence méthodologique plutôt que les résultats obtenus. Cette polémique montra combien il est périlleux de supposer que la répartition trifonctionnelle peut se trouver partout et surtout dans la Bible, les spécialistes restant campés sur leurs positions, leurs corpus et leurs méthodes respectifs. G. Dumézil tenait des positions fluctuantes à ce sujet, tantôt un refus radical, tantôt une acceptation laconique. [...] J. Brough a en effet formé des triades sans leur donner de raison d'être: par exemple, elles ne se justifient pas par la complémentarité interne des trois termes en vue de former un système cohérent et fonctionnel" (PUTTER 2009: 23).

this was that it was impossible to find traces of trifunctional ideology in the Old Testament, which was a product of the Semitic world.¹⁴⁾ It was quite unreasonable to find evidence of trifunctionality in the Bible (both new and old), which was mainly arranged by Semitic people. Until recently, the idea that trifunctionality did not exist was supported. Dumézil was also negative on the trifunctionality of the Semitic religion.¹⁵⁾

The second issue of the Brough-Dumézil polemic was the implications of three functions in polytheistic religions. Colin Renfrew (1937–), a heavyweight in British archeology, also developed a criticism of *trifunctional ideology*. According to Renfrew, the trifunctional structure discovered by Dumézil does not come from a common origin. Similar things are to be found everywhere. He showed that *trifunctionality* can be seen in parallel ways in the course of social development: “The time has come to ask whether some of these institutional similarities may not be due to coincidences of various kinds, or to similarities in development rather than to a common origin in some supposedly proto-Indo-European social structure” (RENFREW 1990a: 251).¹⁶⁾

Curiously enough, the Japanese myths were often cited as one of the major examples of

14) “Puis en 1984, lors d’un entretien audiovisuel, G. Dumézil insiste sur ce fait: les Sémites, conditionnés par leur histoire et leur environnement géographique désertique, n’ont pas eu à développer un système général du monde, mais plutôt la conception d’un dieu unique. Voilà qui explique en partie l’émergence d’une pensée monothéiste chez les Sémites, sans toutefois conditionner intégralement leur mythologie. L’exemple du zoroastrisme nous prouve que le monothéisme n’empêche pas l’inclusion ou même la préservation de structures trifonctionnelles. Nous verrons plus loin que c’est bien l’histoire (par l’exil à Babylone par exemple) et la géographie (leur position sur le Croissant Fertile et donc sur un espace d’échanges commerciaux et culturels) qui permettent à ces mêmes Sémites de développer ou d’intégrer des faits trifonctionnels” (PUTTER 2009: 22).

15) “Le récit biblique ne suggère pas que la promotion de David soit sentie comme une montée à travers les trois niveaux fonctionnels” (DUMÉZIL 1985a: 322).

16) “Renfrew has other objections. Appreciating that the essence of the approach lies in seeing that A-B-C in one context resembles a-b-c in another, he doubts whether the similarities proposed are always persuasive, and cites similar doubts expressed by Ernest Gellner in 1962 concerning Lévi-Straussian binary analyses (where the similarities would have the form: A-B resembles a-b).[...] Renfrew concludes that in so far as they are real, the similarities Dumézil finds are to be explained not by common origins but by a combination of coincidence, parallel development or global human proclivities (of a Lévi-Straussian nature), and that however rich they were linguistically, the proto-Indo-Europeans were probably ‘culturally rather simple’ (p. 273). Anyone who can think this simply has not come to grips with the volume and, above all, the interconnectedness of the evidence. It is understandable that an archaeologist should be tempted to exaggerate the possibilities of his own discipline, but as regards ‘cultural simplicity’, it is, I think, for archaeology to accommodate its interpretations to the facts established by comparativism, more than vice versa” (ALLEN 1993: 10–11).

the presence of trifunctionality in non-Indo-European myths.¹⁷⁾ However, the essential feature of trifunctionality is the complete disjunction between gods by functions; for instance, the function of decision making belongs to one god which is sovereign. Conversely, in polytheist Japan, where we count innumerable gods (say eight million), many gods come together and discuss to make a decision; no sovereign is attributed individually to a single god. Multiple gods effectively share even sovereignty in Japanese myths. From the perspective of the function, Japanese myths are located in the definitely opposite position from the Indo-European ones. Therefore Renfrew's evaluation cited below on the Japanese myths looks appropriate.

He [A. Yoshida] has suggested that the historical explanation for these supposed Indo-European elements in early Japanese mythology is contact between (Indo-European) Scythian nomads and the (non-Indo-European) inhabitants of Korea, whence they would have been transmitted to Japan at the time of early state formation in the sixth century AD. This is, as so often, a matter where a non-specialist is not in a position to assess the evidence properly, but the story seems inherently implausible. It is pertinent to note that the notion of Korean immigrants playing a decisive role in the formation of the early Japanese state has recently been questioned by qualified experts. One is therefore left with the uneasy suspicion that the tripartite aspect of Japanese mythology is as fortuitous as that deliberately and frivolously conjured up for the Semitic by Brough, and totally unconnected with Indo-European systems. However this time the claim has come from an authorized analyst, working within the Dumézilien canon, and cannot be rejected as a frivolous exercise, as was Brough's example. It is difficult here to escape the view that some of the claims of the Dumézil school have been overstated. In these circumstances we are not obliged to consider incompatibilities between it and the view of Indo-European origins advanced here as a decisive refutation of the latter (RENFREW 1990a: 257–258).¹⁸⁾

17) “En effet, la structure trifonctionnelle se retrouve, comme l’admet Dumézil lui-même, dans plusieurs mythologies « non indo-européennes ». Le cas des mythologies japonaise et coréenne, analysées trifonctionnellement au sein même de l’école dumézilienne (OBAYASHI, 1977; YOSHIDA, 1977), est régulièrement cité comme un contre-exemple de taille (DEMOULE, 1980; RENFREW, 1987). On rappellera de même la tripartition du panthéon mésopotamien en dieux souverains, sauveurs et terrestres, ou les castes de l’Égypte du IIe millénaire. Dans tous ces cas, Dumézil fit l’hypothèse d’emprunts” (DEMOULE 1991: 186).

18) Renfrew formulated the Anatolian hypothesis regarding the homeland of Proto-Indo-Europeans, but his theory is currently quite inferior to the Kurgan hypothesis. His unfavorable treatment toward Maria Gimbutas, the champion of the Kurgan hypothesis, created a somewhat distasteful impression. He might have abused his status as a leader of the British archaeology community (SPRETNAK 2011). However, as far as his criticism toward “trifunctionality in the Japanese

In polytheism, there are numerous gods with a multitude of functions. Decisively, it will not be so difficult to suitably select, among them, the gods who bear the function of sovereignty, of battle, and of production. As the number of gods is exhaustive in polytheistic religions, it is possible to extract such a god according to its function, role, and behavior and to make it correspond to one of the three functions. Dumézil attributed the trifunctional character of the Japanese myths to the influence of Indo-Europeans like Scythians. This assessment should be qualified as misleading. Naturally, in addition to the gods that have achieved these three functions, many others do not belong to these categories. Those residual gods can also bear and share some of the three functions. The dispute concerning the Japanese myths provoked confusion in the trifunctionality arguments.

3. The serious challenge: Absence of “social classes” at the time of trifunctionality formation

1) The three social classes as the premise of the Dumézil's theory

There were many criticisms against the trifunctional theory. The first reproach was, as mentioned, that the trifunctionality that Dumézil advocated was insufficient in proving in the mythology itself. The second reproach was the absence of social segmentation into three classes at the time of trifunctionality generation (the fourth millennium BC). As seen, Dumézil first proposed the theory of trifunctionality in about 1938 around at age 40. At that time, he presumed the existence of a social three-level structure as the background of the trifunctionality. Even in 1949, Dumézil himself thought that “roughly, one (human organization) and the other (god's organization) respond to each other” (DUBUISSON 1990: 270).

For Dumézil's theory, this second reproach was more serious and critical than the first. Dumézil himself thought that trifunctionality was premised on a social context. However, there was no social structure corresponding to it.

2) Archaeological criticism by C. Renfrew

In terms of an archaeologist, Colin Renfrew showed the major difficulties of the trifunctional theory. He argued that, when the Proto-Indo-Europeans began to emigrate as late as in the third millennium BC, “these were certainly not state societies, and there is very little evidence in their material culture for the prominent ranking of individuals which is characteristic of chiefdoms” (RENFREW 1990a: 253).¹⁹⁾ According to Renfrew, the

mythology,” suggested by the Dumézilian School, Renfrew seemed to be very reasonable and fair.

