BOOK REVIEWS

The Plight of a Sorcerer. Georges Dumézil. Edited by Jan Puhvel and David Weeks. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1986 x + 120 pp. Cloth. US $25.00

JOHN COLARUSSO
McMaster University

Half a century ago Leonard Bloomfield embarked upon a rigorous reconstruction of Proto-Algonquian and thereby ushered in a new era in the reconstruction of the native languages of North America. This set a model for linguists in reconstructing the proto-forms of languages attested only in present day, usually unwritten form. Bloomfield built upon more than a century of careful reconstructive work within Indo-European studies, that branch of historical linguistics that studied, in Bloomfield's day, Latin, Greek, Sanskrit and other ancient languages of Europe and parts of Asia, all of which were written. The work of the French folklorist and polyglot, the late George Dumézil, is of equal significance for it puts present anthropologists into a position similar to that of Bloomfield's. Dumézil has brought the practice of reconstructing Indo-European myths and social patterns to such a stage of refinement that one can now embark upon similar efforts for virtually any corpus of myths anywhere in the world, ancient or modern. For this reason the present book is of the utmost importance for any anthropologist with even a passing interest in the mythology and history of a people.

Dumézil's book, however, is for the Indo-Europeanist, both the linguist and mythographer, and as such requires a certain amount of patience and background work on the part of the non-specialist. I shall endeavour to provide some background and context to the present work in the course of this review, (see also Littleton 1982, pp. 144ff, for background).

The Indo-Europeans are a hypothetical tribe or congery of tribes that are presumed to have spoken Proto-Indo-European. The latter is a reconstructed language, (more accurately, a vocabulary and some grammatical paradigms), that has been erected over a period of almost two hundred years by the tedious and careful comparative analysis of scores of languages. Languages descended from this mother tongue range from Irish Gaelic in the west to the extinct Tokharian in the east (eastern Singkiang), and from the Norse tongues in Scandinavia to those of India and Sri Lanka in the south. The original speakers are thought now to have dwelt somewhere in western Asia, either the Northern

Caucasus or Anatolia, some time between 3,000 and 5,000 B.C. The language family is of interest, not merely from the ethnocentric viewpoint of Europe, but because the care and elaborateness of the reconstructive work in this field surpasses that in all others, so much so that it serves as a standard for all other comparative work.

Hand in hand with the linguistic work have gone substantial efforts to reconstruct common myths or mythic themes as well as other aspects of culture. Near the end of the 19th century much of this parallel cultural work fell into disrepute, in part because of its inherent excesses and flights of fancy, in part because of shadowy undercurrents of racism that often underlay a great deal of it. While the professionals became more circumspect in their work during the first part of the 20th century, the politicians, over several generations behind in their thinking, utilized this racism for nefarious ends, culminating in the Nazi atrocities of World War II. Dumézil is one of the foremost recent practitioners of comparative Indo-European mythology and along with a few others has done a great deal to rehabilitate this field.

The present volume is a series of translations from the French that have been welded together by the two editors and accompanied by a preface. The work is the second part (pp. 133-248) of volume 2 of a larger work, Mythe et épopée, by Dumézil, a large work representing a good portion of his mature views on Indo-European society. This portion is as self-contained as anything of Dumézil, he being a writer fond of numerous cross references to his own work. The present work completes the translation of volume 2, the first part having appeared as The Destiny of the Warrior, and the third as The Destiny of a King.

The central thesis of Dumézil's work is that the Indo-Europeans had a tripartite society, with this social order reflected in their myths, art and overall ideology. The three divisions or castes are best preserved in the Hindu caste systems, with a brahmin or priestly group at the top, followed by a ksatriya or warrior group from which both kings and warriors were drawn, and a vaiśya or professional group from which artisans, tradesman and farmers originated. The fourth Hindu caste, the śudra or untouchables, is seen as a product of the Indo-European conquest of an indigenous population and is not projected back into Indo-European society itself. Most of Dumézil's effort has been devoted to finding evidence for this tripartite set of functions outside of the Indic world.

This dominant theme is taken up only in the last chapter of the book, the prospectus. For most of this work Dumézil is concerned with a problem particular to only one branch of the Indo-European family, that of the Indo-Iranians. Indo-Iranian is a stage in the descent of Indo-European down to the attested

languages Sanskrit (India) and Avestan (Iran). Sanskrit and Avestan are very close and are considered to be the descendants of a Proto-Indo-Iranian, once spoken in the steppes of Central Asia. Sanskrit has given rise to the modern languages of India, while Avestan and its close kinsman, Old Persian, have given rise to the present Iranian languages, only one of which is still spoken in Iran. At one time Iranian languages were spoken from eastern Hungary to western China. A few relics of this lost Iranian realm survive and Dumézil has spent a great deal of effort elsewhere trying to recover as much of this lost civilization as he can through a study of their myths and religious writings, the former surviving in the form of the Nart sagas of the Iranian Ossetes of the Caucasus (see Dumézil 1978; and the third part of volume 1 of Mythe et épopée, pp.439-575), the latter in Zoroastrian, Manichaean and Buddhist works. Thus, Dumézil's conclusions in this work are relevant to much of his other efforts and may apply to surviving traditions of Eurasia that once were near to this Iranian world.

The present work goes against much of the orthodoxy in Iranian and Indic studies in that it makes a conclusive case that the two traditions, very old and conservative by Indo-European standards, preserve a great deal that is of common origin regarding two figures, despite highly divergent cultural histories.

