

ONE GOD OR A TRINITY?

Michel Serres

University of Paris and Stanford University

THREE FUNCTIONS

Jupiter directs the kings and the priests; Mars commands the armies; Quirinus presides over the work of producers, planting seasons, vintages, and harvests, and he organizes the flow of commerce.

These three gods with Latin names, but with precise equivalents among the Hindus, Iranians, Celts, Irish, Gauls . . . of Indo-European cultures, symbolize, according to Georges Dumézil, three social functions: the sacred, war, and fortune.

That trilogy analyzes, clarifies, and describes, without trying to explain, the ordinary functioning of our societies from the most remotely archaic, prior to classical Athens and Rome, to the most recent. For the Middle Ages, as well as the States General on the eve of the French Revolution, according to Georges Duby, parceled out our communities in exactly the same way: clergy, aristocracy, the third state.

A lack of variance to be admired.

THE CASE OF TARPEIA

Complex and jovial, the first of these functions includes politics and religion, law and cognition, while the other two, which are less complex, are devoted exclusively to violence and the economy.

Now, Georges Dumézil dwells only fleetingly on the possible connections among the three divinities. The vestal Tarpeia belongs, for example, to the third function, since her dead body is covered with gold and jewelry. But the study which the author devotes to her fails to note that she was lapidated, a strange omission for such an unforgettable and dramatic ending.

And since this lynching remains an act of violence, it would be necessary to consider the relationship between Quirinus and Mars.

Can the latter be reduced to the former? Should economics be considered a war continued by other means?

A SINGLE GOD OF VIOLENCE AND LOVE

In the comparative history of religions Georges Dumézil proposes a pluralistic approach with three gods, one which is openly descriptive, without enigma or mystery and relatively invariable over a very long time, whereas René Girard unveils the coming of a single God through a unique rational and temporal dynamic in which sacrificial violence yields, little by little, to love.

To retain the trinity or, by connecting the three functions, to seek a single explanation and rediscover monotheism: that is the question.

CULTURAL OR UNIVERSAL DIFFERENCE?

The pre-Capitoline trilogy for its part seems to encompass more than violence and the sacred, for Mars appears to represent the former while merely a part of Jupiter represents the latter.

However, if one can manage to bring together such diverse institutions as those that constitute the economy and production, indeed even those of war and law, then the rational explanation covers a larger field than that of descriptive analysis: while Dumézil's work is limited, in effect, to the particular, yet certainly enormous, field of Indo-European cultures, that of René Girard points toward the universal.

Whether that is a weakness or a strength given the tenor of our times remains to be seen.

The comparison between these two comparative histories of religion poses, then, two questions: the reduction of functions among them or their resulting unity: *a single God or a Trinity?* And the question of *Universality*.

The second is more urgent and relevant to the present time. Do we today live, do we think, in isolated spaces or are we building a Universe?

I. UNIVERSAL VIOLENCE

CLASSIFICATION AND ENGINE

Illuminating and verifiable—although not falsifiable, as is always the case in the human sciences—the tripartite division offers categories, but

without providing a reason for the ordering of species and genres, without giving the principle of classification. We have here, *mutatis mutandis*, a system and a taxonomy without the evolutionary engine, a Linné without Darwin.

This necessary energy that produces disorder followed by movements and ordinances is inexhaustively provided by violence itself, according to René Girard.

With regard to human groups, the latter is to Darwin what Georges Dumézil is to Linné, for Girard illustrates the dynamic of evolution and proposes a universal explanation.

VIOLENCE AND THE SACRED OR MARS AND JUPITER?

Is violence among humans triggered by its own accord, or, on the contrary, is it the effect of some other cause, of something, therefore, essential?

Experience seems to show that violence endlessly reproduces itself, without limitations or borders, without mother or father, or any predecessor whatsoever. And simple logic seems to demonstrate this, for violence knows of no antithesis or negation other than itself.

Its causes are but excuses.

Just as a torrent clashes against the very deposits which it carries, and may even at times detour around those accumulations borne by the fury of its own current, violence, that river of fire, traverses and builds the above mentioned categories.