19) “The real difficulty lies in the previous stages of this social development. For even if the distribution of the Indo-European languages were due to a dispersal of peoples as late as the third millennium BC, there seems no way in the light of what we know of their archaeology, that these

Proto-Indo-Europeans had no social stratification; it was proved due to the lack of archaeological evidence. However, Nick Allen criticized Renfrew, writing that, when Dumézil invented trifunctionality, he remained silent about the concrete social form. Although society as a whole had not been specialized, the trifunctionality principle was applied to some clans or families.²⁰⁾

3) The Proto-Indo-Europeans as tribes

Proto-Indo-Europeans were generated as early as at the end of the fifth millennium BC with the emergence of the Sredny Stog culture, or as late as around 3200 BC, when they began to breed a large number of sheep in the steppe. When the Proto-Indo-Europeans emerged, they were still in extended families or kinship-based groups. So they were still in a tribal stage at best. Where Proto-Indo-Europeans lived at the time of the trifunctionality generation, there was a patriarch in each household, and there was a chief in the whole residence. It was a patrilineal organization and the chief integrated daily life and belief. It was a kinship organization and was not divided into classes. In other words, there were no explicit three classes in the Proto-Indo-Europeans at that

peoples could already have possessed such complex institutions. Even if we follow this relatively low chronology, and think in terms of the Kurgan cultures as the point of origin, as has been widely suggested, these were certainly not state societies, and there is very little evidence in their material culture for the prominent ranking of individuals which is characteristic of chiefdoms. This difficulty is of course much compounded if one follows the earlier chronology proposed here. If we are thinking in terms of the first farmers as the earliest Indo-European speakers of Europe, in the sixth and fifth millennia BC, we are speaking of what are generally regarded as egalitarian peasants. Their societies, as noted above, probably embodied no hierarchical ordering whatever: certainly their material culture does not reflect it. This does not mean that they were without some social organization, and no doubt individual communities often did have effective leaders, but there is no reason to suggest the existence in them of hereditary chieftains, and certainly none to warrant a specialized functional division of the population into warriors, priests and common people. These terms seem a complete anachronism" (RENFREW 1990a: 253).

- 20) "The main argument [of Renfrew] is that, in construing Indian and Celtic social stratification as descending from a common origin, Dumézil attributes to proto Indo-European society a degree of stratification that, even at the later date, and a fortiori earlier, is archaeologically impossible. But Renfrew misreads the victim of his attack. Certainly, for Dumézil, the proto-Indo-European speakers had a conception of their social structure as founded on the distinctness and ranking of the three functions, but he was carefully and explicitly agnostic as to the concrete form or forms in which the conception was realised. One possibility among others was that the trifunctional pattern applied only to certain clans or families that specialized respectively in one of the three functions, while the mass of society was unspecialized (1958: 18). Renfrew cites the page but apparently stopped reading at line 4. He also thinks that Dumézil needed to offer a concrete picture of the proto-society (p. 245). But he was under no such compulsion" (ALLEN 1993: 10-11).

time (mid-fourth millennium BC). They were not yet divided into classes.²¹⁾

Therefore, their society did not have a three-level structure. Around 4000 BC, a three-level structure was not formed in human organizations. When Dumézil began to advocate the trifunctional theory in 1938, he thought that the pantheon of the gods had some social background (DUBUISSON 1991: 126). However, when we examine this theory in the realistic socio-economic context at that time, there was no division into three classes as a human organization; this had become a serious weakness for the theory.

Mary Boyce (1920–2006), an authority on the study of Zoroaster, described the case of ancient Iran (Sintasta cultural period) as an example of a no-class society. Based on Wilhelm Geiger's study (GEIGER 1885: 64), she wrote that “another notable aspect of the Sintashta community is the absence of any sign of class-divisions ... This pattern of an apparently classless society is one which, E. C. Polome has argued, would have been generally characteristic of Indo-European peoples in their pastoral period” (BOYCE 1987: 511).

In organizations where the kinship-based principle dominated, the members were *grosso modo* in an equivalent position. In other words, they were flat nomads or flat peasant farmers in peacetime, because they were not divided into classes. In peacetime, they were treated equally as peasants or nomads. Based on that normal situation, they used their specific skills to perform their part-time professional duties. Once in wartime, they turned into combatants. In the equal treatment of the members of the ancient Iranian society illustrated above, the organizational governance based on the kinship-based principle is clearly spoken.²²⁾

21) “What was social life like? The speakers of Proto-Indo-European lived in a world of tribal politics and social groups united through kinship and marriage. They lived in households (*domh), containing one or more families (ge'nh^s-) organized into clans (*weik-), which were led by clan leaders, or chiefs (*weik-potis). They had no word for city. Households appear to have been male-centered. Judging from the reconstructed kin terms, the important named kin were predominantly on the father's side, which suggests patrilocal marriages (brides moved into the husband's household). A group identity above the level of the clan was probably tribe (*h/ros), a root that developed into Aryan in the Indo-Iranian branch” (ANTHONY 2007: 92).

22) “A society with ‘unranked descent groups’ is in fact reflected in Zoroaster's Gathas, in which the only terms which the prophet uses for a male lay member of the tribe are nar ‘man’ and vdstrya (and its synonyms) specifically for ‘herdsman’; and W. Geiger, who long ago studied these ancient texts with a fresh and penetrating eye, unclouded by academic theory, duly interpreted Gathic society as a simple one, in which every pastoralist was ‘at the same time a fighting man, who was ready to defend his property against enemies in time of danger’” (BOYCE 1987: 511).

II. The *Setback in 1950* of Trifunctional theory

1. Growing criticism: trifunctional theory has “*aucune valeur empirique*”

When Dumézil advocated the trifunctional theory, he presumed that there was some social background of a three-level structure.²³⁾ “Social” in this case, means “concerning organizations consisting of humans.” It was assumed that the social reality (having a three-class structure) gave birth to trifunctionality. However, the organizations of the Proto-Indo-Europeans were structured by the kinship-based principle. When such communities emerged and made up trifunctionality, the Proto-Indo-Europeans were still organized on a kinship-based principle. Trifunctionality was premised that some social background supported it; this premise collapsed. It became clear that it was almost impossible to depend on the real organizations that existed historically as the proof of the trifunctional theory.

No matter how much Dumézil and his proponents insisted on the trifunctional theory, it became so irrelevant as to be evaluated that this theory had no empirical value (“*aucune valeur empirique*”) (COTTRET 1986:147).²⁴⁾ This theory looks good on paper, but it is an ideological type that cannot be proved. So, to continue that claim, only a “leap of faith” remained.²⁵⁾

2. The revision of trifunctional theory in around 1950

Roughly in 1950, when about twelve years had passed from the first publication of trifunctional theory in 1938, Dumézil finally recognized the legitimacy of the above-mentioned criticisms and revised his theory. Before 1950, Dumézil recognized that “it is probable, a priori, that the one (the organization of men) and the other (that of the gods)

23) “The Germanic example provided confirmation of this point of view, since the same distortion, or the same deficiency, can be observed here in both social theory and pantheon: ‘the pantheon is less hierarchical because the society is itself less hierarchical’[...]” (DUBUISSON 1990: 270).

24) “Pourtant un problème demeure, à la limite de l’obsession : pourquoi maintenir, contre vents et marées, trois états? Qu’est-ce qui justifie la rémanence de cette tripartition, alors même qu’on ne lui accorde plus aucune valeur empirique, que le clergé a cessé d’être un ordre, et que la noblesse est surtout affaire de distinction? Pourquoi se rattacher confusément à ce modèle ternaire, quitte à le remodeler, à le subvertir? J’ai longtemps hésité, tant ce divorce entre une réalité sociologique mouvante et la permanence du modèle me paraissait énigmatique” (COTTRET 1986: 147).

25) “Unfortunately, no matter how carefully and accurately he or his fellow comparativists trace the history of a tradition back toward the generative structure, there will always come a time when a “leap of faith” must be made from the concrete to the abstract; and that leap is no less arbitrary and analytical than that of Propp, Bremond, Levi-Strauss, or any other of the structuralists who renounce any claim to a diachronic methodology” (STAHL 1978: 712).

roughly corresponded to each other, the divine peoples roughly reproducing the structure of the peoples that invoked them" (DUBUISSON 1990: 270).

