

THE ARCHAIC SLAVIC RELIGION IN A PERSPECTIVE OF GEORGES DUMÉZIL'S COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The presented paper deals with the application of Dumézil's comparative mythology on religion of ancient Slavs. I will briefly introduce the life and method of Georges Dumézil and examine the influence of Durkheimian sociology and Lévi-Straussian structuralism on his research. A short summary of his focal theory of tripartite, three-functional ideology will be presented as well. Then I will present an analysis of Slavic archaic social stratification by means of tripartite ideology; I will also accentuate the importance of Slavic religious specialists, i.e. the „priestly class“, and also the need of searching of (supposed) clearly articulated tripartite theological structures of Slavic paganism, especially in cultic practices. In the last third of this work, four possible dumézilian interpretations of Slavic pantheon will be demonstrated. Each function will be examined on the basis of primary sources reading and secondary interpretations. In the concluding synthesis there will be shown the antithetic, yet complementary character of given academic theories and interpretations and subsequently I will evaluate the dumézilian hypothesis in general. Furthermore its contributions as well as inherent difficulties will be reconsidered in relation to the well-known problems of the scientific study of the Slavic religious system in general.