The sacred is born of violence and, in turn, freezes or restrains it temporarily: without it groups of humans would destroy one another to the very last.

Patriarch Noah, a global figure of the mortal struggle of all against all, prepares and preserves a *remnant* before and during the deluge: we are reborn endlessly of the current of violence and of a rare peace. Intoxicated with intraspecific murder, men, unlike the beasts, kill one another: hence the Ark, a ship which serves as an animal preserve.

Jupiter the priest partially dominates the violence of Mars the warrior. Such are the results—formulated in Dumézil's terms—of René Girard.

VIOLENCE AND THE LAW

But the other part of the Jovial function, that of law and sovereignty, also tries to detour the same fury. Whatever the laws may be, private or

public, civil or criminal, are all founded ultimately in a contract. And how could one conceive such a contract except as a pact or agreement to either terminate or avoid conflict?

Thus the alliance brought the diluvial disaster to an end and signed its contract with the rainbow, a celestial bridge over the waters.

One example among ten thousand. In Racine's tragedy of *Athalie* Voltaire saw the masterpiece of the human spirit: the sacred, in effect, openly triumphs over violence. "*God of the Jews, you are victorious!*," conclude the armies of the cruel queen.

To this half truth let us add its complement, Corneille's *Horace*, which undoubtedly would deserve the same praise. Rules of conduct arise from the public spectacle of hand to hand combat between three soldiers selected twice, and from the private murder, in contempt of the law, of a sister by her brother. Those rules in turn give rise, in the final act, to a tribunal in which the king-judge presides and the heroes, disguised as prosecuting and defending lawyers, debate. *Horace* describes the tragic birth of law. The final action unfolds like a combat, like war itself prolonged under a different guise.

In the juridical sense, the critique brings the crisis to a close.

Tragedy in general serves as the middle ground between the immediate spectacle of the quarrel, the crisis, or the sacrifice, and its critical representation in the sense of a judicial process.

The *tragos* allows the passage from victim to the accused.

Laws, then, like the sacred or the religious, are born of violence, and they too temporarily protect us from it.

VIOLENCE AND COGNITION

History, it seems, has given increasing importance to a third attribute of Jupiter, that of knowledge, of which Dumézil speaks little.

The history of Western science demonstrates, if history can demonstrate anything, that the sciences derive from religion and law. Magi, druids, priests, clerics . . . in sum, Jupiter, who long monopolized knowledge and teaching in the traditional societies of the times. Later, inversely, the sages will form a Church.

And, once again, close to violence and sometimes producing it, are the sciences that struggle against it and contain it: to open a school means closing a prison, said Victor Hugo; and Spinoza knew that the most violent passions are appeased by an understanding of those movements of the soul.

Following *Athalie* and *Horace*, which are based on collective traditions recovered by individual authors of related languages, the entire human race has witnessed in terror, about a half century ago, the global tragedy of *Hiroshima*, a tragedy whose representation on a giant stage was assured by the scientific community of the period, and one which ended also in a fragile pact, thanks to which we still survive.

The theater changes in relative size and passes from cities which our languages call eternal, Rome and Jerusalem, to the entire planet.

Day of anger, this one, when the city-universe began.

TRACES

Violence leaves its trace on the institutions built to confront it: religions consume sacrifices, law represents due process. The history of science itself is replete with judicial and sacrificial actions, and one can read, as well, of religious traces and the memory of law: the trials of Zeno of Elea and of Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, the condemnation and death of Socrates, the punishment of Abélard, the burning of Giordano Bruno, the judgement of Galileo, the beheading of Lavoisier, the terrible suicides of Boltzman and Turing . . . *libri calamitatum* . . .

... and what is happening on campuses?

Jupiter, in sum, hovers in proximity with the work of Mars. But what, in reality, does Mars do?

VIOLENCE AND WAR

Now, it takes an intelligent effort of paradoxical generosity to understand that war itself is a panicky attempt to ward off, for the time being, the terrible dangers to which violence exposes us.