At that time, the Proto-Indo-Europeans formed some social three-level structure, and based on that reality, and they clarified trifunctionality. He partially abandoned this explanation. The background of the generation of the trifunctional theory was the premise of the argument that there was some sort of social structure of three-level classes. However, when this premise collapsed, Dumézil pivoted to raise the theory to move toward the purification of ideology. He finally admitted that trifunctionality was a theory discussed uniquely in mythology, and was not necessarily socially supported.²⁶⁾

Dumézil himself spoke of this trajectory correction with some emotion: "Around 1950, on the contrary, it has become obvious to me that correspondence is not automatic and that it is not legitimate to conclude from ideology to practice, from a philosophy to a social organization".²⁷⁾ Since he has revised his theory, we term it the *Setback in 1950* of the

26) Dubuisson explained this theoretical conversion of Dumézil: "...he [Dumézil] was a prisoner of his own mirror-image conception at that time. The mention of the division of a human group into functional classes, tribes, clans or races had of necessity to reflect a real social stratification, since the latter is in any case the reference, the model, by which the most diverse objects and notions may be classified. Later, however, on discovering that he had blocked himself into this Roman 'impasse' by mechanically and radically applying his initial postulates, Dumézil came to understand that the objective of his analysis was, and should remain, the study of a dominant scheme of thought. He was obliged to give up trying to describe and situate the process of formation of this scheme, concentrating instead on studying its expression and 'harmonics'. This second and last point of view might be termed the autonomy of ideology" (DUBUISSON 1990: 272).

27) "La reconnaissance et l'exploration de la place centrale qu'a occupée, dans l'idéologie des Indo-Européens et des peuples qui sont issus d'eux, la conception des trois « fonctions » hiérarchisées, – le sacré (puissance magico – et juridico-religieuse; sagesse), la force (principalement guerrière), la fécondité (abondance, richesse, alimentation, paix, volupté, etc.) – m'a valu, depuis 1938, beaucoup de satisfactions, de nombreux repentirs et une infinité de débats. Les satisfactions n'ont pas à être détaillées : ce sont celles qui, par nature, accompagnent le développement de la recherche. Les repentirs, qui ont toujours contenu leur part de joie puisque chacun permettait un progrès, ont principalement porté sur deux ordres de faits. D'une part, dans la hâte et l'enthousiasme des premières années, il m'est arrivé de manquer d'exigence dans l'identification des cadres trifonctionnels : j'ai dû, je dois donc nettoyer le bilan et passer au crible les glanures qui se rencontrent encore après la moisson. D'autre part, le rôle important que le système indien des varna arya – prêtres; guerriers ; éleveurs-agriculteurs – avait joué en 1938 dans la découverte m'avait fait admettre au départ, comme allant de soi, le postulat que l'idéologie trifonctionnelle supposait, ou avait supposé dans un état antérieur, partout où on l'observait, une division réelle de la société en classes fonctionnelles bien distinctes, sinon en castes; vers 1950, et je ne puis que m'excuser de cette lenteur, il m'est devenu évident au contraire que la correspondance n'est pas automatique et qu'il n'est pas légitime de conclure de l'idéologie à la pratique, d'une philosophie à une organisation sociale" (DUMÉZIL 1981: 338).

trifunctional theory.²⁸⁾ In any case, because the theory had lost “pertinence empirique,” Dumézil decided to change his argument fundamentally and to reconstruct his trifunctional theory.²⁹⁾

At this stage, Dumézil was forced to choose whether to abandon or continue the theory. However, Dumézil had no option to give it up. As Dubuisson wrote, the reason why Dumézil modified his theory at this point was that he believed that the trifunctional theory itself had already been proved in mythology: “The autonomy and the omnipresence of the trifunctional scheme have been abundantly demonstrated, and it is now possible for him to abandon his initial hypothesis. The ideology of the three functions possesses its own evidence” (DUBUISSON 1990: 275). Dumézil was confident from his mythological and cultural studies of the Proto-Indo-Europeans that the theory was correct, even though there was no realistic background to it.³⁰⁾ The trifunctional theory was solid and decisive for him.³¹⁾

3. The development from trifunctional theory to trifunctional ideology—The purification of ideology

- 1) Trifunctionality sublimated as ideology, that is, the birth of trifunctional ideology
Before the *Setback in 1950*, Dumézil primarily assumed that reality would be

28) “Setback in 1950”, which is the theoretical modification taken place in 1950 by Dumézil, was described by Littleton as follows; “But the classical Durkheimian proposition that social facts yield supernatural facts, that society is necessarily anterior to religion, posed some important problems. For one thing, although social tripartition (or bits and pieces thereof) was detectable among the Western Indo-Europeans — e.g., the tripartite hierarchy of the *flamines maiores* at Rome (DUMÉZIL 1966, pp. 147–157), the clear distinction between *carl* and *jarl* in Scandinavia (DUMÉZIL 1958b), the Celtic Druids (LE ROUX 1961a, de VRIES 1961) —it had already begun to dissipate by the time the several communities emerged into the light of history. Therefore, the one-way causal nexus postulated by Durkheim could not be supported by the whole range of Indo-European evidence, and Dumézil was constrained in 1950 to restate the relationship between social and supernatural phenomena” (LITTLETON 1982: 269–270).

29) Dumézil abandoned “empirical pertinence” at this moment: “La trifonctionnalité totalement remodelée et mise au goût du jour continue son cheminement dans les consciences alors même elle a perdu sa pertinence empirique” (COTTRET 1986: 148).

30) “[...] dans aucun autre cas, on n’a l’occasion de [suivre, parfois pendant des millénaires, les aventures d’une même idéologie dans huit ou dix ensembles humains qui l’ont conservée après leur complète séparation]” (DUMÉZIL 1986a: 630).

31) We suppose however that Dumézil was sure, as an outcome of his over fifty years of life, about the French real society at that time that trifunctionality existed in the real world. In the conversation that Dumézil had with the president of the French Republic in office at that time, the president referred to the trifunctional system in French society. Dumézil didn’t deny president’s suggestion entirely (DUMÉZIL 1987: 188–189).

sublimated into ideology and that ideology would be applied to reality. However, proof of the historical reality has been lost. Therefore, Dumézil increasingly shifted from an inquiry of the historical existence of three classes of social structure. He changed the line of argument and planned to prove the existence of ideology by its inner logic, such as its reasonableness, completeness, and integrity. To prove its functionality, Dumézil switched to the purification of ideology. After the revision of his theory, Dumézil began to extensively use the word “structure,” beginning with the introduction of *Les dieux des Indo-Européens*, published in 1952. How should we discuss the existence of “structure” as conceived separately from reality and its influence on reality? What is the basis for this? The “structure” conceived separately from reality was exactly the trifunctional ideology, and he had to prove its rationality with logical consistency. When Dumézil used “structure,” he meant an independent and ideological reality.³²⁾

But all these elements (that is to say mythology, theology, sacred literature, sacerdotal organization) are themselves subordinated to something deeper, which directs them, groups them and makes them one, and which I propose to call, in spite of all the other uses of the word, ideology, meaning a conception and appreciation of the great forces that drive the world and society, and an understanding of the relations between them (DUMÉZIL 1954: 7) (Translated by DUBUISSON 1980: 276–277).

As Dumézil stated, ideology is an idea that exists. He believed that ideology controlled the various elements in the real world. According to Julien Ries, “what he calls structure is the coherent and logical representation that Indo-Europeans make of realities” (RIES 1989: 457).³³⁾ Eric de Putter explained trifunctionality as a homogeneous system where

32) “Ce changement lexical traduit l’émancipation du fait idéologique. Désormais, ce sont des structures que Dumézil va comparer, des transpositions de structures qu’il va analyser. L’autonomie et l’omniprésence (la transgénéricité) du schème trifonctionnel ayant été largement démontrées, il lui est possible d’abandonner l’hypothèse initiale; l’idéologie des trois fonctions possède sa propre évidence et n’a plus besoin d’une caution sociale, telle en tout cas qu’il pouvait la concevoir au départ, car, bien sûr, renoncer à une conception spéculaire de l’idéologie n’implique pas que l’on renonce pour autant aux fonctions sociales et politiques de l’idéologie. Ces deux questions doivent être soigneusement distinguées” (DUBUISSON 1991: 136).

33) “G. Dumézil a souvent parlé de structure, mais il a clairement dit qu’il prenait ses distances à l’égard de tout structuralisme érigé en théorie et en méthode. Ce qu’il appelle structure, c’est la représentation cohérente et logique que les Indo-Européens se font des réalités. La structure fondamentale est la tripartition qui est l’élément déterminant d’un ensemble. Cette structure trifonctionnelle n’est pas une idéologie mais une méthode de relation, un système à variations multiples qui met une cohérence interne aux représentations, une cohésion dans la société et dans la pensée” (RIES 1989: 457).

“social, political, religious, mythological or institutional order develops”.³⁴⁾ These remarks should be regarded as an appropriate expression to clarify the essential character of the trifunctional system: an entity constituted of functions which are integrated and homogeneous.

