

skin, he flung his arms round the head of the brute, and though the dragon in its tail bit him, he never relaxed his grip and pressure till it yielded. So he carried it off and ascended through Troezen. But Demeter turned Ascalaphus into a short-eared owl, and Hercules, after showing Cerberus to Eurystheus, carried him back to Hades.

14. *The Three Sins of Heracles*

Heracles is the Greek reflex of a far more ancient Indo-European mythic figure, argues Dumézil—a warrior figure who commits three sins, violating each stratum of tripartite Indo-European society. Dumézil here follows the account of Heracles' three sins preserved in the work of Diodorus Siculus, a Greek historian of the first century a.c. Heracles' twelve-year servitude to Eurystheus was only the first of three "penalties" the hero would suffer, each the consequence of his sin, each bound up with mental or physical ailment. Cognate heroic figures among other Indo-European peoples to whom Dumézil makes reference in this selection are Indra, warrior deity par excellence of India, and Staroatherus, the Danish avatar of a well-known Scandinavian hero (Old Norse Starkaðr), whose tale is preserved in the Gesta Danorum of the twelfth/thirteenth-century cleric Saxo Grammaticus. (RDW)

THE THREE SINS OF HERACLES

Georges Dumézil

Dare one hope that the foregoing considerations will encourage Hellenists to revise—paying attention not only to particular episodes but also to the general structures—the distressing treatment that the story of Heracles has been receiving for several generations?

This hero, the only pan-Hellenic hero, must certainly, in many Greek regions, have given rise to diverse traditions, new episodes, or variants of traditional episodes. But when his career finds him in Argolis, in Thebes, back in Argolis, then in many provinces of Greece, not to mention Lydia and the rest of the world, let us not jump so readily to the conclusion that we have before us Argive legends, Theban legends, etc., arranged artificially, belatedly set end to end, and that the first task of criticism is to disperse them again. It is to be expected that a hero of Heracles' type should be itinerant, that he should carry out many deeds in many places.

When Homer or Pindar make use of only one episode, or a fragment of an episode, and when, in this very fragment, they fail to transcribe some detail

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that other versions have led us to expect, let us not immediately conclude that they were unaware of all the other legends about Heracles or even of the particular detail itself. The poet may deliberately have said only what was useful to characterize, to evoke in passing, a personage from ancient times. And when so troublesome a matter as the hero's madness was in question, the poet may have refrained from saying anything.

Finally, let us rid ourselves of philological ingenuity. One of the most intelligent studies of these legends, still useful after three-quarters of a century, is, in my opinion, the *Vorwort* that Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf devoted to the "Raging Heracles." After scoffing at the comparative mythology of his time, which he found too facile—twenty years later he would also be able to dismiss the disappointing work of Leopold von Schröder on Heracles and Indra—he gave several detailed examples of the critical method. What confidence and what illusions! For example, with respect to the murder of the children: "Auch hier ist eine mühsame Voruntersuchung nötig, um auf dem zerstreuten Materiale die älteste Gestalt der Geschichte zu gewinnen, die dem Urteil über ihre Bedeutung allein zu Grunde gelegt werden darf" (1.81). *Eine mühsame Voruntersuchung*, "a tollsome preliminary investigation"; yes, let us free ourselves from these laborious preparations, which sometimes lack clarity (p. 87), and which are too often designed to give a scientific veneer to a preformed conviction.

With the fear and trembling that accompany such an indiscretion, I will insist only that the most general framework of the legends of Heracles, in its two most systematic presentations (Diodorus of Sicily and the pseudo-Apollodorus of Athens), is clarified and gains plausibility by comparison with that of the legends of Starkaðr the sinner, of Indra the chastised sinner, and generally by reference to the epic theme that we have delineated. The career of Heracles is in fact divided into three and only three parts, each ended by a serious sin which demands an expiation. And following the first two sins is a set of adventures that is presented as its consequence. The aftereffects of these sins bear heavily upon the hero, the first one in his mental health, the second in his physical health, and the third in his life itself. Finally, these sins correspond to the three functions, following the descending hierarchical order, since they involve, in turn, a hesitation before an order of Zeus, the cowardly murder of a surprised enemy, and a guilty amorous passion. Let us follow the account of Diodorus in his fourth book.¹

The Origin and Functional Value of Heracles [9]

Even before his birth, Heracles—who will not have three lives, but whose conception took three nights to prepare—is officially classified as a hero of the second function. Just before Alcmena's parturition, Zeus, who has sired him at Tiryns, announces in the presence of the gods that the first child about to be born will be king of the Argives. As a result, Hera checks the birth-pains of Alcmena and has Eurystheus born before he is due. Now Alcmena's child will not be king. In compensation, Zeus promises that after having served Eurystheus by performing twelve labors, Heracles will attain immortality. In the scene which follows the birth, the protection which the infant receives from Athena and the hostility he arouses from Hera—Hera the queen, Athena the warrior: let us recall the "tri-functional problem" posed by Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite to the unfortunate Paris—confirm the "second function" character of his destiny.

The First Sin [10.6–11.1]

Heracles is in Thebes. The tremendous services he has rendered have led the king to give him his daughter Megara in marriage.

... but Eurystheus, who was ruler of Argolis, viewing with suspicion the growing power of Heracles, summoned him to his side and commanded him to perform Labours. And when Heracles ignored the summons Zeus despatched word to him to enter the service of Eurystheus; whereupon Heracles journeyed to Delphi, and on inquiring of the god regarding the matter he received a reply which stated that the gods had decided that he should perform twelve Labours at the command of Eurystheus and that upon their conclusion he should receive the gift of immortality.

At such a turn of affairs Heracles fell into despondency of no ordinary kind; for he felt that servitude to an inferior was a thing which his high achievements did not deserve, and yet he saw that it would be hurtful to himself and impossible not to obey Zeus, who was his father as well. While he was thus greatly at a loss, Hera sent upon him a frenzy [*ἄϊσταν*],² and in his vexation of soul he fell into a madness [*εἰς μανίαν ἐπέπεσε*].

Then follows a whole cycle: the murder of his children, whom he pierces with arrows in his delirium, the painful return to reason, the submission to the will of the gods, the twelve labors accomplished under the order of Eurystheus with many sub-labors added according to circumstance, and finally a long series of exploits taking him throughout the world.