To begin with, let us not say that war solves problems, because this word is the least appropriate of all to violence. Far from being posed objectively—as if projected in front of us, as an objective problem is posed before us—violence lies in me, in you, in him, in all. It expands around us and through our relationships like the air that our life consumes or a body of water in which we struggle, in which our "hominity" complacently swims.

One can, certainly, turn away from a problem. But how does one flee from that into which we're plunged or embarked? How does one escape a permanent conflict?

No matter how implacably it rages, war presupposes, without paradox, a mutual recognition of governments or military commands, and the observance, at least relative, of common rules and conventions.

It is initially declared through legal forms and ends with an armistice or pact, which indicates that there is always a contract or agreement involved, something which needs to be demonstrated.

COLLECTIVE BELLIGERENCE

War either temporarily settles litigations and contrary claims, that is, conflicts generated within a pre-existing legal frame, or, in spite of appearances to the contrary, it is declared in order to substitute as quickly as possible organized for unorganized violence. War is never declared in order for a certain group to take revenge for some other groups' previously inflicted violence, as in a sort of *vendetta*, for that is too dangerous for both belligerents. This last word reveals, in fact, that the two groups manage ("gèrent") their war.

One must understand that in the mythical times of the origins of Rome, the two kings, of Alba and of the City, chose soldiers from among the population, which was thus spared, and then chose three champions on each side from within the army, which was thus put on reserve. One can see that a decision is set into motion which exposes the minimum of men, or, in a literal sense, establishes an economy. First, conscription of a legion in order to economize the life of a population, then the election of a triple team in order to spare the conscripts: a double choice whose juridical form acts like two fire walls.

Wars use a law that saves many men from a *de facto* violence which would be fatal to entire groups.

Were contracts invented by wars?

Mars turns toward Jupiter.

COLLECTIVE SACRIFICE

Like Jupiter, Mars also aims at regulating violence and manages to make a fragile peace last.

Yes, it takes a lot of time, knowledge, experience, wisdom, and even resignation to come to the understanding that wars, armies, regulated strategies, gendarmeries and police are collective and juridical frames for violence and, thus, actually protect against it, against a violence which becomes fatal for individuals and groups if it is unleashed without laws.

War is opposed as much to violence as it is to peace.

Nevertheless, war remains a sacrificial solution.

In fact, do polemologists not use most readily the typical sacrificial argument: better to have a few people killed than to see a great number die?

Mars becomes indistinguishable from Jupiter.

THE BLUE HELMETS

Jupiter is the law and Mars the armies: we have here, already, a single god in two persons, which is to say, two methods for combating violence.

Forty legions of Angels and Archangels line up in battle formation, in the name of this god . . .

If you want peace, prepare for war. Could one translate this old saying on the (U.N. peacekeeping) blue helmets as their motto?

THE HISTORY OF HISTORY

The cultures from which we undoubtedly come—the others having vanished, abolished from the face of the earth—discover and demonstrate the original character of these wars which consist in legal actions that allow the belligerents not to destroy each other to the last man: gigantomachies or biblical wars, figures of the Deluge or even of the first diluvial waters over which the spirit of God hovered, as we find in Semitic and Indo-European religions; the Trojan, or Alban, or Etruscan, or Punic war in the Greco-Latin world.

By this passage from a *de facto* to a *de jure* situation, wars accomplish such a cultural progress or sign so decisive a contract, anthropologically speaking, that all of today's living undoubtedly descend exclusively from ancestors who survived thanks to that pact. Hence its site at the origin in myths or legends.

STATE OF NATURE

The philosophy of law translates this fundamental history or anthropology in terms of an abstract thesis: the state of nature consists not in war—Thomas Hobbes commits a contradiction when he writes about *bellum omnium contra omnes* (the war of all against all)—but in the free violence which once unleashed opposes all to all and each to each, threatening the group with total extinction.

Thus the social contract that follows, the legal pact, in effect, designates war as an institution posterior to the state of nature and the begetter of history.

Suddenly, history begins and is understood with and because of war. At the very least there would have been no history without it; it is as fundamental in this sense as the economy but clearly more archaic, primitive, and foundational.