Dumézil announces his intended conclusion and gives some background in his introduction. He justifies his concentration upon the Indic sage or magician, Kāvya, Uśanas, and the Iranian king, Kay Ūs. Chapter 1 gives a short history of the scholarship surrounding the matter of parallels between these two figures. Chapter II begins the detailed analysis of the relevant texts. I shall present the parallels found therein as briefly as possible and discuss his conclusions, before concluding with some criticisms and comments.[1]

Chapter II gives a summary of the relevant portions of the Mahābhārata, the Sanskrit epic. In short it is as follows. The demons and gods are at war. The demons have hired a sage, Uśanas, often bearing the title Kāvya, to resurrect their dead warriors. The gods send the son of their sage, Kaca, son of Bṛhaspati, to apprentice himself to Uśanas in order to acquire his secret of resurrection. Uśanas accepts him as the son of his fellow caste member. Uśanas' daughter, Devayānī, falls in love with Kaca. The demons try two or three times to kill Kaca, but each time, at Devayānī's request Uśanas resurrects him. The last time, however, the demons have burned Kaca to ashes and served him to Uśanas in a drink. Therefore resurrecting him will kill Uśanas as Kaca will then have to burst through his body. Uśanas, to prevent his daughter from committing suicide in despair, devises a scheme. He will teach Kaca the powers of resurrection and bring him back to life if Kaca will resurrect

Uśanas in turn. Kaca agrees and the two resurrections take place, but because Kaca has exited from his teacher's body he has acquired a type of blood kinship with him and cannot now marry Devānyī without committing incest. The spurned Devayānī curses Kaca that he may never use his new-learned magic, but merely pass it on to others. Kaca curses her in turn that she will marry below her caste.

Devayānī is eventually insulted by the daughter, Śarmiṣṭhā, of the king of demons. This woman throws Devayānī down a well from which she is saved by a king, Yayāti. She tells her father of her insult and demands that he quit the service of the demons. To keep him from leaving, the demon king grants him all the wealth of the kingdom plus any wish that Devayānī might have. She asks for her enemy, Śarmiṣṭhā, as a maid servant. He grants her wish. Devayānī then takes Yayāti, her rescuer, as a husband, her father granting special permission for this inter-caste marriage. Yayāti fathers children not only upon Devayānī, however, but also upon her handmaiden, Śarmiṣṭhā. Eventually this is discovered and Uśanas punishes his son-in-law by making him age instantaneously. Yayāti can escape this curse only by passing his old age on to a willing son. Only one son agrees to accept it, Pūru. For reward, Pūru becomes the ancestor of a famous dynasty.

In chapter II Dumézil discusses the true meaning of Kāvya, the apparent title of Uśanas. This goes back to a noun kavi, which denotes not merely a brahmin, but one belonging to what must have been a guild of magicians or shamans, within the brahmin caste, who claimed to be able to resurrect the dead. Part of the knowledge of resurrection involves control of time and the aging process. Dumézil then discusses the immortal Iranian king Kay Ūs[2], one of the Kayanids, the oldest dynasty in the Iranian corpus that is considered by specialists to have had a historical basis. Kay Ūs lives in a set of mountain top palaces and hoards fabulous wealth therein. This is similar to the wealth that Uśanas has exacted from the demon kin. Dumézil next discusses the bizarre episode in which Kay Ūs attempts to ascend to heaven, often at the head of an army of demons, only to fall to earth in disgrace and so lose his immortality. Here again, in the association with demons, is a parallel with the Indic figure.

Chapter IV presents some interesting parallels regarding resurrection in other Indo-European groups, namely the Kelts and the Greeks. The Iranian Kay Ūs has a magical elixir that can heal mortal wounds, a sort of pre-resurrection magic. One of his generals, Rustam, mortally wounds his own son, Sohrab. Although Rustam begs Kay Ūs for the elixir, the latter refuses to give it and Sohrab dies. Here Dumézil, for the first time, suggests that Kay Ūs, and his entire dynasty are not historical persons, but rather myths reinterpreted by a group to meet various nationalistic and cultural demands afoot in ancient Iran. Kay

Ūs' moral corruption and willfulness are historicized versions of an earlier association with demons and of a moral independence still preserved in the Indic tradition.

Here is an interesting thesis by which the relationship between myth and history is reversed from the usual. Common wisdom has it that the older a history becomes the more likely it is to pass over into myth and legend. Dumézil, in keeping with his view that a culture's myths are an integral part of its social needs and expressions, argues compellingly that just the opposite is true. Elsewhere, he has made extensive use of this theory in reconstructing Roman mythology, (Mythe et épopée, vol. 1, part 2, pp. 259-437).

In chapter V he examines in more detail the case of resurrection in general and that of Kaca, the Indic Uśanas' disciple, specifically. The issue of symbolic kinship through this magical ingestion and resurrection is discussed. An episode in which Uśanas is ingested by the god Śiva is brought up. It seems that Uśanas stands toward Śíva and the latter's wife as Kaca stands towards Uśanas and his daughter. The most striking parallel to emerge in this is that Uśanas escapes from Śiva as urine, Sanskrit súkra. The name of Venus is also 'Śukra.' Dumézil draws a striking analogy between the celestial movements of Venus (it never makes a complete planetary transit, but always stays close to the sun) and the incomplete ascent to heaven of Iranian Kay Ūs.

In chapter VI Dumézil draws a parallel between Kaca being inside his master Uśanas and that of Kay Xūsroy, the grandson of Kay Ūs, being "inside" his grandfather. The differences here are between the Indic myths which emphasize the continuity of the sorcerer's guild, master to disciple, as opposed to the Iranian sources which emphasize dynastic continuity, king to successor.

As part of this the Indic Kaca serves only as an intermediary in passing on the secret of resurrection. His Iranian counterpart is Siyāvūš, the son of Kay Ūs. To avoid an "incestuous" entanglement with his stepmother, Siyāvūš leaves his father's court never to return. He is captured by Āfrāsiyāb, king of the Tūrānians and enemy of the Iranians. He lives in exile and fathers there Kay Xūsroy. He is killed before he can return and only his son returns to claim the throne. Thus, like Kaca, Siyāvūš is merely an intermediary in the succession, and like Kaca, this results from his avoidance of a symbolic incest.

Chapter VII presents Dumézil's criticisms of the Iranianist orthodoxy that the Kayanids were a historical dynasty. Herein he makes one very significant statement, (p. 94):

> ...the accordances pertain not to what is readily borrowed, namely connected narratives, but to character

traits and behaviour patterns which have been staged and elaborated differently by the Indians and Iranians.

This distinction is vital for it clearly states what the data of comparative mythology should be: the odd facts and details of the various corpora and not the main narrative themes and structures. The latter are products of a given culture's state of development and details of place and history. The former, however, are the product of bardic training, of the memorization of myths, of their details, regardless of whether these details make sense to the apprentice bard. This is one of the few places where Dumézil draws this distinction (see also, Colarusso, 1984).