From the standpoint of trifunctional ideology, Dubuisson affirmed: “By titling his main discovery trifunctional ideology, Georges Dumézil perhaps did not foresee how well he had done to prefer this term to any other (system, conception, theory ...). It is clear today that the three functions were not only a dominant mode of thought, both at the time of Indo-European unity and in several historical societies stemming from it, but also an omnipresent mode of thought” (DUBUISSON 1980: 281).³⁵⁾ This is a critical text because it praised the hypothesis by describing the systematicity of trifunctional theory. The reality was no longer well connected to the idea. Dumézil focused on ideology and pursued its ideal autonomy. Ideology means an idea that is abstracted and generated from reality and applied conversely to reality; reality is also defined by ideology.

Dumézil always remained on its “innocent slopes” (AUGE 1979: 17) where its function is conceived as a general and dominant *Weltanschauung*, equitably shared by all members of a community: “I call ‘ideology’ the inventory of guiding ideas that govern the thought and conduct of a society, and which, of course, do not imply any particular organization of the mind, whatever that may be” ([DUMÉZIL] 1985: 312) (DUBUISSON 1990: 277).

Dumézil himself qualified this revision as the “*progrès décisif*” (decisive progress).

34) “Le système trifonctionnel, ou structure tripartite, est une aide, une armature didactique, un alibi sur lequel des symboles sont placés afin de développer une idée centrale, d’ordre social, politique, religieux, mythologique ou institutionnel. Les trois fonctions, « comme des instruments conceptuels », formant un système, doivent répondre à l’impératif d’homogénéité : trois objets, trois personnages, trois idées, trois lieux, trois actions[...] se concentrant autour de la même problématique. Cet impératif respecté, nous pouvons considérer qu’un système fonctionne” (PUTTER 2009: 7).

35) “En intitulant sa principale découverte *idéologie* des trois fonctions, Georges Dumézil ne prévoyait peut-être pas à quel point il avait bien fait de préférer ce substantif à tout autre (système, conception, théorie...). Il est clair aujourd’hui que les trois fonctions ont été non seulement un mode de pensée dominant, tant à l’époque de l’unité indo-européenne que dans plusieurs sociétés historiques issues de cette dernière, mais aussi un mode de pensée omniprésent. Si l’on dresse par curiosité la liste de ses domaines d’application, on constate qu’ils coïncident exactement avec l’ensemble des fondements culturels sur lesquels s’appuie toute société (théologie, mythes, thèmes épiques, rituels, institutions, schémas sociaux) et qu’elle les modèle tous avec la même rigueur” (DUBUISSON 1980: 281).

Je dirai seulement qu'un progrès décisif fut accompli le jour où je reconnus vers 1950 que « idéologie tripartite » ne accompagnait pas forcément dans la vie d'une société, de la division tripartite *réelle* de cette société, selon le modèle indien; qu'elle peut au contraire, là où on la constate, n'être (ne plus être, peut-être n'avoir jamais été) qu'un idéal et, en même temps, un moyen d'analyser, d'interpréter les forces qui assurent le cours du monde et la vie des hommes. [...] Ainsi s'est dessinée une conception plus saine dans laquelle la division sociale proprement dite n'est qu'une application entre bien d'autres, et souvent absente quand d'autres sont présentes, de ce que j'ai proposé d'appeler, d'un terme peut-être mal choisi mais qui est entré dans l'usage, la structure des trois « fonctions »: par-delà les prêtres, les guerriers et les producteurs, et plus essentielles qu'eux, s'articulent les « fonctions » hiérarchisées de souveraineté magique et juridique, de force physique et principalement guerrière, d'abondance tranquille et féconde (DUMÉZIL 1986a:15-16).

In this stage, the trifunctional ideology was no longer sustained by the outer elements like a three-tiered structure but was now essentially supported by inner reasoning and its consistency.³⁶⁾

2) Secession from the Durkheimian School?

The theory of trifunctionality claimed by Dumézil was out of touch from the reality as the ties were being cut off. However, even if the ties with reality were cut, Dumézil did not abandon the trifunctional theory. As an alternative, it became necessary for him to prove the existence of trifunctionality by itself since its ties with reality were cut. However, what does it mean that trifunctional theory holds even if there are no empirical supports for it? According to the Durkheimian School, it was envisaged that, in the relationship between social phenomena and supernatural phenomena, social phenomena existed and supernatural phenomena occurred as a reflection. According to Littleton, the above-mentioned revision of trifunctional theory meant that the “net effect of this recognition was major modification of Durkheim” (LITTLETON 1982: 270).

Emile Durkheim regarded collective life as the origin and purpose of religion. Durkheim regarded the religion as “sacred things, that is, an integrated system of beliefs and events about things that are separated and forbidden”. “Beliefs and

36) “This change in perspective represents a profound and new epistemological reorientation, since a reductionist approach to theological and mythological systems (the mirror-image representation) will be replaced by an attempt to understand the immanent structural character of these systems. Henceforth, ideology, as a system of thought, will exist in itself and through itself, emancipated from any social or sociologizing ancestry” (DUBUISSON 1990: 272-273).

events are integrated into an ideal community called the church". For Durkheim, sacred things such as gods, totems, myths and rituals reflect social and cultural reality. Individuals are part of and product of such social and cultural complexes, and thus experience and interpret the world around them through these sacred representations (HEBBAR 2012: 143).

According to Littleton, Dumézil "had come to the conclusion that the only viable theoretical basis upon which to rebuild comparative mythology was 'la méthode sociologique,' that is, an adaptation of the idea that fundamental social and cultural facts are 'collectively represented' in the structure of supernatural belief systems" (LITTLETON 1974: 154). However, since Dumézil was set apart from the reality when the *Setback in 1950* of Dumézil occurred, would it be a departure from the Durkheimian School? Balaya Narayana Hebbar believes that "it has rather developed." The sociological interpretation of the religion by Durkheim is reflected in Dumézil's thought. His entire three-section scheme is an affirmation of Durkheim's view of religion. However, Dumézil added his ideas by his large-scale studies in anthropological areas of Indo-Europeans. Dumézil elaborated on Durkheim in religious sociology (HEBBAR 2012: 143-144).

3) The positioning of each function in the entire society

Nick Allen indicates the instability of the term "function" (*fonction*). According to Allen, Woulter Bellier states that function is synonymous with activity, but it is entirely wrong. It contains more than that. He wrote that "Dumézil goes on to emphasize that there is more to it. To paraphrase, the functions supplied the proto Indo-European speakers with a heuristic and/or with classificatory principles that applied well beyond the realm of social structure. [...] function and ideology in Dumézil's writing are much like class and form of primitive classification in Durkheim and Mauss" (ALLEN 1993: 121).

However, arguments that there must be a social background to make function an academic issue continued. For example, according to Lincoln, "three-function ideology means that the assumption of function is impossible outside society," so that Lincoln did not agree with applying "function" to events outside society (ALLEN 1993: 124).

Therefore, the meaning of "function" is decisive. First, it is important to know whether each function itself is rational or not. Each function makes sense for the first time only when it is positioned in the whole society. Conversely, whole society continues to exist only after each function works appropriately. Regarding the functional consistency of the social system, Radcliffe-Brown states that each function is an essential element for the maintenance of the whole if the society is in a healthy state and that each function is indispensable for the maintenance of the whole. "Durkheim's definition is that the 'function' of a social institution is the correspondence between it and the needs (*besoin* in French) of the social organism".³⁷⁾ Thus, Durkheim considered society as an organism,

and he thought that the individual parts were systematically connected to each other and to the whole. It was the “structure” that was defined as the set of relations between elements. The life of an organism makes its structure function, and the “function” means the role and contribution it plays in the life of the organism as a whole. Thus, when “structure” and “function” were defined as working hypotheses, it was presumed that the social system had “a certain unity” and that all parts were harmonized with “functional unity” and “internal consistency”.³⁸⁾

Both Radcliffe-Brown and Durkheim had basically the same view of the relationship between a society as a whole and the functions of each part. The above-cited passage shows the background of Dumézil's understanding of trifunctionality. As he considered it as an organism, he thought of it as a three-tiered structure divided by function, integrated and self-regulating. Summarizing the discussion, the relationship would be “no functions of each part without society as a whole; no society as a whole without functions of each part.”

4) Trifunctionality as the organization principle

Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown argued that the function was the work with which

37) “The concept of function applied to human societies is based on an analogy between social life and organic life. The recognition of the analogy and of some of its implications is not new. In the nineteenth century the analogy, the concept of function, and the word itself appear frequently in social philosophy and sociology. So far as I know the first systematic formulation of the concept as applying to the strictly scientific study of society was that of Emile Durkheim in 1895. [...] Durkheim's definition is that the ‘function’ of a social institution is the correspondence between it and the needs (*besoin* in French) of the social organism. This definition requires some elaboration. In the first place, to avoid possible ambiguity and in particular the possibility of a teleological interpretation, I would like to substitute for the term ‘needs’ the term ‘necessary conditions of existence’, or, if the term ‘need’ is used, it is to be understood only in this sense. It may be here noted, as a point to be returned to, that any attempt to apply this concept of function in social science involves the assumption that there are necessary conditions of existence for human societies just as there are for animal organisms, and that they can be discovered by the proper kind of scientific enquiry” (RADCLIFFE-BROWN 1952: 178).