SACRIFICE TO MARS

Do not misunderstand me. I have no doubt whatsoever that most wars, unjust and criminal, are an expression of the atrocious law of the stronger. It may happen that they end with the "accidental" death of half a score of combatants on the side of the powerful and many scores of thousands on the side of the weak—a confrontation so uneven that it is the equivalent of a collective lynching of men that cannot be counted because they do not count.

The fact remains, nevertheless, that between a violence without laws which encroaches upon the group like an epidemic of the plague, between that state of nature considered original by some philosophers of law, and the organized practice of war, the law and only the law makes a difference. And the difference is measured by the economy of that epidemic.

The law often remains, of course, on the side of the strong. And the only notable progress in the history of humanity must always proceed by way of the unconditional defense of the weak.

Law, then, is always open to correction; it is never truly just. A ceaseless amending of the rules is always better than killing.

In brief, war produces less death than violence: being a **collective sacrifice to Mars**, it is always within the domain of the sacrificial.

Meanwhile innocent peace dreams of producing no death at all.

INDIVIDUAL QUARRELS AND SPORTS

Before leaving Mars, let us note that he also presides over representations similar to tragedy, but of a different nature, above all for the lack of a text, the kind of representation that intellectuals haughtily disdain.

Here and there, depending on circumstance, violence breaks out: punches fly, and kicks, and strikes with a dagger, or shots . . . the rules of boxing, of football, of fencing, or of the triathlon confine violence to a particular place and time and cloak its nakedness with social decorum. Within a designated space and clearly limited duration of time, whoever plays according to the rite and under the supervision of an arbiter believes not only that the vital parts of his body are protected, but that his and his adversaries' use of force is fair.

By submitting violence to arbitration in this way, fighting enters through sport into the realm of law, like war.

And will one day enter into that of innocence as well, as science will also, I hope.

In passing, then, what is free will ("libre-arbitre")?

The legal instance that I invent, within me, in order to regulate therein the wild beast who kills.

II. ECONOMY AND SACRIFICE

RETURN TO COGNITION

Let us end with Mars as with Jupiter.

Having become scientific, the deadly efficacy of war depends on our knowledge, science, and technology. Conversely, the advances of the latter often proceed from institutions related through their programs and financing to combat.

And so we have once again the question posed by Hiroshima: tragedy and human sacrifice at once. After that day of anger, repeated every so often by the Chernobyls, Sevesos, and other ecological disasters in our oceans and hospitals, we dread the perpetration of those unpredictable sacrifices created by our research.

Will a new science determined to be no longer sacrificial branch out tomorrow from the present one which is resigned to remain sacrificial?

Such is the ethical criterion, simple and decisive, which imposes itself at a time when all branches of knowledge are exploring the possible, and sometimes actualizing it.

EXTENSION OF THE SACRIFICIAL

On the side of Jupiter, the sacred character of the scapegoat who is charged with the violence and sins of the group comes from the fact that it is immolated instead of and in the place of each and every person unani- mously implicated in the crisis.

There emerges, then, an evaluation which is properly *economic*, one whose principle always justifies sacrifice by saving the maximum number of victims. "One for all" in the case of the sacred or of Jupiter. "Some for all" in the case of war or Mars: three champions sacrificed, in effect, for the armies of Rome and Alba which, in turn, substitute for all the men and women of those two cities.

These elective divisions are a response to the question, How many deaths, at the very least, will the groups' conservation cost?

One to Jupiter. A multiplicity to Mars. How many more to Quirinus?

PRACTICES

Now the practical question regarding the work and performances necessary to change the face of the world by means of tools or machines is posed in the same terms: how much do these accomplishments cost not only in money and capital, but also, and above all, in suffering and deaths? No omelette without cracking the eggs, as the French say.

And so we see that all *praxis* is sacrificial, especially when it calculates rigorously *the best result for the least expenditure*. Such *optimization* guides the sacrificial gesture, sacred gesture, of course, but also war-like—and essentially *economic*.