The chapter concludes with a few other parallels. The Indic god Indra (the chief god of the oldest Indic book, the Rg Veda) hides in a reed after he has killed a demon, Vṛtra. An epithet of Indra is 'Vṛtrahan,' 'slayer of Vṛtra.' The Iranian counterpart, is Vərəθragna, who appears in an Armenian epic as Vahagn, apparently borrowed from an Iranian source. Vərəθragna is cognate with Vṛtrahan and this Vərəθragna (Vahagn) is born as a flaming young man from a reed growing in the middle of the ocean. Another Iranian hero, Θraētaona, has his spirit lodged inside a reed in the ocean. This spirit ('x Aar nah'_ is eventually passed on to Kay Apivēh, a great hero. The same Kay Apivēh is associated with a prohibition against drinking. Indic Uśanas also institutes such a prohibition, at least for brahmins. Finally, the Indic figure of Tritya, a scapegoat who exculpates the sin of necessary or sacrificial murder, has a parallel in Srīt, a general of Kay Ūs. This Srīt, whose name comes from an earlier Θrita and is congnate with Tritya, also takes the sin of murdering an ox onto himself and away from Kay Ūs.

Dumézil's conclusion is that Iranian history has to be reassessed, some of it being seen now as historicized myth. Indic Kāvya Uśanas and Iranian Kay Ūs both go back to an Indo-Iranian *Kavi Ušan, a magical priest with powers over resurrection, the demons, and wealth. More generally, however, he has shown how original material can be retrieved from two traditions, even when one of them has undergone a cultural revolution (in the case of Iran, first the Zoroastrian and then the Islamic revolutions) and when it encodes the old material in a manner very different from that of the conservative tradition. Further, archaic material is not always to be found in the oldest texts, particularly if these are doctrinal, as is the case with the Iranian Zoroastrian sources, but may emerge in later works if they have a more secular function, such as the Shāh Nāmeh of the Persian poet Fīrdausī from Islamic times. Finally, neighboring traditions, (here Armenian), must be scrutinized as well for possible borrowings that have survived in their new home, but have died out in their homeland.

In the final prospectus Dumézil calls upon his tripartite analysis of Indo-European society. In particular he draws the Iranian evidence into this structure. He emphasizes that the Indic Mahābhārata is concerned with relationships within a generation, whereas the Iranian Shāh Nāmeh is concerned with relationships between generations. The individuals in the Indic work fall into the tripartite form of an Indo-European ideology. On the other hand, the tripartite function must be found distributed among the dynasties in the Iranian work. The earliest dynasty, that of the First Man and the first king, Θraētaona, represents the cosmic ordering function of the priestly level. The next dynasty, the Kayanids, represents the warrior role. Between this dynasty and the subsequent Achaemanid one, wherewith the true historical dynasties commence, there stand two kings, Luhrāsp and Guštāsp, seemingly without dynastic affiliation of their own. He recapitulates the thesis of Stig Wikander (1949-1950) and expands thereon that these two kings are surviving remnants of the divine twins found in Greece as the Dioskuroi and in Rome as Castor and Pollux, with wide traces in the Germanic and Baltic traditions. Their Indic counterparts are the Vedi Aśvins and the twin shining heroes, the last of five brothers, in the Mahābhārata. As such they represent the third function. He concludes by tracing out the lineages of the heroes in the Indic work and suggesting that some of them may offer fruitful prospects for further comparative work.

There is little question that the present book is an important and thought provoking work, representing deep and wide learning. Nevertheless, a few critical comments are in order, but first one last word of praise.

The editors have performed an invaluable service in overseeing a translation of this piece. A normal facility in reading French will hardly suffice for reading most of Dumézil's works. His writing is elaborate and filled with obscure usages. The editors have, moreover, standardized Dumézil's translations and citations, often drawing upon more up-to-date texts. This involved work in a number of languages, including not only Sanskrit and Avestan, but Persian, Arabic, Gaelic, Welsh, and German. A few phrases in Latin, such as on page 220, are not glossed and this might cause minor problems for the reader.

More significant is the absence of a bibliography or index that might have made the work more useful. Further, more background might have been given in the preface regarding not only the Indo-Europeans and the Indo-European program of reconstruction, but the history and place of the Indic and Iranian traditions. The Iranian sources, the Avesta, the Bundahišn, the Dēnkart, and the Shāh Nāmeh are not discussed, nor are either the Rg Veda or the Mahābhārata of the Indic tradition. The uninitiated will wonder in vain about the nature of these sources.

As is so often the case with such works no guide is given to the pronunciation of the exotic transcriptions, apart from note 2 on page 18 regarding Kaca. I have supplied one in note 1. The matter of comparison is further confused by the various forms of the names as reflected in certain eras. I have supplied a list of correspondences for the more prominent personages in note 2. In short the work was made for the student of Indo-European, which is unfortunate since it has a significance that extends far beyond its intended scope.

As to Dumézil himself, there is the problem of the convoluted prose. His sentences are riddled with awkward parenthetical remarks, as on pp. 43-44:

> It certainly is possible, let us note in passing, that at the secular level such a type of holy man---he is no more than this in India, and probably still in the gāthās of Zarathuštra (unless the kavis there are not already, as is generally thought, petty rulers inimical to the new religion)---was able to attain elsewhere, in eastern Iran, some political power.

Or one may find the following even more turbid example, p. 63:

> Hardly had they made peace with each other after one of those outbursts when the tragic encounter of father and son took place---Rustam, the father, failing to recognize his son Sōhrab until he had fatally wounded him, at the end of a duel in which he himself barely escapes alive, because in this remarkable race of Sistanian heroes, the son is the equal of his father.

Such stylistic horror may reflect the haste in which Dumézil's prodigious output was probably written. They are not a product of the translations. Style alone is not the issue, however, for this convoluted manner obscures many of Dumézil;s most important arguments, such as the one on p. 94 about details being inherited, while it also hides much of his supporting data.

Dumézil urges the investigator to be respectful of the myth and its richness, but often this appears to lead Dumézil into a wealth of detail in recounting a myth that overwhelms the reader and seems to serve little end. Characteristic too is a style that I call "reverse" presentation. For example, on pp. 2-3 the stories of Iranian Θraētaona and Indic Tritya are laid out. Their significance and use for Dumézil, however, are only suggested at their end, so that the reader is first confronted by two tales and only afterwards told why the tales are presented. The whole book is a bit reversed. The prospectus at the end would have served admirably as an introduction into the significance of the whole work. Here, however, Dumézil's order is in part dictated by his quarrel with Iranianists, something most readers would be

unlikely to share.