The Second Sin [31.1-4]

After Heracles had completed his Labours he gave his own wife Megara in marriage to Iolaos, being apprehensive of begetting any children by her because of the calamity which had befallen their other offspring, and sought another wife by whom he might have children without apprehension. Consequently he wooed Iole, the daughter of Eurytus who was ruler of Oechalia. But Eurytus was hesitant because of the ill fortune which had come in the case of Megara and replied that he would deliberate concerning the marriage. Since Heracles had met with a refusal to his suit, because of the dishonour which had been showered upon him he now drove off the mares of Eurytus. But Iphitus, the son of Eurytus, harboured suspicions of what had been done and came to Tiryns in search of the horses, whereupon Heracles, taking him up on a lofty tower of the castle, asked to see whether they were by chance grazing anywhere; and when Iphitus was unable to discover them, he claimed that Iphitus had falsely accused him of the theft and threw him down headlong from the tower. Because of his murder of Iphitus Heracles was attacked by disease [νοσησας . . .].

When Neleus refuses to purify him, he has Deiphobus perform the ceremony; but the disease does not disappear. For the second time he consults the oracle of Apollo, which answers "that he could easily rid himself of the disease if he should be sold as a slave and honorably pay the purchase price of himself to the sons of Iphitus." And thus we have the sale to Omphale, the bondage in Lydia, and a new series of exploits.

In this episode, Diodorus' account attenuates the fault of Heracles: he has indeed set a trap for Iphitus, his guest, by urging him to climb the tower from which Heracles will easily be able to hurl him; but just as Heracles is about to hurl him, he warns him, even if only by his reproaches, and the surprise is no longer total. In Sophocles' *Trachiniae*, the messenger Lichas offers a better explanation for the divine punishment:

. . . and when one day Iphitus came to the hill of Tiryns, searching for the tracks of the horses that had strayed, the moment his eyes looked one way, his mind on something else, Heracles hurled him from the top of that flat bastion.

But the King was angry with this act of his, he who is the father of all, Zeus Olympian, and had him sold and sent out of the country, since this was the only man [of all those killed by Heracles] he had ever killed by guile [ὄθουρον ἀπὸν μόνον ἀνθρώπων δόλοιο / ἔκτενον]. If he had taken vengeance openly [ἐμπαρῶς], [evidently in connection with his adversary], Zeus surely would have pardoned his rightful victory. The gods like foul play no better than do men. [269-80]⁴

Thus Heracles' fault is to have violated, contrary to his regular practice, the duty and the honor of the Strong-One by substituting the trap for the duel, by taking a man by surprise who should have been able to regard himself secure in Tiryns, his safety guaranteed by the unwritten pact of hospitality: one can sense how close we are to the episode of Namuci (or Vjtra) in the myths of Indra.

The Third Sin and the Death [37.4-38.2]

Heracles has finally found in Deianeira the lawful wife he had sought and who had been refused him since his separation from Megara. But before dying, the Centaur Nessus has given Deianeira a little of his blood which is poisoned by the arrow that has been dipped in the Hydra's venom, and has told her that if her husband should be touched by a fabric saturated with this potion, his affection, if one day it were found wanting, would be assured. Soon the hero forgets that he is married.

. . . as he was leaving the territory of Itonus and was making his way through Pelasgiotis he fell in with Ormenius the king and asked of him the hand of his daughter Astydameia. When Ormenius refused him because he already had for lawful wife Deianeira, the daughter of Oeneus, Heracles took the field against him, captured his city, and slew the king who would not obey him, and taking captive Astydameia he lay with her and begat a son Ctesippus. After finishing this exploit he set out to Oechalia to take the field against the sons of Eurytus because he had been refused in his suit for the hand of Iole. The Arcadians again fought on his side and he captured the city and slew the sons of Eurytus, who were Toxeus, Molion, and Clytius. And taking Iole captive he departed from Euboea to the promontory which is called Ceneaeon.

At Ceneaeon Heracles, wishing to perform a sacrifice, dispatched his attendant Lichas to Deianeira his wife, commanding him to ask her for the shirt and robe which he customarily wore in the celebration of sacrifices. But when Deianeira learned from Lichas of the love which Heracles had for Iole, she wished him to have a greater affection for herself and so anointed the shirt with the love-charm which had been given her by the Centaur, whose intention was to bring about the death of Heracles. Lichas, then, in ignorance of these matters, brought back the garments for the sacrifice; and Heracles put on the shirt which had been anointed, and as the strength of the toxic drug began slowly to work he met with the most terrible calamity. For the arrow's barb had carried the poison of the Hydra, and when the shirt for this reason, as it became heated, attacked the flesh of the body, Heracles was seized with such anguish [. . . τὸ χυτὸν διὰ τὴν θερμασίαν τὴν σάρκα τοῦ σώματος λυμαινωμένον, πρὶ αὐτῆς γενόμενος ὁ Ἡρακλῆς . . .]

Having fallen prey to such increasing and intolerable suffering (*ἀεὶ δὲ μάλλον τῆ νόσῳ βλαπνόμενος* [38.3]), the hero dispatches envoys to seek a third and last consultation at Delphi. Apollo responds: Let Heracles be carried onto mount Oete, with all his arms, and a huge pyre be built for him; as for the rest, it should be left to Zeus. And thus we have the pyre, the service of the young and pure Philoctetes who lights it, the bolt of Zeus, and the disappearance of every earthly trace of the man who has attained immortality.

Such is the three-act drama—three sins, three maladies, scanned by three Delphic oracles—which develops, in descending hierarchical order, in accord with the three functions. If the beginning of Heracles' epic (the role of the divinities of the first and second functions) and also its end (the death, suicidal in nature, after the third sin; the demand that a pure young man administer the killing) recall the epic Starcatherus, the details of the second (Iphitus) and third (Iole) sins are even closer to the second (Namuci) and third (Ahalyā) sins of Indra; in particular, the sin of the third function concerns sexual concupiscence, as with Indra, not venality, as with Starcatherus.⁵ Equally close to the Indian conception, in connection with Indra, is the theme of three "losses," which are the consequence of the three sins as well as their punishment: Indra's loss of *tejas* and then of *bala* (psychic force and physical force) after the sins of the first and second functions have the same quality as Heracles' loss of mental health and physical health after his sins of the same levels, with one difference: for Indra the three irreparable losses add themselves together to constitute in their progressive sum the equivalent of an annihilation, whereas for Heracles the first two sins are entirely atoned for, and it is the third, by itself, *ab integro*, which occasions his death. Let us draw no final conclusions about these partial agreements. It is still quite possible that, since the subject matter readily suggests definite oppositions and definite causal connections, one and the same epic framework could have been embroidered in convergent variations by the Indians, the Germans, and the Greeks. But first we must account for the framework, and our actual purpose is only to establish its existence in these three domains. Despite the variants, despite their multiplication in a fashion typical of Greek legends, despite, more especially, the frequent displacements of the Iphitus episode (second sin) in the course of the hero's career, perhaps Hellenists will agree to retain this new element of explanation and accept that fundamentally, at all times, before its further developments, the story of Heracles was marked out by these three ideologically interdependent episodes,

either in their present form or equivalent forms.⁶ In any case, it is harder to understand how these late compilers could have reinvented such a framework in a period when the memory of the ancient, prehistoric trifunctional structure was surely lost.