SCIENTIFIC THEORIES

As they explore the virtual reality of possible scenarios, our sciences, whose theories direct and make effective most of our practices today, lead once again to the same question: What is the cost for the actualization of such and such theory, whether true or possible? How many deaths does such an expenditure entail?

That is the well posed *pragmatic* question that henceforth concerns our scientific exploits, our best, most effective, and only long term programs. *A practice, certainly, that is both economic and sacrificial.*

Which poses again the question of our times: Will our sciences remain sacrificial?

HARD SCIENCES AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Just as war and the sacred accept a blood price for the conservation of the group, work and the scientific research of the possible and the true in the objectivity of the real, lead to a similar acceptance of a similar price.

Example: How many arms for how many tools?

Disturbing and formidable, this economic principle brings together, apparently for the first time in the history of knowledge, the hard sciences and the human sciences. We accept a cost for the stability of society as much as for the production of object, be they discovered or merely imagined, a cost which our ideals of security minimize or optimize.

But that is the price of sacrifice.

The optimizing calculation hides, in fact, the problem of evil, and we should call the best solution by its name, minimal death.

The corpse as object, *sociologically* speaking, founds the group, and that same dead body, *epistemologically speaking*, founds the object as such, which may eventually become exchange currency. The corpse founds the object, which founds both science and the group, which founds the object, which ...

Statues has narrated this spiraling foundation.

THE UNIVERSALITY OF SACRIFICE: PASSAGE TO QUIRINUS

And so, *the sacrificial has a universal function and value*: for the Jovial sacred there is the "one for all" of the scapegoat; for war or for Mars, the "some for all" of the champions or combat troops; for praxis or the actualization of the possible or the true in the field of the sciences and technology, the "how much does that cost?," or the principle of the least expenditure.

There it is, in principle, *the very concept of economy in the sense of Quirinus*.

The balance sheets of production or exchange are deduced from violence by the intermediary of sacrificial optimization.

RETURN TO THE TRUTH

The principle of optimization directs action, which is objective and social, but as a law of nature it regulates knowledge.

Valid for religions, war, economy and cognition, this principle is both theoretical and practical, scientific and philosophical, and it imposes the following, new, criterion: *that which kills is unacceptable or false and that which does not kill is acceptable or true*.

While there is no criterion for truth, or for the decisive verification of an idea or a theory, which are indefinitely subject to the falsification process, the principle "Thou shall not kill"—which until recently was only a moral precept—converges toward the epistemological criterion of truth.

In the same way that the principle of economy brings together the hard sciences and the human sciences, *so, by the same sacrificial process, do the ethical and epistemological domains tend to coincide*: their criteria converge.

Henceforth a given science will be acceptable not if it produces few dead, but only if it does not produce any, that is, precisely *as it leaves the domain of the sacrificial*.

Truth, finally, is the equivalent of innocence. That should be the yardstick of true philosophy and, without a doubt, of true science.

This is as great a novelty about the notion of truth as what happened at the dawn of Greek philosophy to separate the Homeric *aletheia*—immortal burst of social glory—from the sunlight of the philosophers/geometers, or at the dawn of our era to separate the gods perceived as false from the One, the true one.

The false gods kill. The true one creates.

III. UNIVERSAL MISERY

UNIVERSAL VIOLENCE AND SACRIFICE

In order to demonstrate the universal character of violence, it will be necessary to extend and generalize the foregoing demonstrations concerning Martial war and Jupiter's sacred, to the god Quirinus and economy.

In fact, the universality of the sacrificial and its economic principle has partially solved the problem.

These are the questions:

While wars are obviously sacrificial, *is that the case also with religions? Yes or no?*

Will cognition and praxis, the sciences and techniques, remain sacrificial? Yes or no?

And, finally, is the economy sacrificial and will it remain so? Yes or no?

A SINGLE GOD IN THREE PERSONS, BY GENERALIZATION OF THE ECONOMY?

Do the three functions have the same goal? Does the economy continue war itself by other means? Does Quirinus apply himself to the same cares as Mars?