Occasionally, there are odd assumptions being made that seem not to have been examined very closely. For example, on p. 4 an Indic hero, Kṛśāśva, and his Iranian cognate, Kərəsāspa, are said to have existed as historical figures, but no evidence is given for this assertion. One wonders if this pair is passed over because it runs counter to Dumézil's case that the other cognate pair, Indic Kāvya Uśanas and Iranian Kay Ūs, is mythical. Sometimes confusions seem to occur, especially if they are from sources cited by Dumézil. Thus on pp. 5-7, in a long passage cited from Marijan Molé, a manifest confusion arises between the ultimate source of weapons in the Indic and Iranian traditions. The Indic source is said to be other than an ancestor while the Iranian one said to be ancestral. Molé's own quote clearly supports non-ancestral origins in both traditions. Dumézil passes over this blatant error in silence.

Finally, there is a disturbing mysogynistic passage on pp. 87-88.

> ...the cautionary tales of any society emphasize the dangers inherent in a government of women, or influenced by women, or affording great freedom to women.
>
> First of all, as everyone knows, they lack judgment.

One might try to read into this some sort of ethnographic generalization about other cultures, but the most straightforward reading is simply as an opinion on Dumézil's part.

One must overlook such distasteful lapses and the other difficulties that I have mentioned and see in this work a brilliant example of what can be done by an insightful and careful analysis of a range of material wide both in space and time, and how the odd details culled therefrom can be reconstituted into a coherent earlier pattern that is otherwise utterly lost to us. Dumézil has retrieved a mythic figure from the period of Indo-Iranian unity, a time probably no later than 2,000 B.C. He can tell us considerable details about this figure as well. His name was *Kavi Ušan, with *Kavi most likely a title denoting one possessed of a certain knowledge that we would term magical. The figure was a brahmin set apart from his fellow caste members by this special knowledge that gave him control over life and death, over aging and resurrection. He was so powerful as to be morally and politically independent of both gods and demons alike. The demons sought his services so desperately that in effect he had mastery over them and their stupendous wealth. This wealth and his demon throngs may have been kept on a mountain top vastness. The link between him and his disciple was so strong that it was a symbolic father - son

bond, realized through some literal internalization of the disciple inside his teacher's body. He had a daughter who was fond of his disciple, but whose love was thwarted by her symbolic kinship with the disciple. She seems to have been troublesome and to have dominated her father. This figure may even have had a celestial correlate in the planet Venus and to have depicted that planet's motions by an aborted attempt to rise up to or storm by force the firmament. This celestial component may even have been based upon a pun between the words for venus and urine, and thus be tied in with the concepts of internalization and symbolic kinship. All this can be put forth with a high degree of certainty.

This is an astonishing achievement when one realizes that it has been done for a people who vanished at least 4,000 years go without leaving behind a single recorded word or reliably identified archaeological object. While Dumézil stops at the Proto-Indo-Iranian level, the stage is clearly set for a wider and more ancient comparison between this figure and other possible cognates elsewhere in the far-flung Indo-European world and its margins.

Notes

1 I give here an informal pronunciation guide to the transcriptions.

θ = θ̌ = th, as in 'thigh', also written as 'th' in Zarathuštra and Gāthās.

δ = voiced th, as in 'thy'.

th, dh, etc. in Sanskrit mark voiceless or voiced aspirates.

x = voiceless velar spirant, like ch in German 'Bach.'

ǧ = voiced velar spirant.

c = ch, as in 'church'.

š = sh, Avestan, as in 'shoe'.

ś = sh, Sanskrit, as in 'shoe'.

ṣ = retroflexed sh, as in the English pronounciation of 'Karsh'.

ṭ, ḍ, etc. are retroflexed stops, as in 'tree' and 'dream'.

ṛ = syllabic r, as in both syllables of murder. In some Sanskrit pronunciations it seems to have been [ri], thus Rig Veda, for Ṛg Veda.

ərə = r̥ in Avestan.

ṅ = ng in Sanskrit, as in 'sing'.

ŋ = ng in Avestan.

ṃ = in Sanskrit an nasal assimilated in point of articulation to the following consonant.

ḥ = in Sanskrit a phonetic variant of 's' in final position, pronounced either as a voiceless velar spirant, 'x', a voiceless pharyngeal spirant, or a simple 'h' with the previous vowel repeated.

Macron mark over a vowel, for example as with ā, denotes length, usually accompanied in present pronunciations of Sanskrit by a shift in vowel quality toward a more continental standard.
i = in Sanskrit the 'i' in 'bit'.
ī = in Sanskrit the 'ee' in 'beet'.
a = in Sanskrit the 'a' in 'sofa', a schwa.

ā = in Sanskrit the 'a' in 'father'.
u = in Sanskrit the 'oo ' of 'book'.
ū = in Sanskrit the 'oo' of 'boot'.
e = in Sanskrit a sound more like 'i' in 'bite'.
o = Sanskirt a sound more like 'loud' in 'out'.
Contrast in vowel length in Avestan may have been similar, but to the Sanskrit pairs Avestan adds 'e' vs. 'ē', and 'o' vs. 'ō'.

Avestan 'aē' is a long diphthong 'ai', as in 'hi!'.

A hook under vowel in Avestan denotes a nasalized vowel.

An acute accent mark over a vowel in Sanskrit denotes a high tonal accent. In Gaelic it denotes a long vowel.

2 The Iranian names vary in their form according to period. Avestan (Av.) is the oldest, followed by Pahlavi (P.) and Sassanian (S.), (just before the Islamic period), the last being carried down into modern Persian (Fārsī).

Kavi Usaδan (Av.), Kay Usan (P.), Kay Ūs or (Kay) Kaūs

Kavi Syāvaršan (Av.), Kay Siyāvaxš (P.), Kay Siyāvūš (S.)

Kavi Haosravah (Av.), Kay Xūsroy (P.), Kay Husrav (S.)