Notes

1. Citations from Diodorus are from the translation by C. H. Oldfather, Loeb Classical Library (1955).

2. ME 1:581–86.

3. See the excellent observations on the *Atropa* of Euripides' *Heracles*, compared to the Alecto of the seventh book of the *Aeneid* (less delicately shaded, "das Böse an sich"), in Vinzenz Buchheit's *Vergil über die Sendung Roms* (1963), pp. 101–2.

4. Michael Jameson, trans., *The Woman of Troas*, in David Grene and Richmond Lattimore, eds., *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, vol. 2, Sophocles (University of Chicago Press, 1959), Italics added.

5. See an analogous pair of variants in my *Tarpeia*, pp. 280–81 (Tarpeia betrays for love of gold, or for love of Tatiüs); cf. ME 1:428–30; 491 and n. 2; 560.

6. In the *Bibliotheca* of Apollodorus (2.4.8–7.7) the "scansion" of the multitude of Heracles' exploits by three sins and three curses (*τῶν τριῶν, 4, 12; δὲ τριῶν, 6, 2 ὁ δὲ ἄλλως ἕως τὸν χρόνον ἔσται, 7.7*) is very similar, with several reservations of which the most important bears upon the first sin and its connection with the first malady: (1) the madness in which he kills his children is visited upon Heracles (or rather upon "Alcides," still his name) by Hera, no longer after (and under cover of) the depression produced by an initial sin, but simply *κατὰ ὄλον*, from jealousy; no matter how involuntary, it is the murder of the children that determines the

character of the sin—a sin, moreover, of the "first function" since he defies the sacred ties of blood; (2) at the same stroke, the first consultation at Delphi is displaced: it comes, as is natural, after the event that is the fault; in this context, thus after the sacrilegious murder of the children (it no longer follows the disobedience of divine orders, given before the murder); the question that Alcides puts to the Pythian is "where he should dwell," and it is the priestess, in giving him the name "Heracles," who commands him to go and serve Eurystheus for twelve years and perform ten labors (which will become twelve); (3) the two other sins and the corresponding curses are presented as in Diodorus, but there is a consultation at Delphi only after the second, not after the third: it is on his own that Heracles, his flesh torn away, constructs his pyre (after having charged his legitimate son Hyllus to marry, when he came of age, Iole, Heracles' concubine, his partner in the third sin and the cause of his misfortune; all of which underlines the sexual character of this fault). It will be observed that neither in Apollodorus nor in Diodorus is any of the other acts of violence which Heracles commits in his long career, not even the odious murder of the *Klytaimenes*, the heralds of the king of the Myiars (Diod. 4.10.2; Apoll. 2.4.11)—and the heralds are from Zeus!—considered a fault, nor does any deed entail a divine punishment, sickness or otherwise.

18. *Indra the Sinner*
and
The Sins and Losses of Indra

In part 2, we encountered Dumézil's analysis of *Heraclès* as the Greek expression of the Indo-European warrior who sins against each of the three realms of society. *Indra* likewise knows such a sinner, inherited from the common Indo-European culture that is ancestral to Greeks and Indo-Aryans alike: he is the warrior god *Indra*, contends Dumézil, the very god lauded for his slaying of the monstrous serpent *Vṛtra*. *Indra's* three sins are the slaying of a three-headed monster (*Trīśiras*, the "Tricephal") called *Vīśvarūpa*—said to be a *Brahmin* among the gods and the cousin of the gods—with the assistance of one *Trita Āptya* (first-function sin); the cowardly murder of his former demonic opponent, the asura *Namaśi*, with whom he had made a pact of friendship (second-function sin); and the seduction of *Ahalyā*, wife of the *Brahmin* *Gautama* (third-function sin).

This role of the war god as sinner finds little expression in the collection of hymns that is the *Rig Veda*, that most ancient of Sanskrit documents; though the *Rig Veda* makes an apparent cursory reference to *Indra* having killed his own father (*RV* 4.18.12). In "*Indra the Sinner*," Dumézil addresses this silence. In the *Brahmanas*, commentaries on the *Vedas*, and the epics, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana*, however, *Indra* the sinner is depicted. Dumézil rehearses a particular expression of *Indra's* three sins in "*The Sins and Losses of Indra*" and explores ancient connections made between these sins and the persons of the sons of *Pāṇḍa*, heroes of the *Mahābhārata*. (RDW)

INDRA THE SINNER

Georges Dumézil

In the *Brahmana* and the Epics, *Indra* is a sinner. He is not, however, so designated in the *Rg Veda*. Hanns Oertel's efforts (1898)¹ to discover, in some passages from the hymns, a trace of censure, an allusion to what is later to be denounced as criminal or shocking, have come up with nothing convincing.

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When *ṛgVeda* 6.47.16–17 shows Indra sometimes inclined to help one person and sometimes another, abandoning his initial friends to take new sides, we need only refer to the context in order to understand that what the poet senses here is simply a manifestation, which he registers with neither blame nor complaint, of the *independence*, the necessary and wholesome *autonomy*, of the warrior god.² It is mere artifice to see here, as does Oertel, the breaking of the word which we encountered, on the level of the Brāhmaṇa, in the story of Namuci.

When *ṛgVeda* 6.46.3 calls Indra *sahasramuṣka*, "of a thousand testicles," this epithet surely alludes to the supervirility which every people readily attributes to its human and divine warriors: the songs of soldiers, century after century, continue to draw together the diverse offices of the male, just as the Avestan *Vərəθraṅna*, the god called upon for victory—in part homologous to Indra *Vṛtrahan*—is also invoked to obtain *ərəzōdīs xā*, *fontes testicularum*. But here there is no reason to look, as Śāyana does, for a precise reference to the sexual sins, the adulteries, of Indra which the epic literature will expose with such relish.

As to 5.34.4, the verse probably does not say what Oertel and many others have tried to make it say. The symmetry induces one to translate the *kilbiṣāt* of the last verse as an objective ablative, referring not to a fault of Indra, to which there will be no echo in the remainder of the hymn, but to the fault of a man with whom Indra, despite this fault, enters into a relationship. Accordingly, the meaning gains in both force and beauty:

From the one, whose father or mother or brother he, the strong one, has killed,
from that one he does not remove himself; making an arrangement, he seeks
even his offerings. From the fault he does not remove himself, he, the giver of
boons.³

"From the fault" means "from the guilty party." The intention of this verse as of the entire strophe is to remind us that Indra, in contrast, for example, to Varuṇa, keeps no tight accounts, acknowledges no blind paths of justice. He is not held back in his relations with men at that point where the two sovereigns must check themselves perform. This strong god, who upon occasion kills (that is his mission), is ready to become reconciled with the sons or brothers of his victims; and he does not automatically excommunicate the sinner.