In other words, does one single god, not present in the tripartite classification, a god of violence, one single devil no doubt, replace the three fundamental gods of ancient polytheism?

Jupiter tries to contain violence by means of religion, law, and knowledge. Mars, by means of war both as a legal action and through the regulated training in organized combat of armed legions. And Quirinus, by

the competition among producers, by commercial battles, by class struggles, and by the exploitation of men by those who do not consider them their equal.

Formidable monotheism of universal violence.

THE MISERABLE

To arrive at such a result, our final demonstration should deal with the details of economic science.

Assuming—an improbable thing—that we could master such a massive amount of data, how could one bring it all to such a simple result?

It is better *to reverse the question* and to consider a minimal concrete state defined in negative terms, a state in which the total absence of goods of fortune would be equivalent to the disappearance of Quirinus.

In other words, what happens not in the production and exchange of goods, *but without them*.

What happens among the miserable, the destitute.

Is misery, radical misery rather than poverty, as universal as violence itself? Is it possible to speak of *l'homme misérable*?

A negative demonstration is always better, in fact, than positive, but indefinite and never plausible, verifications.

MISERY AND VIOLENCE

What the experience of misery immediately shows is that without goods of fortune—without Quirinus—the individual and the group experience the sudden disappearance of the law. There they are, without Jupiter, without any police; there they are without Mars, given over to pure unregulated violence. -

The total absence of one of the three gods, Quirinus, implies an equally total absence of the other two: a clear indication of their interrelation and their unity.

And these disappearances carry with them, notably, the loss of all protection against the permanence of violent relations.

Whether individual or collective, misery plunges those people who are overwhelmed by it into a liminal state where violence knows no rules or laws. This exclusion from the law approaches the maximum risk of elimination or eradication. It exceeds homicide, because the latter is defined

according to penal laws . . . and comes close to genocide, because it concerns virtually the entire human race.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND THE PRINCIPLE OF ECONOMY

The universality we seek is discovered, then, not in social organization, institutions, or politics, but rather in disorganization, in the stripping down of all structures and, at the limit, in that state of misery probably as old as the origin of man. It concerns what philosophers have described for the last four centuries, without being fully aware of it, when they discussed the problem of Evil.

The miserable suffer from physical evils as hunger, cold, sickness, early death . . . but also from moral evil, because most often a social consensus is reached regarding the responsibility assumed by the miserable for finding themselves in such a state of misery. The word "Misérable," at least in French, designates not only those who are excessively poor and destitute, the hapless and pitiful, but also the dishonest, malicious, shameful, and contemptible. Western history hesitated for a long time, in fact, between the gallows and pity.

Can we reformulate the principle of economy? Is it necessary to resign ourselves to the production of such misery as the price we must pay for the increase in wealth and the progress in comfort and knowledge for some of the population?

Do maximum and minimum exchange places here?

SACRIFICE TO QUIRINUS

Because rich men in some well provided nations still often judge them responsible for their own deadly destiny, are the Miserable today, numbering hundreds of millions in the third world as well as in that fourth world rapidly growing in the West, the new victims of the most immense sacrifice known and perpetrated in our history? A history which is already rather repulsive?

If war remains a collective sacrifice to Mars or is prepared by him, today's misery seems even more sacrificial, since it concerns a much more important population: *we acquiesce to a gigantic holocaust to Quirinus.*

Does this other false god also kill great numbers through the use of the sciences and other practices, the truth of which we should, by now, doubt ?

Does he kill still more than ancient rituals and Martial combats in a revolting historical growth that is covered up by the supposed needs of the economy?

FUNDAMENTAL MISERY

Between definitive death and the relatively comfortable and protected existence afforded by culture and its diverse contracts and institutions, there exists a state where violence destroys before it produces its own limits, a primary, conditional, fundamental, universal state, which expresses our mortal condition.

Ecce homo.

We come from it. We live, in part, in it. We are constantly headed there as soon as we acknowledge to ourselves that we are only humans precariously protected by frail institutions.