Kavi Kovata (Av.), *Kay Kovāt (P.), Kay Kobād (S.)

Θraētaona (Av.), Frīton (P.), Feridūn (S.)

Θrita (Av.), ..., Srīt (S.)

Franrasyan (Av.), Frāsiyāp (P.), Āfrāsiyāb (S.)

..., Sūtāvēh (P.), Sudābeh (S.)

Dumézil uses, by and large, the form of the name that goes with the particular episode or data at hand and its era, though he is not entirely consistent in this.

REFERENCES

Colarusso, John
1984 Parallels between the Circassian Nart Sagas, the Rig Veda, and Germanic mythology. In V. Setty Pendakur, ed. South Asian Horizons, vol. 1, Culture and Philosophy, pp. 1-28. Ottawa: Carleton University, Canadian Asian Studies Association.

Dumézil, Georges
1968, 1971, 1973 Mythe et épopée. 3 volumes. Paris: Gallimard.

1970 The Destiny of the Warrior. Alf Hiltebeitel, trans. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

1973 The Destiny of a King. Alf Hiltebeitel, trans. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

1978 Romans de Scythie et d'alentour. Paris: Payot.

Littleton, C. Scott
1982 The New Comparative Mythology, 3rd edition. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

Wikander, Stig
1949-1950 Sur le fonds commun indo-iranien des épopées de la Perse et de l'Inde. La Nouvelle Clio, 2: 310-329.

Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective
Louis Dumont. University of Chicago Press, 1986, pp. x+284, Cloth. US $27.50

R.J. PRESTON
McMaster University

This book, a translation of the 1983 original, is one of a cluster of very recent, very interesting anthropological critiques of contemporary individualism (Bellah et al. 1985; Burridge 1979; Carrithers et al. 1985; Beteille 1986). The goal of Dumont's book is to propose, through a series of essays that evidence the development of his perspectives, and especially through developed formulations in the final two chapters, "a format for the anthropology of modernity."

In the fullness of a career deeply inspired by his teacher, Marcel Mauss, Dumont combines two perspectives, social anthropology and the histroy of ideas, to examine contemporary global ideology. How will he set about such an ambitious project? "Practically, or methodologically, Mauss teaches us always to maintain a double reference - a reference to the global society on the one hand, and, on the other, a reciprocal reference of comparison between observer and observed" (1986: 5). Social anthropology, Dumont tells us, is still very much "a science in process of becoming", essentially an immature development of concepts that are becoming less and less overdetermined by their modern origins, and a development of theory that is still very limited in its generality of cultural reference, but becoming more able to account more adequately and completely for the given in our subject matter.

Modern ideology refers to a configuration of ideas and values that Dumont labels "individualism", which encompasses such cumulative and value-laden ideas as 1) people thinking of themselves as individuals, 2) the legal sanctity of private property, 3) a proclivity towards nominalism, and 4) the nation-state. He schematically traces the history of this configuration (from early Christianity to economics, chs. 1-3), examples its recent history in one nation (Germany, from Herder to Hitler, chs. 4-6), gives us an appreciation of Mauss (ch. 7) and from this background, poses his challenge to contemporary social anthropology (chs. 8-9).

Modern ideology as part of a global system is viewed in contrast to the ideologies of "traditional societies', by which he means specifically "higher civilizations" such as India, where he has done field work on ideology, and from which he substantially derives his concept of hierarchy (defined on pp.

223-233,247-254). And this is his central point: an ideology devoid of the recognition of hierarchy as a fundamental ordering principle of thought, he tells us, is a distortion of the holistic, inherent structure of experience. Further, there is a critically essential differentiation to be made between hierarchies of value and hierarchies of power. Failure to realize these fundamentals (or an insistence on their rejection in favour of the equalitarian mandate of individualism) is the mistake of our time, and promises a ruinous destiny. Nazi Germany is our warning that the ideology of that individualism has severe practical consequences, principally that it leaves open the way for the radical, uncritical, totalitarian leap to illegitmate universalistic constructs, such as the Reich. Perhaps he regards the example of India as somehow indicative of our best hope. In any event, he seems to have found, in this contrastive set (traditional India and modern Europe) a comparison that he can frame in terms of dichotomies clustering on the ends of a single, ideological continuum of individualism and holism. This has a didactic advantage, in that he can array an astonishing amount of information, without leaving the reader overwhelmed and bewildered.

Dumont is struggling, sometimes brilliantly, with interpersonal and global problems that each of us (individualistically) and all of us (holistically) live within. He brings a mature mind to the task of understanding our peculiar, in some ways exotic ideology, with the comparative objectivity of a vantage point partly learned during his sojourn in India (cf. Homo Hierarchicus), partly cultivated in decades spent in pursuit of the history of ideas (cf. From Mandeville to Marx). Aware that he has too few years left to come to a finished and complete synthesis, he has paused to give us what he has found so far.

REFERENCES

Bellah, Robert et. al.
1985 Habits in the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life. Harper & Row.

Beteille, Andre
1986 Individualism and Equality. Current Anthropology 27: 121-134.

Burridge, Kenelm
1979 Someone, No One. An Essay on Individuality. Princeton University Press.

Carrithers, Michael, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (eds.)
1985 The Category of the Person. Cambridge University Press.

Henderson, Louisiana: Cultural Adaptation in A Cajun Community. Marjorie R. Esman. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 1985 137 pp. Paper. Can $14.45.

NANCY ARBUTHNOT
McMaster University

Marjoire Esman's Henderson, Louisiana: Cultural Adaptation in A Cajun Community is one of the latest in a growing number of ethnographies which deal with non-native groups in North America. As such, it provides a highly readable and detailed description of many aspects of life in a Cajun community including ways of making a living, forms of social interaction, religion, sex roles, politics, and leisure activities. At the same time, Esman emphasizes that, contrary to popular stereotypes that depict them as a people "unchanged and unchanging" (p.1), Cajuns are very "flexible" and have successfully made "the transition from tradition to the modern world" (p.2). That is:

> Within the past two generations, Cajuns have been transformed from self-sufficient peasant farmers and fishers to a people predominantly involved in the U.S. (and international) cash economy, particularly but not exclusively the oil industry. Once largely isolated, they are now connected with the rest of the world via airports, interstate highways and television. Where they formerly spoke French they are now bilingual or even monolingual English speakers (p.1).