38) “By the definition here offered ‘function’ is the contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part. The function of a particular social usage is the contribution it makes to the total social life as the functioning of the total social system. Such a view implies that a social system (the total social structure of a society together with the totality of social usages in which that structure appears and on which it depends for its continued existence) has a certain kind of unity, which we may speak of as a functional unity. We may define it as a condition in which all parts of the social system work together with a sufficient degree of harmony or internal consistency, i.e. without producing persistent conflicts which can neither be resolved nor regulated” (RADCLIFFE-BROWN 1952: 181).

society as a whole is supported. So Dumézil, free from empirical evidence after 1950, theoretically pursued the trifunctionality kept by the Proto-Indo-Europeans as an idea which is rationally completed by itself without any social background. Dumézil tried to explain this theoretical progress as a sublimation from organizational principles to ideology. He recognized trifunctionality as an organizational principle that exists beyond the real organization. Since 1950, he moved to reinforce the intrinsic logic of this organization principle.

The core of Dumézil's theory was that the gods were hierarchized in the mythology of the Proto-Indo-Europeans. Dumézil and those who supported his theory emphasized that the three functions were hierarchical or hierarchized when retorting criticism of trifunctional theory. Therefore, the meanings of hierarchy and hierarchization are crucial. What is the meaning of hierarchy and hierarchization?

The next point is the most important issue. The implications of *hiérarchie* by Dumézil are: different gods clearly individualize three functions; gods are clearly layered for each function; and, consequently, the gods that carried out the three functions are completed as a whole. "Cette idéologie trifonctionnelle forme un système dans lequel les trois fonctions se répondent mutuellement pour former un tout" (PUTTER 2009: 7). The Trifunctional theory serves as an organization principle that governs many Indo-European societies because the above-mentioned terms and conditions are fulfilled. We think that the connotation of this hierarchization is not well understood. As far as we know, Daniel Dubuisson and especially Eric de Putter revealed better than others the meaning of hierarchy in Dumézil's trifunctional ideology.³⁹⁾

39) In this paper, PhD thesis (PUTTER 2009) of Eric de Putter (born in 1980) is often quoted. The doctoral dissertation, which he completed in his late twenties, had some negligible drawbacks such as hard-lined sentence expressions, hasty conclusions, and too many quotations; it might be qualified to be rough cutting as it was also slightly impetuous in terms of combining music and trifunctional ideology. In spite of these minor weaknesses, however, his work was a highly ambitious attempt at revealing the logical structure of Dumézil's trifunctional ideology. De Putter was very willing to reveal the logicity and completeness of the three functions. I refer to the character of these functions as individual exclusivity, rigid class division, and mutual interdependency of the three functions in this paper. He didn't even wait long after receiving his doctoral degree to be posted as a teacher to the Protestant University of Central Africa in Yaoundé, Cameroon. After his doctoral dissertation, de Putter published a book, but unfortunately he never had an opportunity to continue his research and to publish any kind of work after this. Eight o'clock in the evening on Sunday, 8 July 2012, suspicious persons visited his home in Yaoundé, and stabbed him to death. It was reported that this tragedy happened due to some dispute over a doctoral dissertation examination at the university. He was 31 years old leaving a wife who was pregnant. (*Paris Match*. 11 July 2012, <https://www.parismatch.com/Actu/Societe/Cameroun-L-enseignant-francais-victime-d-un-reglement-de-compte-155581>)

Hierarchy and division by class of the trifunctionality on which Dumézil insisted stood in the view that “the functions are the need (*besoins*) to maintain the whole society” of the Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown schools. If so, the trifunctionality was based on the following characteristics: each of the three functions has (1) individual exclusivity, (2) definitive class affiliation, and (3) mutual complementarity. Ultimately, the three functions have the integral characteristic of completeness as a whole. Therefore, Dumézil changed in 1950 to the view that trifunctionality inherently existed only in the idea.

Dumézil abandoned the original hypothesis of a realistic relationship consisting of human stratification, which served as a background of trifunctional ideology, and turned to prove unity, completeness, and division by class in myths. Briefly, he tried to clarify and theorize the individuality, stratification, and complementarity of the three functions in various myths. In trifunctional ideology, one of the three functions is (1) exclusively different from each other, (2) hierarchical with each other and (3) mutually complementary among each other. The three functions are complete so that the entity must function only as a system.⁴⁰⁾

Three functions can also be found in non-Indo-European societies. However, they are not necessarily hierarchized.⁴¹⁾ The most distinctive feature of Indo-European societies is that the three functions are hierarchized. As Littleton wrote, “The key to understanding Dumézil’s philosophical perspectives lies in his often repeated assertion that the tendency to organize phenomena in terms of three *hierarchical principles* -sovereignty, force, and fertility- is, in the Old World, at least, unique to the ancient Indo-European speaking community” (LITTLETON 1974: 152; italicized by the author of this paper).

4. Backlash and criticism of ideological purification

As we clarified, Dumézil appreciated the theoretical revision in 1950 as “un progrès décisif” (DUMÉZIL 1986a: 15). Moreover, Dubuisson termed it “revolution” by describing it as the “victory of the structure” (DUBUISSON 1991: 135). However, the more Dumézil purified the ideological nature of his theory, the stronger the criticism and refutation

40) “Nous avons soulevé dans notre introduction le principe d’homogénéité : les trois fonctions doivent absolument être d’un ordre comparable pour pouvoir se manifester au sein d’un système qui fonctionne. [...] Ce principe est déjà présent dans l’œuvre de G. Dumézil dès 1939 : DUMÉZIL, G., *Mythes et Dieux des Germains...*, p. 10, où il emploie l’expression « panthéon cohérent »” (PUTTER 2009: 33).

41) “[...] ce qu’on observe, ce sont soit des organisations indifférenciées de nomades, où chacun est à la fois combattant et pasteur; soit des organisations théocratiques de sédentaires, où un roi-prêtre, un empereur divin est équilibré par une masse, morcelé à l’infini, mais homogène dans son humilité ; soit encore des sociétés où le sorcier n’est qu’un spécialiste parmi beaucoup d’autres, sans préséance, malgré la crainte qu’inspire sa spécialité : de près ni de loin, rien de tout cela ne rappelle la structure des trois classes fonctionnelles hiérarchisées. Il n’y a pas d’exceptions” (PUTTER 2009: 19–20).

against his theory became.

First, Dumézil's claim that ideology was formed independently of the reality of the society was conceived as an idealism which opposed the historical materialism advocated by Marxism: the substructure defines the superstructure. The rise of Marxism in the postwar social sciences was seen in France and elsewhere. From the Marxist viewpoint, strong rejections raised up against Dumézil's theory. Historical materialism argued that the substructure defined the superstructure. Thus, the Dumézilian theory, claiming that the ideology was formed in a scene that was categorically separated from the actual economic process, was far from acceptable in Marxism. Furthermore, as seen in trifunctional ideology since 1950, the functions were stratified in the order of sovereignty, battle, and production, and the third function (i.e. production) was positioned in the lowest layer. Since historical materialism claimed that the substructure prescribed the superstructure, Dumézil's concept was regarded as idealism in which the idea is positioned higher than production, which was a realistic process. This kind of view of orders was not compatible with the Marxist view of historical materialism.

Conversely, during World War II, Nazi Germany's belief in Aryan racial superiority led to the Jewish genocide. Dumézil came under fierce criticism because the trifunctional theory cast doubt on sympathy kept by Dumézil toward Nazism and on his psychological support for Nazi racism. Studies on Indo-Europeans themselves were academic fields that flourished in anti-Semitism growing in 1930s European societies. His doctrine and his relationship were regarded as dubious or suspicious. Additionally, he was criticized by the left that the new right used his argument to create a theoretical pillar of those who affirmed and admired class society.⁴²⁾ In any case, Dumézil was potentially more likely to receive criticism from Marxism, the left-wing, and Jewish scholars and critics, because he had strengthened his ideological position after the *Setback in 1950*. Dumézil was fatally involved in politics because of the nature of the issue.

Thus, Dumézil himself admitted that the trifunctional ideology did not rely upon any existing foundation of the three-tiered social structure. As an alternative, he made a significant turn to purify the ideological nature of the theory in 1950. This, as we have seen, became his mission to refine the intrinsic logic within mythology and epic history. How should we assess Dumézil's intellectual activities?