At bottom we all recognize ourselves as miserable or constantly, vertiginously, exposed to the risk of becoming miserable.

RETURN TO THE STATE OF NATURE

All of a sudden, what law philosophers like Hobbes or Rousseau say about a pre-existing state of nature or about some primitive statute whose utopic or uchronic character, whether formal or conditional, would precede the social state of law in the savage solitude of men, or in the war of all against all—improperly named, I repeat, because such violence without laws has nothing to do with the juridical state of conflicts regulated by formal declarations—all that philosophers imagine to be abstract or theoretical about such a primary, fundamental, ahistorical, even transcendental state, *becomes actualized in the suffering and the concrete, next to us, in the survival of the Miserable.*

Conceptual or imaginary, *the state of Nature* where violence knows no rules is, therefore, revealed as universal, and more real than the cultural, local, fragile, and relative reality in which, amidst the economic, juridical, and policed comfort of the three functions, we live. It is *the state of Misery.*

GENERALIZED SACRIFICE

The three functions discovered by Dumézil in Indo-European institutions consume the same sacrifices according to the same principle of economy: rare and ritualized in the temples or the law-courts; heroic, but still limited, on the battlefields; unpredictable, and perhaps avoidable, in the laboratories; generalized, finally, to the entire universe by the rules of exchange, of production, and of the aforesaid economy.

Tell me how many men you contribute to kill and I will tell you what your occupation is. I will even deduce your principle and your ideas.

Do you still seek to work in innocence?

THE WEAKNESS OF CULTURAL CLASSIFICATIONS

Mars, the duelist or warrior, and Quirinus the farmer, blacksmith, merchant or banker, simply because they are gods, are on the side of the sacred, and therefore of Jupiter.

But how much time and energy have the human sciences and history devoted to showing that the *religious and the martial can be reduced to the economic . . .* ? So here we are, Jupiter and Mars lined up on the side of Quirinus.

Now if Jupiter and Quirinus each work at containing violence, they are in the company of Mars.

If two of the three gods can always be reduced to the third, then the trilogy, no longer differentiated, crumbles.

The force of the universal destroys the culturally local.

Which is what I wanted to demonstrate.

FROM ONE UNIVERSE TO ANOTHER

Comparing the two comparative histories of religion leads to reducing the three functions to one, or the three gods to the single god, and to showing the universality of sacrifice and of the economy.

Abominable and present, this universe constantly requires the death of men in great numbers, in combat, in knowledge, in the production and circulation of commodities.

We have not yet left the archaic ages, blind as we are to these holocausts, in spite of the Enlightenment of our knowledge.

However, we changed religions one day, leaving sacrifices behind.
We must, from today, change universes.

People would love for the scientists to be *the first* to decide on the new route.

They would invent!

How?

THE CORRESPONDING POSITIVE WORD

By similar parables, Saint Luke and Saint Matthew express *the principle of the non-sacrificial economy*, the economy that refuses even the smallest expense, one percent, which is no other than the scapegoat itself: *if one of you has one hundred sheep and loses one, would he not leave the other ninety nine in the desert and go searching for the one that was lost until he finds it?* (Mat. 18,12; Luke 15, 6).

The one who brings back the lost animal turns the entire economic logic upside down in a symmetrical manner, because the other ninety nine were left in the desert, the place, normally, of the expelled scapegoat, which now constitutes an inclusion. Thus the reversal of the logic of exclusion. And as friends celebrate the return of the stray one, sacrifice is transformed into a *positive* feast: we will all rejoice together, without execution or expulsion, that the victim has returned to the fold.

Not only does this gesture refuse all economy founded on the calculation, even though minimum, of the one percent loss. It demonstrates positively that what has to be done is precisely to save that which by custom and reason we allow to be lost.

Lost soul, lost woman ... do we realize that this word "loss" has both a moral and an economic meaning?

This lost man, who wanted to lose him?

Economist, turn your science upside down in order to go searching purposefully for the miserable, the sacrificed. Scientist, change your logic to save the victims of progress.

No! Not progress at any cost! Give back in full the price offered up in sacrifice for progress.