In the process of change a number of culture "traits" have been lost and new ones adopted. Nonetheless, many of the old cultural "patterns" such as Catholicism, the popularity of traditional foods, the "fun-loving spirit", the importance of family ties, and a strong sense of independence and self-reliance, have been retained. As a result, Cajun culture is presently "a mixture of old and new, a combination of traits preserved and those recently adopted" (p.9).

Esman argues that despite the changes which have occurred in "culture content", Cajun identity has not been lost, but rather redefined on various levels. This, in fact, is the central theme of her work. Yet, the subject of ethnic identity receives only superficial treatment. Clearly lacking is a definition and discussion of "ethnic identity", without which it is difficult to see how Cajun identity has been redefined and why certain factors are more important than others in reaffirming that identity. This is a serious failing given that the text, as a member of Holt, Rinehart and Winston's "Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology" series, is intended as a reader for students in beginning and intermediate courses in the social sciences.

Perhaps equally serious is Esman's failure to define, in precise terms, the relationship between culture and identity (and clearly one exists, for culture change in her account has evidently been accompanied by a redefinition of ethnic identity). It is not sufficient to merely state that the two are not coterminous. Recognizing that culture and identity are "not the same thing" hardly allows the reader to readily move beyond the basic assertion that the demise of traditional cultural patterns need not entail the loss of identity.

In short, Esman's Henderson, Louisiana: Cultural Adaptation in a Cajun Community is well-written and provides an excellent description of life in a Cajun community. Unfortunately, the development of her main argument and explanation of the ideas and concepts associated with it take a backseat to that description.

The Community Apart: A case study of a Canadian Indian reserve. Yngve George Lithman. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. 1984. vi + 186 pp. Paper. Can $8.95

JOHN MACDONALD
McMaster University

Lithman spent three years (1971-74) on the Maple River reserve (a pseudonym), personally involved in its administrative functionings, while gathering data to deal "...with one particular issue concerning the Indians, the continued existence of the impoverished, all-Indian rural reserve communities" (p.3). Maple River is considered a typical "type B" reserve community as characterized by its long and close association with the neighbouring white communities.

The history of the region and Maple River, from the early fur trading days to the present, is outlined in Chapter 1, along with reviews of some of the literature which has addressed the problem of continual Indian impoverishment (e.g., Dunning; Inglis; Carstans; Frideres; Elias and Stymeist). Lithman disagrees with these authors' conclusions because they focus on the reserve communities in order to comprehend the internal factors involved.

In Chapter 2 Lithman dismisses "Indian culture" as a viable strategy for overcoming poor socioeconomic conditions and therefore rejects "internal" factors as an explantion for poverty. Lithman demonstrates that interactions between Indians and non-Indians (i.e., inter-ethnic interactions) are defined "..as the result of White ability to influence Indian access and performance" (p. 60). Five types of inter-ethnic interactions are defined from Barth's discussions of ethnic groups and boundaries (1966, 1967, 1969).

Chapter 3 deals with the economic and political spheres within the reserve community. Lithman identifies twenty-five political "bunches" whose major aim is the fair division of economic resources provided by the federal Indian Affairs Branch. Other economic resources are also briefly outlined.

The final chapter discusses the "...emergence of an 'opposition ideology'" (p. 163) among the Indians as a response to the inter-ethnic interactions outlined earlier, where the Indians are observed to be subservient to White oppressors. Within an opposition ideology Indians have been able to embrace positive definitions of their 'culture' and negative ones for White society at large. Lithman argues that increasing transfer payments to Indians is a response to a growing opposition ideology. "Massive welfare programs have been instituted.

Although necessary, they contribute to a containment of the basic issue - the forced subjugation of the Indians in the Canadian society" (p. 175).

Because of the opposition ideology and the increased payments to reserve communities, Indians are seen to be choosing to live under present conditions rather than face "the injustices and indignities" (p. 172) outside the reserve.

Much of Lithman's argument is based on the typology, or levels, of opposition between Indians and Whites in duo-ethnic interactions. Although Lithman sees this relationship as one of dialectics, the reader is presented with rhetoric. In order to support his "dialectic" he presents select concrete examples of Indian representations of suppression. The other half of the duo-ethnic interaction - the Whites - is represented by hypothetical cases, and the reader is forced to accept Lithman's interpretations if the model is to be valid.

The presence of opposition ideology in maintaining the reserve community is not in question, only the existence and role of the five types of inter-ethnic interaction is suspect due to the lack of observed dialectic in this duo-ethnic model. Whereas Lithman views the opposition ideology as a product of inter-ethnic interaction, one questions whether these interactions were not a product of the opposition ideology. Lithman was forced to adopt his point of view because he rejected traditional cultural stereotypes as a cause for maintaining reserve communities. But in his bid to blame reserve maintenances solely on inter-ethnic relationships, he has simply introduced modern cultural stereotypes instead.

Atlas of World History. R.I. Moore, gen'l ed. New York: Rand McNally and Co. 1984. 182 pp. Paper. US $14.95.

DAVID JOHNSTON
McMaster University

This atlas provides a history of the world within a geographical context. Rand McNally utilizes, in the Atlas of World History, almost 100 maps to complement the text. The Atlas maps are accurate and easily read, providing a multitude of information at a glance. The volume contains short monographs by historians from around the world, each giving a simple historical synopsis of different regions. The Atlas uses an essay on world prehistory as an introductory chapter to open the text. It follows through the centuries, focussing mostly on Europe and its influence, concluding at present time with an analysis of contemporary society. The appendix contains a series of maps examining the development of the United States. The editor provides in his preface the aim of the Atlas: to show man's growth from isolated communities to global village.

The Atlas provides a vast supply of information and an adequate narrative on world history. Included at the end of each monograph is a useful list of sources for further reading. The text is written clearly and concisely but it is constricted by the Atlas format. Although the Atlas provides a reasonable synopsis of world history, in many cases it simplifies events too much, portraying change as monocausal. The text verges at times on portraying history as a series of dates and not as an analysis of changes and trends. Although providing a very abridged version of world history, the Atlas should be commended for the attempt. The volume would be most useful to high school students at whom it is probably aimed. This atlas successfully presents a short, simple and easy to read history of the world considering the magnitude of compressed information within its texts.