42) "Here the New Right has been distorting the work of Georges Dumézil, scholar of comparative Indo-European mythology, who has discerned a so called tripartite ideology, common to all ancient Indo-European peoples and based on the three social functions of power/sacredness, military force and economic production. Since the 1950s at least, Dumézil has stressed that it is a tripartite ideology rather than the social structure (concerning which there is a paucity of evidence) that he would attribute to all Indo-European peoples. His concern, at any rate, is with the past. But the New Right is elevating Dumézil's insights to the level of norms: this is how societies of Indo-European origin should be organized" (CASTELINO 1979: 1875).

The proof of the existence of the idea has been a serious issue for Europeans. It is their philosophical tradition that has continued since they became aware of their ethnicity. The long tradition began, for instance, with Geek Philosophers like Plato, through the proof of the existence of God in Christian theology in the middle age, and a series of efforts that have persistently continued to the modern era like Hegel.⁴³⁾ When we consider the philosophical traditions in the Western world, Dumézil's *Setback in 1950* should be regarded as the convergence of one of the main themes of Western philosophy : the proof of the existence of ideas.

Dumézil aimed to purify the ideological nature of trifunctionality after having abandoned the basis of reality. He sought to shift away from reality and to move beyond comparative mythology to pursue consistency and logical unity as idealism. As we have seen, Dumézil appreciated the *Setback in 1950* as “decisive progress” (DUMÉZIL 1986a: 15). Furthermore, Dubuisson called it a “revolution” by describing it as the “victory of the structure” (DUBUISSON 1991: 135). However, Dumézil's *Setback in 1950* was not a “revolution,” but much closer to the convergence of European intellectual tradition or return to European intellectual origins.

III. The three-tiered class structure in the early nomadic organization as the basis of Trifunctional ideology

We have mentioned the three characteristics of “organization completed by itself” or “organization as a complete body” assumed as the basis in trifunctional ideology. The features of the three functions are (1) individual exclusivity, (2) rigid class division, and (3) interdependence. With these three functions, the organization was assumed to have the property of completeness and integration. Since 1950, the Dumézilian School argued that such an organization exists only in the idea. However, did any real and tangible organization that could be the premise of trifunctional ideology exist in Proto-Indo-European society?

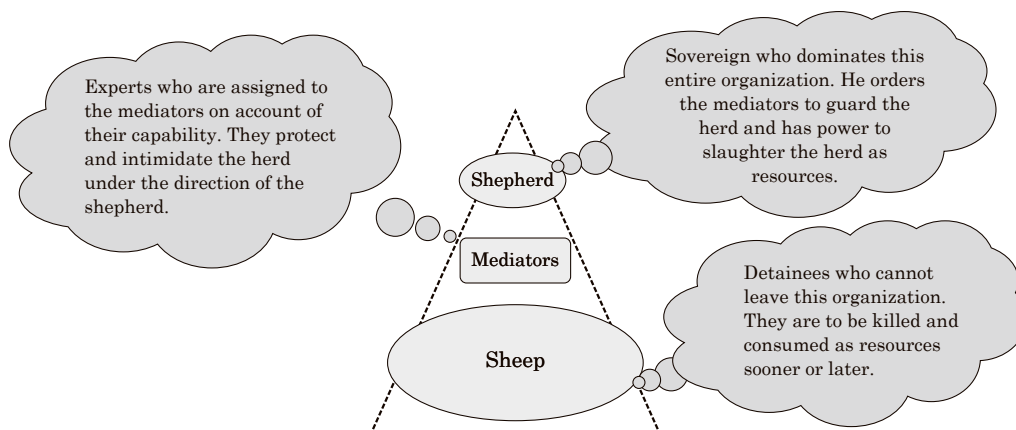
Yes. It firmly existed.

1. The human-animal three-tiered structure in early nomad society

Indeed, if we define an organization in terms of a group composed uniquely of human

43) Of course, in order to declare that “the proof of the existence of ideas was a major concern of Western philosophy”, appropriate evidences should be provided with reference to a plethora of books on Western philosophy that continued from Plato through Christian theology and Hegel to this day. As it is not the main theme of this paper, we simply refer to the famous remark given by A. N. Whitehead in his *Process and Reality*: “The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato” (WHITEHEAD 1978: 39).

Figure 1 Human-animal organization created by Proto-Indo-Europeans with the emergence of nomadic herding— Three-tiered structure —



Source: NAKAGAWA (2019a: 423)

beings, there was no class division among the Proto-Indo-Europeans. When they lived on the steppes, there were only family members and some of their relatives. They were organized in clans, where several families had ties based on their blood relatives, and in tribes as expanded clans. There was no class division, although there might have been hierarchies based on the superiority or inferiority of the pedigree and the number of livestock owned. Life on the steppes was a world where the kinship-based principle was dominant, and it was not yet a class-divided society.

However, if we expand its members outside of humans, we recognize that an integrated organization composed of humans and animals (non-humans) had been constructed when a family of shepherds began to herd sheep on the steppe. This human-animal organization, as an entity, was comprised of a three-tiered structure. That was precisely the early nomadic organization held by the Proto-Indo-Europeans in the Yamna cultural period when they lived on the steppe. This human-animal organization formed a remarkable three-level structure.

Around 5000 BC, on the grassland around Mesopotamia, pastoral organizations were born abruptly, and this way of living spread to the Pontic steppe through Anatolia in the fifth or fourth millennium BC. This human-animal organization consisted of (1) a shepherd family, (2) a few *mediators* (dogs or castrated sheep or goats),⁴⁴⁾ and (3) a large flock of sheep. It consisted of three different and heterogeneous animals, which was complete in functions.

Figure 1 shows the human-animal structure established by nomadic herding of livestock, especially sheep, in the fourth millennium BC. There are shepherds, *mediators*

44) Mediators are animals which transfer the direction of shepherds to the flock.

(dogs or castrated sheep and goats), and a large number of domestic animals (such as sheep, and so on). The shepherd's family was a small kinship group, normally comprising four or five people. However, this nomadic organization did not merely consist of these family members. To comprise a nomadic organization, there should have been a herd of livestock in addition to the shepherd's family. A group without livestock animals should have been just a set of wanderers roaming grasslands. Moreover, there must be *mediators*. The herding of a flock is an occupation beyond human physical capacities. Shepherds developed a special occupation, such as *mediators*, to guard and to keep a herd of sheep and attribute it to dogs or castrated sheep or goats. In nomadic pastoralism, shepherds trained and developed *mediators* to raise many sheep. Dogs and castrated sheep or goats were the typical *mediators*. Without *mediators*, it was impossible to raise flocks of herbivores on widespread grasslands. Therefore, in this group, heterogeneous animals such as sheep and dogs (not humans) were indispensable as vital members of the organization.

The human-animal organization of the nomadism showed in Figure 1 had an epoch-making character in the history of organization. We can summarize it in four points:

- (1) The organization consists of three different kinds of animals;
- (2) Each of the three animals has a specific function and the three functions are completely different;
- (3) The three functions are all indispensable for the maintenance of the whole organization and are dependent on each other;
- (4) The organization is complete since it is sufficient with three functions.

1) This organization is made up of three different animals

This organization holds three different animals (humans→ dogs→ sheep) as its essential constituent members. Humans, *mediators* (here, dogs), and livestock groups (here, sheep) belong to different species respectively (especially when the *mediators* are dogs). Thus, they were heterologous to each other. Neither dogs nor sheep are human. Since they are non-human animals, they are genuine and definitive outsiders. If we recognize the family of shepherds and dogs and sheep as members of this organization, this early nomadic organization was the first organization in history that held true outsiders as members and it was an organization composed of three classes of animals who were strangers to each other. In the history of humans, humans had lived only in bands with relatives in the long period of hunting and gathering. From bands to societies, there should have been a crucial problem to know how to incorporate outsiders into the band-organization which had essentially consisted of relatives or insiders.

This nomadic organization with such dogs and a large number of sheep was different from hunting-gathering and early farming communities composed only of relatives when

viewed from the viewpoint of “how to incorporate strangers into the organization.” This nomadic organization with such dogs and a large number of sheep was definitively heterogeneous. Potentially it was the major innovation in the history of the organization as it had begun to incorporate true strangers.

2) Each of the three animals functions completely differently

The three animals, including humans, performed different functions or jobs. The shepherd carried out the function of management and operation to supervise and to integrate the whole. He had the right and the absolute power to make the sheep alive or dead. In other words, it was the shepherd who held sovereignty (*souveraineté* in French). The *mediators* guarded and managed the flock of sheep under the order of the shepherd. Sheep supplied milk and wool daily, but became sooner or later meat and ultimately contributed as food and goods to the shepherd’s family. After all, sheep fulfill the function of being consumed by shepherds as resources and/or merchandise.