There remains, in the hymn of Indra's painful "births" (4.18), the famous verse in which it is said that he killed his father (str. 12, v. 4). This would be grave indeed, if only we knew what was involved. But this dreadful crime has caused very little commotion, which seems strange when one thinks of the zeal

of the Brāhmaṇa and epics in spreading the worst and least of rumors about Indra. Moreover, in the strophe where it is mentioned, the crime is presented under such conditions that it comes out incoherent, nonsensical. One is strongly tempted to adjust the person of the verb: by changing a single letter, one will fall back on a theme of story and novel that is recognizable and clear, that of the future hero—such as Batraz of the Ossets—persecuted at his birth in every way and, in particular, left an orphan. The poet, full of commiseration, asks the unfortunate infant:

Who has made your mother a widow?
Who wished to kill you, lying still or moving?
Which god was compassionate with you . . . ?⁴

and then adds, in the fourth verse, against every expectation:

. . . when you seized your father by the feet and caused him to perish!

The strangeness of this last question is more than obvious: by what right can this child who has committed the worst of murders expect the pity of the gods? A paternal persecution, a sequence of the same type as that of the Ouranides, has been supposed, but that is gratuitous. The question initially posed in the first verse suggests rather that the persecutor "who has made your mother a widow" is unrelated to the family and that the father has been the victim of the same enemy or enemies as the mother and child. The strangeness disappears if, in the fourth verse, it is "someone" who killed his father, as, in the second verse, "someone" wished to kill Indra himself. We need only read *ākṣinan* (3d. plur.), "they [the enemies] caused to perish," or *ākṣināt* (3d. sing.), "he [the persecutor] designated by the "who" of verses 1 and 2] caused to perish" in place of *ākṣināh*, "you caused to perish." Whatever scruples one may have about tampering with the Vedic textual tradition, one must sometimes resign oneself to doing so.⁵

Thus, in the *ṛgVeda*, Indra has no criminal record. But let us not rush to proclaim him innocent, or to conclude that the fuss made about his sins must come from later times. Though Oertel does not succeed in his quest, he does at least, from the first page, wisely perceive its reduced importance.

If the Vedic hymns offer but little material of this kind, this fact is simply due to the character of these poems. They are invocations and songs of praise—*māhī* *nv* *śaya* *māhānam* *indriyān* *svār* *agnānta* *ānaśūh* (RV 8.3.13)—in which allusions of this sort would be manifestly out of place. An argumentum *ex silentio* would therefore here be patently wrong.

That is entirely true. The Vedic poets could hardly give a bad role to the very god they considered most useful, of such usefulness as is attested quite adequately by statistics alone. Courageously, as good servants, they would rather have assumed his more questionable responsibilities along with him. <One example of this attitude has been shown in the earlier part of this book.> In all later literature, the murder of the Tricephal entails a strain. The monster is at once both a brahman, chaplain of the gods, from a tradition that is probably post-Vedic, and the gods' first cousin, a feature that is certainly archaic. Now we have seen how the *R̥gVeda* mentions only a single time, and with a light touch only, with a single word, those social relations between the murderer and the murdered that make the slaying juridically questionable. Indra, according to 2.11.19, has delivered into Trita's hands the son of Tvaṣṭr, the son of "the one united [with him] by bonds of friendship," *sākhyaśya*. One seeks in vain, if one examines the context, for any trace of blame: it is for our sake, for us men, *asmābhyam*—in the person of Trita—that Indra has performed this delivery, and if the poet recalls it, it is to ask the god to continue the good work, as the inverted syntax of the phrase does indicate: "May we be able to triumph, to conquer all enemies, the barbarians, with your aid, with the *arya* [that is, probably, with you, the god of the *arya*], us unto whom you have formerly delivered . . ." etc." When one makes one's addresses to the divine striker, one cannot dictate the manner in which he strikes.

Having explained the *R̥gVeda*'s silence, and by the same token eliminated the objection which one might draw from it as to the antiquity of the representation of Indra's sins, one can only share Oertel's observation on the extent and importance which come to be attached to the theologem of Indra the Sinner, and even to the systematization of his sins, when we come to the *Bṛāhmaṇa* and the ritual treatises. Indeed, the authors have arranged his faults in lists which, with slight variations, can be found in the texts of various schools, and which allude to adventures which we know of only in part. Oertel cites *ĀitareyaBṛāhmaṇa* 7.28:

When the gods shunned Indra, saying: "He hath intrigued against Viśvarūpa, Tvaṣṭr's son [that is, the Tricephal]; he hath slain Vṛtra; he hath given the Yatis to the *sālvṛka*-wolves; he hath killed the Arurmaghas; he hath interrupted *Bṛhaspati*," then was Indra excluded from the soma-draught.

In *KausītakiUpaniṣad* 3.1, it is Indra himself who classifies his misconduct:

I killed the three-headed son of Tvaṣṭr; I gave the Arurmaghas, the Yatis to the *sālvṛka*-wolves; transgressing many a covenant [*bahvī*] *saṃdā* *atīva*-

mya], I smote in heaven the Prahlaḍīyas, in the atmosphere the Paulomas, on earth the *Kālakāṭjās*.

To these Oertel added a long passage (2.134) from *JaiminīyaBṛāhmaṇa*, that precious text from which he then published many extracts and made a special study:

The creatures condemned Indra, saying: "He hath killed the three-headed son of Tvaṣṭr, he hath given the Yatis to the *sālvṛka*-wolves, he hath killed the Arurmaghas, he hath interrupted *Bṛhaspati*, transgressing the covenant he had covenanted [*saṃdāḥm saṃhitām atīya*] he cut off the head of the asura Namuci." From these sins against the gods [*erābhyo dvakliḥ(sabhyaḥ)*] he walked away into the forest not descending [?] to the gods. He said to the gods: "Perform a sacrifice for me." "No," they said, "these agreements thou hast transgressed, thou hast committed those sins against the gods. We will not perform a sacrifice for thee." Now Agni might have been called his best friend; so among the gods he spoke to Agni: "Sacrifice for me." "Yes," he said, "but I desire some one among the gods with whom I may sacrifice for thee." He did not find any among the gods with whom he might sacrifice for him. He said: "I cannot find any one among the gods with whom I might sacrifice for thee." "Then do thou alone sacrifice for me." "Yes." Agni by himself succeeded. He performed this *agniṣṭu*. With that he sacrificed for him. With it he at once burned away all his [Indra's] evil. As a serpent would get rid of its skin, as one would pull the blade of the reed-grass out of the sheath, even so he got rid of all his evil.