The Politics of Linguistics? Frederick J. Newmeyer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. viii + 172 pp. Cloth. U.S. $23.95

JEAN-PHILIPPE CHARTRAND
McMaster University

In The Politics of Linguistics, F.J. Newmeyer sets out to overview the political and moral issues and debates that have become entrenched in the discipline of linguistics over the last two centuries. He also examines the political dimension of the relationship between the discipline and the wider social agencies and institutions that have influenced the growth - and the decline - of research activity within the major linguistic theoretical perspectives in the twentieth century. The author is professor of linguistics at the University of Washington and has previously published Grammatical Theory: Its Limits and Its Possibilities and Linguistic Theory in America.

Newmeyer begins his analysis by conceiving of the field of linguistics as having comprised, historically, three major orientations: the humanist, sociolinguistic, and "autonomous" approaches. However, he is careful to point out that, contadistinct to the field of linguistics, the discipline (or profession) of linguistics has overwhelmingly adopted "autonomous" frameworks since the mid-nineteenth century, whereas the humanist and sociolinguistic orientations have flourished largely in other disciplines: literature studies and sociology. He argues that the fundamental characteristic separating the autonomous approaches from the other two major types is that the former have focused on those features of language that are minimally - if at all - affected by wider societal events and processes.

The discussion of the political conflicts within the field covers the central debates between the proponents of the three major orientations regarding the validity of the premises upon which autonomous approaches are based. Linguists have historically legitimized autonomy by asserting that it provides the only possible scientific framework for language studies. On the other hand, humanists have criticized autonomous orientations for ignoring the aesthetic and creative uses of language, as well as the value of language for transmitting cultural heritage. Sociolinguists, for their part, have attempted to demonstrate the futility of treating language as a system disembodied from the wider social, economic, political and cultural matrix in which speakers interact. More generally, Newmeyer is also concerned to show how the debates within the field have affected the nature of linguistic research. To this end, he examines how wider social institutions have supported the major orientations (through funding) in order to further their own political and ideological goals.

Following a brief introductory chapter, the author embarks on a lengthy and fairly detailed historical overview of the development of the discipline of linguistics. He traces the rise of the autonomous orientation to the formation of the field of comparative linguistics, which evolved during the wider romantic intellectual movement in nineteenth century Europe. Along with other romantics, the early comparativists emphasized the need to study human beings by referring to the wider social matrix in which they lived. However, they rapidly realized that their methodologies - particularly those used for reconstructing proto-languages - could be applied cross-culturally, (i.e. independently of the culture, society and personality of speakers). Newmeyer states that this realization, stemming from the practice of comparativist methods - as opposed to theoretical inclinations - eventually led linguists to accept the conceptualization of language as an autonomous system. This, in turn, encouraged the creation of linguistics as an autonomous discipline.

However, the discussion of the nineteenth century diachronic studies falls short of providing the reader with any account of the political conflicts or debates amongst the various schools that might have engendered the eventual demise of this theoretical framework. Instead, the author attributes two primarily ideational factors to the decline of diachronic studies and to the subsequent rise of structural linguistics. The first factor involves a transformation of scientific meta-theory during the late nineteenth century. Historicism had dominated most social science theorizing during the mid-1800's, to a point where a number of prominent linguists equated historical approaches with scientific methodology. While these linguists were publishing a large number of synchronic grammatical studies, they apparently did not consider this aspect of their work as being important. It was only when the inter-disciplinary identification of historicism with science weakened later in the century that they placed a greater value on their synchronic analyses. The second factor leading to the rise of structural linguistics involved an attempt to reconcile the identification of linguistic methodologies with the then-prevailing conceptualizations of science. This task was greatly facilitated by the formalism which structural linguistics brought to the conception of autonomy.

Newmeyer briefly presents the basic theoretical and methodological features of structural linguistics by elaborating de Saussure's classic distinction between "langue" and "parole". His straightforward discussion is non-technical for the most part, and consequently, should be easily understandable by lay readers. Essentially, he shows how the structural linguists' concern for discovering universal principles - ranging from phonological principles of sound patterning to morphological

characteristics of word formation - further strengthened the validity of autonomous orientations throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

It is concerning the rise of structural linguistics in Europe during the 1930's that the author begins to explore systematically the political debates over autonomous orientation. As the belief that language could contain an isolatable set of fundamental structural units gained popularity among the world's linguists, the notion of language as an autonomous system was increasingly being perceived as threatening to the ideologies of both established and newly formed totalitarian states. In the U.S.S.R., where linguistic research focused on the effects of class relations on speech patterns, structural linguistics was condemned as yet another product of bourgeois ideology. Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, for their part, rejected the perspective's egalitarian implications, since it encouraged the idea that all languages were equally complex.

Newmeyer then proceeds to examine the central factors responsible for the rise of the perspective in the U.S. He isolates three basic elements, which he discusses at length: (1) how the structuralists were able to present a clearly outlined set of problematic issues which gained professional attention; (2) how they could support their perspective by claiming it to be the only scientific orientation to language, and finally; (3) how these factors enabled them to obtain financial and organizational support from powerful interest groups. The author focuses on the structuralists' principle of egalitarianism as the major issue over which prominent linguists like Sapir, Bloomfield, and Harris managed to gain a high degree of professional - as well as wider public - visibility. The review of the political opposition to the perspective is essentially restricted to the counter-arguments of extremist (racist) prescriptive grammarians, who sought to prevent the liberalization of American education through the implementation of bilingualism programs for ethnic minorities. Unfortunately, the author overlooks the heated and intense political lobbying that to this day continues to take place at both local community and national levels. Instead, he shifts his analysis to the financial and organizational support structures of the perspective which ranged from the American Council of Learned Societies, to conservative Christian institutions like the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and to the Department of Defense's grant programs in the late 1950's.

His overview of the development of autonomous linguistic ends, quite expectedly, with a discussion of transformational-generative (TG) grammar. The analysis in this chapter closely parallels that of the preceding ones. The reader is first presented with a basic account of Chomsky's "standard theory" which is highlighted by a diagram that interrelates his fundamental concepts. Newmeyer then proceeds to explain the very

rapid rise of TG grammar, and its replacement of structural linguistics as the dominant paradigm in North America, by returning to essentially the same set of issues that were brought out in his discussion of the replacement of diachronic studies by structural linguistics.