3) The three animals formed a clear and irreversible three-tiered structure

These three different animals formed a clear and irreversible hierarchy or relation of domination-subordination. Consequently, it is impossible to replace or exchange one of three animals with each other. These three heterogeneous animals formed a clear and irreversible three-tiered structure (shepherd → dogs [*mediators*] → sheep) in the nomadic organization. As a human, the shepherd is in the absolute position to have full power, to order the *mediators*, and to exhaust sheep. In other words, he is the sovereign. The *mediators* are subordinate to the shepherd because they received orders from the shepherd, but the mediators were ranked higher than sheep because they intimidated sheep. Sheep, regularly threatened by dogs, are placed at the bottom of this hierarchy, whose destiny is at the mercy of the shepherd who holds the supremacy to kill or let them live.

4) All three functions are indispensable for the organization, which is sufficient and complete with these three

If any of the functions of these three different animals was lacking, this organization would not have been founded. Therefore, each of the three functions is indispensable and vital. Moreover, these three different animals are sufficient and complete for the sustenance of the organization. As these three functions are sufficient for this organization to be autonomous, no involvement of any other animals is needed.

2. Generation of the function-based principle by the *exclusive individuality of functions*

The most important feature of the birth of the nomadic herding entities was the

appearance of the *exclusive individuality* of functions.⁴⁵⁾ For a long time in human history, functions were not attributed to a single person in primitive communities. For the first time in history, when the Proto-Indo-Europeans began sheep herding, functions were demarcated to be attributed exclusively to each category of the members of the community: sovereignty to the shepherd; management to *mediators* (dogs); production to sheep.

Of course, the temporary and short-term division of labor can be attested even in primitive communities where the kinship-based principle was dominant in organizational integration. There should have been chiefs and leaders who took group leadership (the first function), or young people confronting foreign enemies (the second function), and men and women usually engaged in labor (the third function). If such functional specialization in primitive communities was confirmed even in such a rudimentary situation, is it enough to assert that trifunctional ideology has some social background and that these three functions had been identified as related to gods?

As some primitive division of labor was recognized even at such a germinating stage, it would be possible to insist on the primitive functional specialization, which would be valid as the real background of the trifunctional hypothesis. However, the point at issue regarding the social background of the trifunctional ideology is not such a primitive, emergent division of labor, nor the germinating specialization of social functions. Dumézil often referred to the stratified and united gods. In this way, what is important is not only the functions which are classified into three parts, but that the three functions are also tiered, integrated as one, and completed by themselves. To clarify the characteristic of the trifunctional ideology, Dumézil repeatedly emphasized that a specific function is assigned to a specific person or institution. From the viewpoint of organization principles, this is one of the vital issues that should be considered as the *exclusive individuality* of functions.

La différence principale, servant de cadre à toutes les autres, serait que, dans certains cas — les plus nombreux —, la structure s'exprime dans, ou par rapport à, autant de personnages (ou de groupes de personnages) distincts qu'il y a de fonctions (ou d'aspects de fonctions) à mettre en valeur, et que, dans d'autres, elle s'exprime dans, ou par rapport à un seul personnage. A l'intérieur de chacune de ces divisions, on distinguerait les cas où les fonctions jouent simultanément et ceux où elles interviennent successivement (DUMÉZIL 1986a: 630).

In this passage, Dumézil advocated the “*exclusive individuality* of functions” by stating

45) The exclusive individuality of functions means that a function is previously defined and attributed to a single person who does not share the function with others.

that “one function appears in a single person.” The important point here is that the functions are primarily defined, and the persons (including animals in the case of sheep herding by Proto-Indo-Europeans) would be chosen afterward to carry one of the functions. The above-mentioned nomadic organizations were created consciously and intentionally in the attribution of functions. On the contrary, in the natural organization, something like clans or tribes where the kinship-based principle was dominant, members had primarily been affiliating with communities by their birth. As for functions, they would be attributed afterward to members as seen in the above-mentioned Iranian organization.

Dumézil himself stated that the *exclusive individuality* of function was a concept unique to the Indo-Europeans. In the Indo-European myths, each of the three functions is individualized, while in other ethnic groups, three functions exist, but they are not attributed to a specific organ in their myths.⁴⁶⁾ However, why is a function demarcated and separated from others? Because it is necessary to individualize it in order to attribute it to a single person.

In the three-tiered structure of the above-mentioned early nomadic organization, the constituent members were humans (shepherds and their family) and non-humans (*mediators* such as dogs, castrated sheep, or goats, and, of course, livestock animals like sheep and/or goats). These animal members (although it is a bit strange to call animals “members”) were selected after their functions had been fixed in advance and involved in the organization. Livestock animals, the largest group, were selected and adopted due to the function of being finally slaughtered and turned into resources. *Mediators* such as dogs and castrated sheep and/or goats were selected and employed due to the function of guarding and protecting livestock groups against predators like wolves. Naturally, it was previously decided that shepherds were responsible to assume the function of overseeing and of the management of the whole organization.

Three functions were defined in advance, and each was posteriorly attributed to a

46) “Il est clair que la tripartie consciente et explicite de la société ou de la partie directrice de la société en prêtres, guerriers et agriculteurs n’est pas propre au monde indo-européen. Le fait est pourtant qu’un tel mode d’organisation n’a pas le caractère d’universalité que certains prétendent. Nombre de peuples, certes, sur tous les continents, assurent les trois fonctions correspondant à cette division-type, puisqu’il n’est pas possible qu’ils subsistent autrement; mais ils le font sans y prendre garde et sans affecter à chacune un organe - de direction ou d’exécution - particulier. [...] Dans la Bible, dans ces textes chargés d’une réflexion profonde et renouvelée sur la vie sociale et sur les rythmes du monde, on chercherait vainement, semble-t-il, une expression dialectique ou imagée du système des trois fonctions, soit du point de vue de Dieu, soit du point de vue des hommes ; ce qui domine l’idéologie, c’est bien plutôt le sentiment de l’omnivalence - moyennant la volonté divine - de chaque être et de l’équivalence de tous : le petit berger David tue le champion philistin sur la ligne de bataille et bientôt il sera l’oint du Seigneur” (DUMÉZIL 1949: 239–240).

single person or organ: so, the functions are individualized and separated from each other.⁴⁷⁾ The *exclusive individuality* of such a function was created because it was an organization composed of an arrangement of human and non-human animals. As we observed, the early nomadic organization was the first organization in history that consisted of humans and non-humans. The reason why the *exclusive individuality* was created is that humans and animals are by no means relatives so that the functions of each of the categories of members were decisively different and exclusive from each other. No possibility of exchanging the roles between the three categories of members existed. Only with the consciousness that humans and animals were completely different beings in the first place, the realistic basis for the generation of *exclusive individuality* of functions was born.

Kinship-based organizations, such as families, bands, clans, and tribes, basically consist of relatives and extended relatives. Relatives mean, in this case, people that tie each other by kinship or common sentiment belonging to the same group. Extended relatives may have been strangers or outsiders in the past, but are now relatives who became new members in marriage or after some particular ceremonies and measures inherent to the organization. The kinship-based principle governs these organizations. In these organizations, members are set previously and predetermined so that functions are assigned to them later. Accordingly, the functions do not have to be individualized nor even more exclusive. In other words, the functions that each of the members carried out in their life may be variable, multiple and not fixed.

However, in nomadic human-animal organizations composed of humans and non-humans, the roles (i.e., functions) were decisively different and were not interchangeable between the three categories of members. Livestock groups such as sheep were domesticated to supply useful resources such as milk, fur, and meat: they should perform the function of supplying resources which is impossible for shepherds and *mediators* such as dogs. Since the function of the *mediators* performed by dogs is beyond human capabilities, dogs were adopted and the job of *mediators* was assigned to them. Moreover, managing the whole nomadic organization and managing the livestock group is a job uniquely assigned to shepherds: they are the single members responsible for the selection of this and of sheep from the livestock group to copulate and to get pregnant, which will be shorn, and which will be killed. Shepherds command everything. No matter how smart

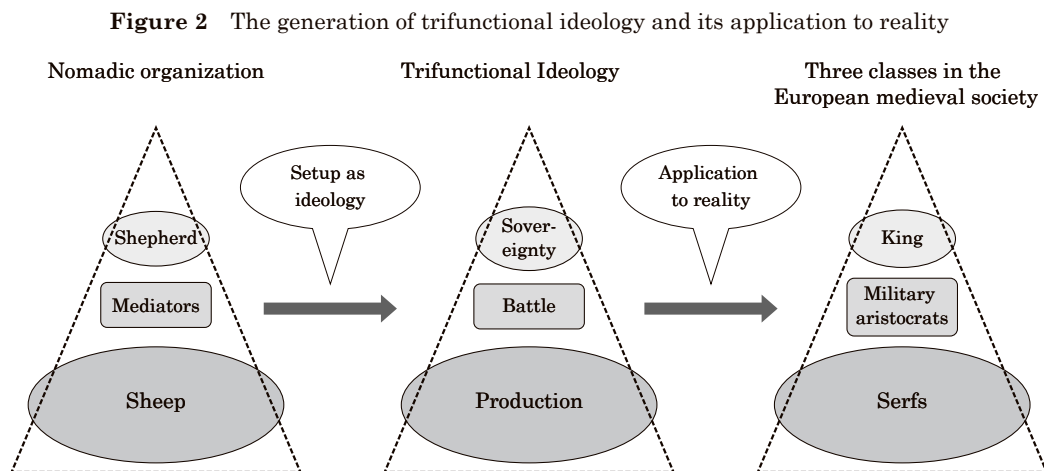
47) Dumézil emphasized the exclusive individuality of functions. However, if he has extracted the exclusive individuality only from reading the wide range of myths, including Indo-Europeans, his reading comprehension and understanding are amazing. The author of this paper supposes, however, that, as for the conviction that he had about the realities of trifunctionality among social phenomena, Dumézil would have based this on mythological research, but also on actual experience and observation that he had during his life.

and tamed dogs were, dogs cannot substitute for humans to perform such supervision functions on behalf of the shepherds. It is impossible to mutually exchange the respective roles in nomadic organizations which consist of humans and non-humans.

