

C. Scott Littleton, *The New Comparative Mythology: An Anthropological Assessment of the Theories of Georges Dumézil*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1966.

The book is an exhaustive summary of Dumézil's (D) theory and his works (pp. 43-139). It is introduced by a short view of the theory (pp. 1-19) and a description of the subjects of the theory: the Proto-Indo-European (IE) culture (pp. 23-31) and the theories advanced to comprehend it (pp. 32-40). It is concluded by a compendium of the contributions and arguments brought forward by the disciples of D and his critics (pp. 143-192), and by the author's (L) "Anthropological Assessment" (pp. 193-212), where most of the criticisms of D's system he has uttered in the course of his work are recapitulated and reviewed from the author's own anthropological standpoint. L is not only a Dumézilian, but also a Whorfian, and a follower of some modern American sociological theories. His work is, therefore, an advance, not merely a careful and competent summary.

The method of L's work (D's works are first reviewed and then vindicated) has led to the fact that many problems are treated at several places and some questions (*e.g.*, the imposition of a scheme, the overinterpretation) are frequently asked. For the reader, L's method offers an advantage too; he is reminded of the problematical nature of a great number of D's views. There are, however, more or less important shortcomings to register. The reviewer will mention only some of them. L (207, 211) (D 1958a, 71) takes into account the possible influences of the ancient Mediterranean and Oriental cultures on the IE ideology; pre-IE Europe, however, is treated by him as a *tabula rasa* (Therefore, it would be better to use the ancient term 'Indogermanic!'). L is too superficially acquainted with the ancient Near Eastern civilizations (L 190 mentions