The publication of Chomsky's Syntactic Structures (1957) paved the way for what T.S. Kuhn has called a 'scientific revolution" in linguistics. TG grammar not only changed the way in which linguists conceived of language, but also altered the standard criteria upon which they evaluated what constituted a scientific understanding of language. While Newmeyer implies that this revolution originally involved only intra-disciplinary processes (e.g., Kuhnian instances of proponents of old and new paradigms talking past each other, the resistance of old-guard structuralists vs. the revolutionary enthusiasm of their graduate students, etc.) he explores the "paradigm shift" in considerably more detail than in his view of the rise of structural linguistics.

The survey of the political issues specifically associated with TG research begins on a particularly interesting note. Chomsky's personal political beliefs (he is an anarcho-syndicalist) have been well publicized, and the author attempts to establish a link between them and his theoretical work. Unfortunately, Newmeyer's analysis rapidly reaches a dead end as he is forced to concede Chomsky's own conclusion that the two aspects of his work are very tenuously related. Following this disappointment, the reader is presented with a listing of the wider financial and organizational support structures that helped to foster the rise of TG grammar as a research perspective through the 1960's.

However, this seemingly straightforward review unveils a second surprising fact. Until 1970, the U.S. Department of Defense provided a significant source of funding for TG research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where Chomsky had been teaching since the 1950's. As the reader cannot help but recall Newmeyer's presentation of Chomsky's outspoken criticism of state organization in capitalist societies, it appears that the author's fact-digging has unveiled a major discrepancy between Chomsky's stated political beliefs and his actions.

Yet his treatment of the political issue is again disappointing. He immediately tries to defuse the discrepancy by referring to Chomsky's rationalization that, in a large complex industrial society, research results can be appropriated by any organization and used to further a multiplicity of political goals. Newmeyer then completely drops the issue, ending the discussion in the chapter by retreating to an overview of the interdisciplinary changes that occurred in North American linguistics throughout the 1970's and the early 1980's.

The author's analysis of the contradiction between Chomsky's statements and actions is striking on two grounds. First, in a general sense it seems puzzling that he would bother raising it if he is apparently in complete agreement with Chomsky's rationalization. Second, his abrupt dismissal of the entire issue will certainly not satisfy even moderately critical readers. While Chomsky's rationale is correct - almost to the point of being truism - one wonders why he would nevertheless defend financial support for TG research by the U.S. military. There is an enormous ethical difference between, on the one hand, willingly receiving support from an organization whose very existence one is critical of, and on the other hand being unable to prevent the appropriation of one's research results by that organization. Newmeyer does not even raise this point, let alone attempt to resolve it.

In the final two chapters of the book the author surveys the wider current conflicts between autonomous linguists, sociolinguists and humanists, and then puts forth several concluding arguments for reconciling the three orientations in order to engender a more harmonious political atmosphere in the field. His brief presentation of the humanist critique of autonomous linguistics covers essentially more moral rather than political issues. A major source of conflict rests on the humanist' charge that autonomous linguistics has depersonalized language (and by extension, speakers) by deliberately neglecting its holistic, aesthetic-impressionistic, and creative dimensions and properties. However, as the author reminds his audience that humanists conduct their work outside the discipline of linguists proper, readers may begin to suspect that his "conflict" is largely spurious.

His more detailed examination of the sociolinguists' critiques illuminates considerably more directly the political dimension of the relationship between the orientations. He traces the rise of sociolinguistics in North America to the growth in the wider populations' social consciousness in the 1960's and to the subsequent increase in government concern regarding ethnic minority problems. Data on government research grants for the late 1960's and early 1970's indicate a significant shift in funding towards socio-linguistic projects, which the author claims as having contributed to the decline of TG grammar as a research programme. Newmeyer then expands his analysis to the international scene. One of the more interesting parts in his discussion is his account of the marxist-based linguistic research in the Soviet Union during the late Stalinist era, when the bureaucracy gave priority to implementing nationalist policies. Returning to the political arena in the U.S., he ends the chapter by briefly presenting the more radical criticisms of autonomy by marxist and feminist sociolinguists. The latter have attacked autonomous linguistics' claim of its

"apolitical" nature - which is founded on more basic claims of scientific objectivity - by asserting that this is in itself a political statement of covert support for the wider social status quo.

After highlighting the major criticisms against autonomy, in the concluding chapter the author defends autonomous linguistics by attempting to demonstrate that the long-standing conflicts in the field have been, by and large, actually spurious. First, he points out that neither orientation is inherently more "progressive" than the others since research results from all three orientations have been used historically by wider social institutions for either constructive or discriminatory purposes. Second, since the non-autonomous approaches have evolved largely outside the discipline of linguistics, and since the three orientations have focused on mutually exclusive aspects of language, there is therefore no necessary reason why they could not co-exist harmoniously in a complementary relationship with each other.

For lay readers totally unfamiliar with language studies or with the philosophy of science, the book may seem original and informative. However, those more exposed to the issues raised in the analysis will likely find Newmeyer's treatment to be somewhat disappointing and superficial. For example, I would have appreciated having more detailed information on the factors responsible for the rise and decline of the various early perspectives. His historical-comparative approach might also have involved examinations of university departmental structures or of departmental policies concerning the recruitment of faculty and graduate students and of the degree to which scholars were successful in establishing research networks in each of the three orientations. Finally, if the latter are truly complementary, Newmeyer's plea for a reconciliation between them would have benefited from a consideration - even a brief one - of why the proponents of each orientation historically have not perceived the other one as being complementary to their own.

In a more general sense, I was surprised to find that Newmeyer did not systematically review any previous works concerning his subject matter. Therefore, his research and analysis may very well be ground-breaking for the discipline. In this respect, the book may simply be intended to generate further discussions of the comprehensive issues that could only be glossed over in this historical overview.

REFERENCES

Chomsky, N.
1957 Syntactic Structures. The Hague: Morton.

Newmeyer, F.J.
1980 Linguistic Theory in America. New York: Academic Press.

1983 Grammatical Theory, Its Limits and Its Possibilities. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.