3. The three-tiered structure in early nomadic organizations as the source of trifunctional ideology

The three-tiered structure of Figure 2 could not have been constructed if all the members were human. It was created due to the presence and involvement of animals such as sheep and dogs. The emergence of this kind of organization is relevant to the ideal organization envisioned by Plato, for example. In other words, the perfect structure that was impossible with human beings was formed with the involvement of animal members. The three-tiered structure in this early nomadic organization was the perfect three-level structure in regard to functions.⁴⁸⁾ It was sublimated as an ideology, and it was applied conversely to the real world.

In early nomadic organizations, dogs played an essential role as *mediators*. This was a very particular situation where the function of sheep-managing was attributed to dogs; these particular circumstances created an attribution of function itself. Durkheim argued that function is the foundation of society.⁴⁹⁾ As assigning dogs the role of mediators should



48) In this paper, the author advocates the human-animal organization of nomadic herding as the true basis of trifunctional ideology. The societies and conflicts in the history of the Indo-Europeans should be regarded as the application of this trifunctional ideology. For example, Pierre Lévêque discussed the relationship between trifunctional ideology and the social background saying that, “La distanciation avec la réalité sociale est claire” (LÉVÊQUE 1984: 64). His text seems very instructive.

49) “Functionalism is basic to Durkheim’s sociology. Like other functionalists, he focused on the problem of order and the positive effects of social institutions, explaining their existence in terms of

be regarded as the first emergence of the function in this sense, a functional-based principle which serves as the pillar of the modern society was created at that moment.

Conclusion — The setback of trifunctional theory in a double meaning

The author's argument in this paper is quite simple. Around the fifth or fourth millennium BC, when the Proto-Indo-Europeans formed themselves as sheep-herding nomads and began to talk about their myths, their organizations were constituted of tribes that were organized on a kinship-based principle. In human organizations, it is difficult to find three-tiered stratifications in tribes. However, the human-animal organization based on shepherding in which they lived as shepherds had a spectacular three-tiered structure: shepherds → *mediators* (dogs) → sheep.

This human-animal organization, which consists of three categories of animals, clearly embodied the reality of the trifunctional ideology; this human-animal organization enhanced the logic and consistency of trifunctionality. If the trifunctional ideology advocated by Dumézil had a realistic basis or actual background, it could not be anything other than such an early nomadic three-tiered structure.⁵⁰⁾

their functionally necessary contributions. As a pioneer he grappled with many of the basic problems posed by this perspective. He derived more than one explanation linking existence and necessity. The most distinctive, and yet widely ignored, aspect of his approach is the implicit argument that as a powerful, self-conscious entity controlling the behavior of its individual members, society can perpetuate the social conditions of its own existence. Many of the characteristic strengths and weaknesses of Durkheim's sociological theory may be traced to his functionalism" (POPE 1975: 361).

50) As mentioned, Dumézil was a tremendously prolific scholar and, for Westerners, the generation of the Proto-Indo-Europeans should be one of the serious concerns related to their own origins. There have been substantial numbers of books and papers on the pros and cons amassed in the field of trifunctional theory. As mentioned, the author's hypothesis is a quite simple argument that the three-tiered structure in the human-animal organization which was constructed by Proto-Indo-Europeans when they launched the sheep-herding in the fourth millennium BC on the Pontic-Caspian Steppe, served as the realistic basis for trifunctional ideology.

Therefore, when we came up with this hypothesis, we thought, "someone should have been aware of this simple logic, to begin with Dumézil himself." Since then, we have collected the preceding studies attentively. However, no similar argument has been encountered so far. If so, the author's hypothesis may be insignificant and absurd. Or maybe the author is still lacking effort so that he has not yet discovered adequate discussions in previous surveys.

During the process of creating a bibliography on this subject, the only work whose title suggested to the author the possibility to advocate similar arguments with the hypothesis was Bruce Lincoln (LINCOLN 1981). His work was based on a survey of the Maasai tribes of African nomads, and it dealt with the problems of Indo-Europeans from the perspective of nomadism: that was very interesting, but when I read it, I found it differed to some extent from my argument.

Around 1950, Georges Dumézil admitted that the trifunctional theory had no social or realistic background. Therefore, he changed the line of his argument. What were the implications of this revision of the trifunctional theory? Dumézil qualified this modification as decisive progress. He abandoned practical demonstratives and aimed to purify the ideological nature of trifunctional theory. Thus, in a sense, we can think of his theoretical revision as an intellectual act of purifying the logic that leads to the discussion of Plato's ideas or the proof of the existence of God in Christian theology. Therefore, it is, to some extent, a return to the European philosophical tradition of the "proof of existence of the idea" that continues today. However, in the opinion of the author, the decisive progress that Dumézil qualified himself was instead the setback in a double meaning.

Dumézil and the supporters of his hypothesis could not overcome the strong criticism he received from the opposition. Consequently, despite having reached the genuine origin of history (i.e., trifunctionality), he confined his research to a comparatively narrow world of comparative mythology. If they had happened to know that the human-animal structure in the sheep-herding organization made the real basis of trifunctionality, the situation would have changed significantly.

In other words, if Dumézil could have overcome such criticism, the trifunctional theory would have gone beyond the framework of comparative mythology and should have been positioned as a philosophical core of European civilization. In the translocation process from reality to ideology, the first setback was that he cut ties with reality.

In any case, when the Proto-Indo-Europeans were generated in the fifth or fourth millennium BC, there was a rigorous reality which consisted of the human-animal organization. A detailed examination of this early nomadic organization from a functional perspective should reveal the three-tiered structure of this human-animal organization and its logical completeness. Above all, it should have been postulated that the function-based principle was generated along with the nomadic organizations of the Proto-Indo-Europeans. As seen, the exclusive individuality of function means the principle where a function is individualized and not shared with any other; the function should be defined previously and attributed to an individual. Accordingly, the exclusive individuality of functions represents the function-based principle which is the foundation of the world's conquest and control by the Indo-Europeans that developed thereafter.

Ideology is an idea shared by tribal members to express their worldview. In that

Whether African or Mongolian, they are nomads, and research on the modern nomads will be very useful for study of the trifunctional hypothesis. Lincoln's work, however, was little interested in the "uniqueness of the Indo-Europeans" as Dumézil repeatedly debated. Even though the general characteristics of nomads can be extracted from the characteristics of the Maasai tribes, the uniqueness of Indo-European tribes seems unclear. Above all, their uniqueness is important, and it should not be diluted to the general character of nomads.

meaning, ideology is not only a worldview but also the ideal view that should be applied to the real world. If so, when Dumézil purified trifunctional theory into trifunctional ideology, the process of applying ideology to reality should have been presumed. However, in trifunctional ideology, he missed the generation of the function-based principle and its application to the real world, because its connection with the reality was refused in trifunctional ideology.

In other words, even though he had reached the standpoint of ideology, he cut its ties with reality, so that he underestimated the application of the ideology to reality and its consequences. Moreover, the role trifunctional ideology played in reality was undervalued. He had underestimated the role that trifunctional ideology played in world conquest and the sustenance of the rule by the Indo-Europeans afterward. This was the second setback.

Naturally, several causes explain the originality of the Proto-Indo-Europeans; it was decisive, based on the hypothesis of the author, that the *mediators* were not castrated sheep and/or goats but dogs. Perhaps thanks to an environmental coincidence in their history and/or intelligence held by the Proto-Indo-Europeans, they adopted dogs as *mediators*; it might have given birth to the watershed of the history.

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