This text is interesting in many respects, especially because it says in its own way that only fire could cleanse, could atone for this career in which sins were mingled with services. Here we have an optimistic version of what is also the lesson, with different nuances, of the *pyre* of Heracles, the burning of the impious Tullius by the bolt of Jupiter, and, in Iranian tradition, the moving dialogue with the god Fire, by which Zoroaster, in the other world, obtains pardon for *Karōsāspa*,⁶ the Iranian Hercules.

Even more than the *Bṛāhmaṇa*, the epic will also obligingly take note of the sins of the god Indra. But a particular type of sin comes to take on increased importance: the sexual sin, adultery, and especially adultery committed by seduction, surprise, or deception with the wife of a brahman. The prototype for this regrettable sin is surely the god's adventure with Ahalyā. Of this the *Bṛāhmaṇa* have little to say, but here again the *argumentum ex silentio* cannot be trusted; as early as 1887, Albrecht Weber remarked that in certain important

ritual formulas, those by which the soma sacrifice is announced on a fixed day to the gods (*subrahmanya*) and which, in particular, refer to Indra by a series of vocatives that allude to his qualities or his adventures, the following salutation is to be found: *Ahalyāyā jura, Kauṣika brāhmaṇa, Gautama bruvāna*, "spouse for Ahalyā, brahman Kauṣika, named Gautama." It is thus certain that in the definitely early period when this ritual was fixed, the story of Ahalyā was known: wife of the brahman Kauṣika Gautama, she was approached by Indra, as Alcmena was by Zeus when the god passed himself off as her husband. If the *Brāhmaṇa* do not incorporate this into the canonical list of the god's sines, one reason, at least, can be found. As sacerdotal literature, in contrast to epic, it would probably seek to avoid drawing attention to a type of conduct declared sinful yet glorified by an august divine example, which could easily establish an awkward precedent for the powerful of this world. It seems that one of the concerns of the brahman caste from its very beginnings as a caste, as can be seen from *R̥gVeda* 10.109, has been to protect its women from the schemes of princes and warriors.

Even if we did not have the evidence provided by the *subrahmanya* formulas, we could scarcely doubt the antiquity of this type of excess: the warrior everywhere takes liberties with the codes by which the *seniores* seek to discipline the ardor of young men, everywhere lays claim to "unwritten rights" to other men's wives, to maidenly virtue. Stig Wikander, in the first two chapters of his *Der arische Männerbund* (1938), established that even in Indo-Iranian times this sexual note clung to the conception of the *mārya*, "young man of the second function," and that it counted for a great deal in the condemnation thrust upon the *mārya* by the Zoroastrian reform (Avestan *mārya*, Pehlevi *mērak*).⁷ In other parts of the Indo-European world, on the level of legend, let us recall the rape of the Vestal Iliā by Mars, of Lucretia by the soldier Tarquin, the scandals which fill the histories of the Scandinavian *berserker*, the *contubernales* of King Frotho (Saxo Grammaticus 5.1.11),⁸ and the innumerable bastards sired by Heracles.

Notes

1. "Indrasya kilāṣiṇi," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 19:118-25.

2. <See above, pp. 61-62.>

3. Karl F. Geldner's version: "Der Mächtige geht dem nicht aus dem Wege, dessen Vater, dessen Mutter, dessen Bruder er erschlagen hat. Er fordert sogar noch Geschenke von ihm, wenn er Vergleich

macht. Er scheut vor keinem Unrecht zurück, der Verschwenker des Gutes."

4. Geldner: "Welcher Gott fand Gnade vor dir . . ." This interpretation of it appears to contradict the attitude of the gods toward Indra as indicated in the second verse of the preceding strophe, well rendered by Geldner (the words of the infant

Indra's mother): "Mein Sohn, jene Götter lassen dich im Stich." Moreover, everywhere else in the *R̥gVeda*, the gods are givers, not beneficiaries of *mārdkā*, "pity, favor, grace" (root *mrd-* "to pardon, to spare, to be favorable").

5. One could object to these considerations on the grounds that, on the contrary, we should keep *akṛmā*, since it is the *lexico-difficilis*. If one chooses this alternative, the fact remains that no other passage in the hymnal mentions the parricide of Indra, and the enormous crime appears in none of the lists of Indra's sines recorded in Vedic prose literature.

6. Henrik S. Nyberg, "La légende de Karasāpa," *Oriental Studies in Honor of Giuseppe Eraci* (Pavia 1933), pp. 336-43; in the first text published

(*D̥m̐art* 9, analysis of Śūkar Maṣk, 14), Karasāpa reports of "having killed men without number"; but his principal sin, for which Ōhrmazd reproaches him and the god Fire demands the punishment of hell, is having "struck the fire."

7. After numerous discussions, often misdirected, this interpretation of *mārya*, like the general thesis of the book, has gained credence. Manfred Mayrhofer, *Kurzgef. etym. Wörterbuch des Altindischens*, s.v. (1957): 596-97, Louis Renou, who in *Études védiques et pāṇiniques* 4 (1958): 49 justly defined *mārya* "terme mi-érotique mi-guerrier" (for *RV* 3.54.13), was less inspired when he deleted the second element in *ibid.*, 10 (1962): 64 (for *RV* 1.64.2).

8. <See below, pt. 3, chap. 4 at n. 9.>

THE SINS AND LOSSES OF INDRA

Let us now turn our attention to a relatively recent text, in which the theory of Indra's sins appears in a remarkable form: book 5 of the *MārkaṇḍeyaPurāna*.

At the beginning of this *Purāṇa*, Jaimini, a disciple of Vyāsa, seeks out Mārkaṇḍeya to get him to resolve some difficulties concerning the *Mahābhārata*. The sage refers him to certain birds, as famous for their intelligence as for their sacredness, and so it is that, in the fourth section, we learn of the four points which trouble Jaimini about the great epic: What led Janārdana, or Viṣṇu, to assume human form? How did Kṛṣṇā, or Draupadī, become the common wife of the five Pāṇḍava brothers, the principal heroes of the poem? How was Baladeva, or the third Rāma, the brother of Kṛṣṇa, expiated for the murder of a brahman? How could the sons of Draupadī all die before being married? By the end of the fourth section we are enlightened as to the incarnations of Viṣṇu, and the fifth takes up the truly delicate problem of the polyandric marriage of Draupadī.¹

I have already alluded to Stig Wikander's memorable article published in 1947, "The Legend of the Pāṇḍava and the Mythical Basis of the *Mahābhārata*," and its important findings.² These five brothers, engendered successively by the functional gods in the wombs of the two wives of Pāṇḍu, have an ordered relationship of their own, forming a hierarchized functional team. In numerous epic passages their respective modes of behavior, whether they are acting alone or together, offer an excellent definition of the three functions which

are at the base of the Vedic, Indo-Iranian, and Indo-European ideology. Thus, in total independence of the system of *varna* or strict social classes (brahmins, *ksatriya*, *vaiśya*)—which is an essentially Indian development, a hardening of the social structure around the principle of the three functions—and with traits that are almost more Iranian, in any case more Indo-Iranian, than Vedic (for example, the role of *Vāyu* within the warrior function, which is very nearly effaced in the *Veda*), vast sections of the *Mahābhārata* present themselves as a series of variations on the theme of the three functions and as a projection on the human plane, in heroic adventures, of the ideology which gave life to that grouping of gods which is like an axis for the Indo-Iranian pantheon: the sovereigns *Mitra-Varuṇa*, the warriors *Vāyu* and *Indra*, and the beneficent twin *Nāsatya*.

Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest, is the son of *Dharma*, "Law, Order," a rejuvenation of the concept of *Mitra*. Of the five, he alone is king, a thoroughly just and virtuous king.

Next come two warriors of very different natures: *Bhīma*, son of *Vāyu*, "the wind," is a brutal and not very intelligent Hercules, one who acts readily on his own, armed with a simple mace, but above all sustained by his colossal force; *Arjuna*, *Indra's* son, is the warrior-knight, leader of the army, master of the bow and of all classic weapons.

The group is completed by a pair of twins, *Nakula* and *Sahadeva*, sons of the twin *Nāsatya*; beautiful, amiable, servitors devoted to their brothers, they are also, as a characteristic episode demonstrates, specialists in the care of cattle and horses.

We have only begun to take stock, for the interpretation of the *Mahābhārata*, for the history of Indian thought, for the detailed analysis of the Indo-Iranian ideology, and even, by contrast or by analogy, for the study of the Persian Book of Kings, of the consequences of this discovery, which, now that it has been made, looks easy and obvious, but which no one had made before Wikander.³ As to the shocking nature, from the *ārya* standpoint, of the figure of *Draupadi*, the common wife of the five brothers, Wikander immediately succeeded in proposing the first simple and satisfactory explanation. In Indo-Iranian mythology, to judge from the Vedic and Avestan materials that have been conserved, the team of the functional gods is completed by a single goddess, who ideologically is not confined to any of the three functions, but is situated, and operates, within them all. Her nature is thus synthetic, as is probably signified by the

curious triple name which the Avesta gives such a goddess: "The Humid (third function), the Strong (second), the Pure (first)," *Arəvi Sūrā Anāhitā*.⁴ The Indian epic has expressed this fundamental idea dramatically, on the human plane, by matching the trifunctional team of the five *Pāṇḍava* with a single woman, their common wife.

It is this archaic theory of the three functions, expressed in the group of *Pāṇḍava*, which we are now about to see the *MārkaṇḍeyaPurāna* connect and adjust to the theory of the sins and punishments of *Indra*, presenting the latter at the same stroke in a systematic and trifunctional form. Here follows the literal version of the text, hardly poetic but tightly constructed, which I have divided into its natural sections, indicating the numbers of the twenty-four distichs.

I. (A) *The First Sin*

- 1 Once, when he had killed the son of *Tvaṣṭṛ* [that is, the *Tricephal*], oh brahman, the majesty [*tejah*] of *Indra*, overpowered by this brahmanicidal, underwent a considerable diminution;
- 2 It entered the god *Dharma*, this majesty of *Sakra* [= *Indra*], because of this fault; and *Sakra* found himself deprived of majesty [*nistējāh*], when his majesty went over into *Dharma*.

(B) *The Second Sin*

- 3 Then *Tvaṣṭṛ*, lord of creatures, learning that his son had been killed, tore out one of the chignons he wore as an ascetic, and said:
- 4 Let the three worlds with their divinities today see my force! Let him see it, the brahmanicide of evil thoughts, the punisher of the demon *Pāka* [= *Indra*],
- 5 by whom my son, devoted to his duty, has been killed!" Thus having spoken, eyes red with anger, he placed his chignon on the fire as an offering.
- 6 Out of that *Vṛtra*, the great asura, came forth, amidst garlands of flames, with great stature and enormous teeth, comparable to a mass of ground collyrium.
- 7 Enemy of *Indra*, of immeasurable essence, fortified by the energy [or majesty: again *tejah*] of *Tvaṣṭṛ*, he grew each day the length of a bowshot, he, the being with the great force.

- 8 Seeing that Vṛtra, this great demon, was destined to kill him, Śakra, wishing for peace, sick with fear [*bhayaṭurah*], sent the seven sages to him,
- 9 who, between him and Indra, made friendship [*sakhyam*] and agreements [*samayān*], they, the sages of pious soul, devoted to the welfare of all beings.
- 10 When, in violation of the agreement [*samayasthitim ullāghya*], Vṛtra had been killed by Śakra, then, overwhelmed by the murder [he had committed], his physical force [*balam*] declined.
- 11 This physical force, having escaped from Indra's body, entered Māruta [another name for the Wind, Vāyu] who penetrates all, invisible, the supreme divinity of physical force [*balasya . . . adhidāivatam*].

(C) *The Third Sin*

- 12 And when Śakra, having assumed the appearance [*rūpam*] of Gautama, had violated Ahalyā, then he, the Indra of the gods, was despoiled of his beauty [same word as for "form, appearance": *rūpam*]:
- 13 The gracefulness of all his limbs, which charmed so many souls, abandoned the tarnished Indra of the gods and entered the two Nāsātya.

II. *The World's Distress*

- 14 Having learned that the king of the gods was abandoned by his justice and his majesty [*dharmena tejasā dyakṣam*], deprived of physical force [*balahīnam*], and without beauty [*arāpīnam*], the sons of Diti [demons] undertook to conquer him.
- 15 Desirous of conquering the Indra of the gods, the Daitya, extremely strong, oh great muni, took birth in the families of kings of immeasurable vigor.
- 16 Some time thereafter the Earth, oppressed by its burden, went to the summit of mount Meru, where the denizens of heaven have their abode.
- 17 Crushed by so much burden, she told them the origin of her suffering, caused by the Daitya, Danu's sons:
- 18 "These asura with vast strength, whom you had overthrown, have all come to be born in the world of men, in the houses of kings;

- 19 their armies are numerous and, oppressed by their weight, I am sinking down. See now, you thirty [= the gods], that I find relief."

III. *Birth of the Heroes*

- 20 Then, with portions of their energy [*tejah*], the gods descended from the sky to the earth, for the service of creatures and to lift the burden from the earth.
- (A) 21 The male [Dharma] himself set free the majesty [again *tejah*] which had come to him from the body of Indra, and in Kunti (the queen, Pāṇḍu's wife) he engendered the King, Yudhiṣṭhira of great majesty [*mahātejah*].
- (B, B') 22 The Wind then set free the physical force [*balam*], and Bhīma was born; and from the half [the remainder] of the vigor [*vīryam*] of Śakra, Pārthi Dhanañjaya (or Arjuna) was born.
- (C) 23 The pair of twins [*yamaia*] [Nakula and Sahadeva, engendered by the Nāsātya] came into the world in [the womb of] Mādrī [second wife of Pāṇḍu], endowed with Śakra's beauty [*rūpam*], adorned with great luster;
- (D) 23 [In continuation] Thus the blessed Śatakratu [or Indra] descended [and incarnated himself, *avaṛīṇah*] in five parts,
- 24 and his most fortunate wife Kṛṣṇā [or Draupadī] was born from the Fire: [consequently] she became the wife of Śakra alone, and of no other.

Whoever the author and whatever the epoch when it was established, this complex account is admirably trifunctional.

The functional values of the five Pāṇḍava, recognized by Wikander, are covered here not only by the names of their divine fathers, but by abstract substantives which fittingly characterize the essence of each function: *tejas*, a somewhat vague term, taken even here with diverse connotations, but one which always indicates, in opposition to the force of the body, a power of the soul, correlates with the god and the hero of the first function, Dharma and Yudhiṣṭhira. Two varieties of physical force, *bala* and *vīrya*, the first certainly more athletic and brutal, are attributed to the two gods and the two heroes of the second function, Vāyu and Indra himself, Bhīma and Arjuna. And beauty, *rūpa*, comes from the pair of divine Nāsātya to adorn the human twins, Nakula and Sahadeva.

But these various elements, these powers whose harmonious incarnation produces the team of the Pāṇḍava, are only transmitted to the sons from the gods, their fathers. On their part, the gods have received them from a sort of three-staged disintegration of Indra, resulting from three sins. The substratum of the three functions can be discerned just as clearly in these three sins as in the three losses that follow them:

1. The loss of *tejas*, spiritual force or majesty, is provoked by a sacrifice and by an outrage against the social structure at its most exalted level: a brahmanicide.
2. The loss of *bala*, physical force, is provoked by a sin which, while remaining a breach of contract, is also considered cowardly, since the conclusion of the pact was provoked by fear before a superior force.
3. The loss of *rūpa*, beauty of form, is provoked by an adultery committed with the help of the shameful fraud of changing into another's form.

Brahmanicide, fear bringing about a dishonorable act, and adultery: the three sins, like their punishments, are situated respectively in the domains of the religious order, the warrior ideal, and well-regulated fecundity.

Given the literary genre in which it appears, one is inclined to see in this systematization of the faults of Indra a late arrangement, made by an intelligent author, of the older, less-organized traditions concerning Indra's sins. This is possible. But it must be acknowledged that if it was conceived in a period when Aryan India no longer meditated on the functions as such and knew only the guidelines of the three social classes, the arrangement still presents, on the third level, a conception that arises from the Indo-Iranian or Indo-European third function, and not from the third social class of India. By no Indian thinker was beauty thought of as characteristic of the class of breeders and agriculturists, the *vaiśya*, and, for that matter, neither was sensuality and the sins it entailed. In classical India, such men were defined solely by their planting and stock-raising activities. In contrast, in Indo-European times, and still in the Vedic period (the *Asvin* were "masters of beauty"), the third function, along with opulence and fecundity, included other attributes, beauty and sensuality among them, with their own conditions and consequences.⁵ These latter were not lost by the Scandinavian gods Freyr and Freyja; nor does the functional goddess Aphrodite neglect them in the well-known legend in which, as the competitor of Hera, giver of sovereignty, and of Athena, giver of victory, she offers Paris nothing less than "the most beautiful woman."⁶ So in the Pāṇḍava legend,

beauty, just as much as competence in matters of breeding and an aptitude for service, is the characteristic of the twins, a trait which, like the identity and importance accorded to the god *Vāyu*, roots this legend directly in the Indo-Iranian and Indo-European ideology. We must therefore suppose, at the very least, that the author of this late arrangement had exceeded the ideology of his contemporaries and reconstituted the rich "third function" of former times.

His treatment of the second sin, the violation of the pact concluded with *Vṛtra* (substituted here, as often in the epic, for *Namuci*), is no less archaic. It lends authority to one element that the ancient forms of the episode could not eliminate, since it is fundamental to them, but which they could scarcely proclaim: though Indra had concluded the initial agreement and this dubious friendship with the demon, instead of treating him at the outset as the warrior god must treat every demon, it was because he did not feel himself equal to the task, because he was afraid. All that follows is merely the result of this defect in the essential vocation of the warrior, in his force and his pure bravery. The author of our text makes this element explicit: at the very beginning of the scene, he says (distichs 8-9): "Seeing that *Vṛtra*, this great demon, was destined to kill him, Indra, wishing for peace, sick with fear, sent the seven sages to him, who, between him and Indra, made friendship and agreements..." And Indra's punishment is exacted in the loss of this physical force, *bala*, in which, for once, he did not dare put his trust.

These archaic, even fossil-like treatments of the third and second level are better explained if we assume that the theme of the three sins that the warrior commits within the framework of the three functions already existed before the author of the *Purāna* applied it to Indra.⁷

As for the idea that guides this whole development, it too is ancient: the warrior, by his actual weaknesses, loses his virtual powers, and from these lost powers, new beings are born. In the story of *Namuci*, inasmuch as it is the myth that justifies the *sastrāmani*, the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* presents an analogous disintegration, though it is only in the animal, vegetable, and mineral realms that the lost powers are productive, and not in terms of gods or men.⁸

In the *Avesta* a very similar theme can be found, but there it is applied not to a god or hero homologous to Indra—*Vərəθraǵna* or *Kərəsāspa*, for example—but to the complex, total, trifunctional personage of *Yima*, the most illustrious of the "first kings." Immediately after presenting *Yima* in his majesty and power, *Yast* 19—the "*Yast* of the Earth," actually almost entirely dedicated to the sovereign

power, the *x'arānah*, a sign which may assume diverse forms, which appears on the prince designated by God, accompanies him in his actions, and leaves him when he has become unworthy—warns us, at the end of verse 33, that this good fortune will last only until Yima should begin to give himself over "to the deceitful, false world." Yima, indeed, sins gravely. One could even expect to see him commit three sins, since the *x'arānah* leaves him three times over, if we translate literally, since three *x'arānah* leave him in succession. This is not the case. There is never more than one sin: in the *Avesta*, it is the lie, the greatest sin of Mazdaism; in later texts, it is pride and revolt against God, or even the usurpation of divine titles, all sins against the rules and proprieties of the first function.⁹ The consequences of the sins, however, are set in a triple structure; and this structure, in the two known variants, is as clearly trifunctional as that of the incarnations of Indra's lost powers.

According to Yašt 19.34–38, the first of the three *x'arānah* of Yima comes to reside in Miθra, "the lord-of-land of all lands, which Ahura Mazdāh has made, of all the *yazata* of the world of spirits, the most suited for the *x'arānah*"; the second in θraētaona, "son of the clan of the āθwya," who killed the Tricephal; the third in "Kərəsāspa of heroic soul," "the strongest of strong men," the Iranian Hercules, whose labors, here as so often, are obligingly enumerated. It is clear, as Darmesteter recognized, that Miθra and Kərəsāspa represent the first and second functions respectively. The attribution of the third—agricultural prosperity—to θraētaona raised a difficulty which Darmesteter began to alleviate, and which, in the first part of the present book,⁸ has been completely eliminated.¹⁰ In any case, no such difficulty can be pointed to in the explicit affirmation of the second variant, from *Dēnkart* 7.1.25–32–36, which says that one third of Yam's *x'arr* (the Pehlvi form of Avestan *x'arānah*), related to agriculture, passed into Frētōn (θraētaona), who immediately eliminated plague and sickness by medical treatment; one-third, relating to the warrior estate, passed into Karšāsp (Kərəsāspa); and one-third—that of the "sovereign function," although this time the word itself is not declared—passed into Ōšnar (Aošnara), who is presented in these terms (§§36–37; from the translation by Marijan Molé):

In the same epoch it [= the "transmission of the word"] returned, thanks to the Glory [*x'arr*] of Yam, to Ōšnar who was very wise, when he was in the womb of his mother. Speaking from his mother's womb, he taught her several wonders. At his birth, he struck the Evil Spirit and refuted the propositions [*frāšnān*] of mar Fračya, worshipper of the *dēv*.

He became minister for Kayus and administered the seven continents under his dominion. He discovered [and] taught the art of ordering speech and several other sciences useful to men; and the non-Arya were defeated in debate. He lavished the wisest counsels in the lands of the *arya*.

It can be seen that the three functions are presented clearly, regularly, and in ascending order: the agricultural function and the warrior function are properly depicted and the first function is abundantly described, joining the faculty of intelligence with the science of administrative technique on the highest level, and also with certain more precise features of this class of "scribes," who often attempted to create an advantageous place for themselves on the social ladder. The test of intelligence in the demon-debater is conquered by Ōšnar takes its place beside the Vedic practices attested, among the priests, by the important contests of enigmas, to which Louis Renou has recently drawn attention, and the ordeal by questions, in the *Mahābhārata*, to which Dharma, himself invisible, submits the Pāṇḍava, and to which, naturally, only his own son, "the Pāṇḍava of the first function," can respond.¹¹

The plan and object of this legend accord well with the plan and object of the fifth book of the *MārkaṇḍeyaPurāṇa*. In both cases an eminent figure, a *ṛṣi* or a god, commits certain sins—once here, three there—which deprive him in three stages of the three factors of his eminence. And these factors are defined by the three fundamental functions: Yima loses three *x'arānah*, or the three parts of his *x'arānah*, one related to the sacred and the intelligence, one to the warrior force, and one to agriculture and health; Indra, for his part, first loses majesty or spiritual force, then physical force, and then beauty, as a consequence of his three sins—against the sacred, against bravery, and against the conjugal bond. But these factors of eminence are not lost: the three *x'arānah*, lost by Yima, inspire three heroes; and the three advantages lost by Indra pass over into the functional gods who correspond to them, whereby, each in its turn, these advantages are enabled to engender the team of functional heroes in whom Indra finally, in fragmented form, is revived.

Notes

1. This text has been treated differently, from the viewpoint of Draspañi, and in connection with *Mōh* 1.1189.1–40 (= *Calcutta* 197.7275–7318), in *ME* 1:201–24.
2. See above, pt. 1, chap. 1, n. 1.

3. This is the subject of the first part of *ME* 1:51–257.

4. See above, pp. 16–17.

5. In a scene, surely archaic, from the ritual of the *asvamedha*, the Vedic horse sacrifice, the

cause-and-effect connection between beauty and fecundity is set forth clearly: *Sat.Śrōṭm.* 13.1.9.6; cf. ME 1:59 (and, for opulence and sensual gratification, p. 491 and p. 560, n. 2).

6. "Les trois fonctions dans quelques traditions grecques." *Essai de l'histoire vivante - Mélanges Lucien Febvre 2* (1953), pp. 25-32; now see ME 1: 580-86 and the parallel cases, pp. 586-601, and on a question of method, "L'idéologie tripartite," MM. W. Pötscher and M. van der Bruwaene, *Latinitas* 20 (1961): 524-29.

7. See the passage from the first book of the *Mahābhārata*, <cited above, chap. 7, n. 1.>

8. See Tarpeia, p. 123.

9. In the third part of ME 2, I shall examine, going beyond the parallel described here, the record concerning the "sin of the sovereign," different from the "sins of the warrior."

10. <See above, pp. 17-19.>

11. ME 1:62.

19. Śiśupāla

Indra is not, however, the only triple-sinning warrior known in Indic tradition. This prehistoric Indo-European mythic figure also finds expression in Śiśupāla, the warrior who commands the army of Maṅadha, a rival kingdom that emerges as a threat to the Pāṇḍava king Yudhiṣṭhira, early in his reign. After the threat is neutralized by the slaying of Jarāśamḍha, king of Maṅadha, a great ceremony of royal consecration is held on behalf of Yudhiṣṭhira, at which Kṛṣṇa, cousin and companion of the sons of Pāṇḍu, openly proclaims five atrocities that Śiśupāla has committed—sins that span the three functions of Indo-European society. The tale is told in Book Two of the Mahābhārata. (RDW)

ŚIŚUPĀLA

Georges Dumézil

The Birth and Destiny of Śiśupāla

Śiśupāla is, in the *Mahābhārata*, an incidental character.¹ Close kinship ties exist and hostile relations develop between him and Kṛṣṇa, but he has no blood relation nor alliance with the Pāṇḍavas, and does not have to intervene, on one side or the other, in the conflict in which all the great names of the epic confront each other; he is put to death beforehand in Book Two. Still, according to the rules of the game, this apparently wholly human being is the incarnation of a being from the beyond, the powerful demon who in several previous lives has already confronted other incarnations of Viṣṇu: Hiranyakaśipu, whom the god fought and slew in the guise of the man-lion; later Rāvaṇa, over whom Viṣṇu-Rāma prevailed with difficulty.² These antecedents barely enter into the plot of the poem, simply justifying that Śiśupāla should be by nature a determined adversary of Kṛṣṇa-Viṣṇu. But, in accord with another rule of transposition, this deep causality is replicated on the earthly level by another, more immediate and more novelistic one.

Śiśupāla is introduced in the following way. After their childhood, and despite their already serious conflicts with their cousins, the hundred sons of

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