

THE STORY OF ERIC THE ELOQUENT AS A MONSTER SLAYER TALE

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The story of a hero who kills a monster, is probably one of the oldest stories of mankind ; originally it must have been a myth. Examples of it may be found all over the world.

In Europe we find a story in which the monster killer has got a twin or a blood-brother. The story can be reduced to the following : the hero kills a monster and saves the life of a maiden, whom he subsequently marries. But soon afterwards a second monster appears, usually female and often a relative of the first monster¹, who captures him. The hero's life is in jeopardy unless there should appear another person to deliver him. This other person is his twin-brother, who must sacrifice himself in order to deliver his brother. In this way the forces of life and death are balanced. We can get a good idea of how the story goes on, by reading some of the folktales of the "Two Brothers" type². The outline of it may be sketched as follows :

Male twins are born, usually by intervention of a mysterious person (miraculous birth). Often they are provided (again in a miraculous way) with weapons and/or helpful animals, such as horses, dogs, hawks, wolves, bears. When they have grown up, they both want to travel, or one of them leaves his home while the other stays there. The hero comes to a ravaged country, where a princess is on the point of being sacrificed to the monster that has caused the damage. He kills the monster and marries the princess. But during the wedding night he is lured away by a witch who turns him (and his animals) into stone.

Meanwhile his brother, often warned by a magic token, arrives in the same country. Because they look so much alike everybody mistakes him for the hero ; he is even obliged to sleep in the princess' bed, but he puts a sword between them. In the night he too is lured away, but he is able to defeat the witch and to bring his brother and his animals back to life. But when the hero learns that his brother has slept at his wife's side, he is overcome by jealousy and kills him. Afterwards, of course, he bitterly regrets his deed.

In the folktales we usually find some magic expedient by which the twinbrother too may be restored to life ; sometimes there is even another, secondbest princess in store for him. But when we turn our attention to the mythical heroic sagas of Scandinavia, where this type of story may also be found, we can find no such happy ending here.

In "Der Drachentöter und sein Zwillingsbruder", a paper as yet unpublished, (2a) I have compared these sagas with the folktale, because in my opinion they are all of the same mythic origin. I think that the underlying myth has its roots in the ideas and the rituals connected with sacral kingship.

The king is the delegate of the gods and has to imitate them in being the creator and keeper of the cosmos, the ordered world. This cosmos is always threatened by destructive forces which are represented as monsters. By slaying these monsters the hero identifies himself as the future king, fit to be the princess' husband; she stands for the land. But now the forces of life and death are no longer in balance, and death wants to have a sacrifice in order that the balance may be restored. Now either the king has to sacrifice himself, or he must provide a substitute, namely his twin-brother or his blood-brother - i.e. his social twin-brother-, who must give himself up in his place.³

Many motifs of the story may be found in the story of Bodvar-Bjarki, a part of the *Hrólfs Saga kraka*⁴, but the sequence has been badly disturbed by the fact that the traditional twins are here triplets, and because the real hero, Bjarki, does not become king, but one of his brothers. A second in my opinion very important example can be found in the first book of Saxo's *Gesta Danorum*, in the story of king Hadingus⁵:

The Norwegian princeas Regnilda is betrothed to a giant. We must not be misled by the word "betrothed". A giant is a monster, a destructive force, and it all amounts to the same thing whether such a creature wants to kill a human being or to marry him or her. It is well known that death-imagery may point in this direction. This can be illustrated with a quotation from one of the *Íslendinga Sögur*, the *Fostbræðra Saga*⁶, in which Þorgeirr Hávarsson says to one of his enemies: "It will come about, as I have dreamt: Hel, your spouse, will lay her arms about you..." On the other hand in a Danish folktale of the twin-brother type the hero meets a princess on the shore who has been left there by her people as a sacrifice for the water-monster. When it appears and sees that she is not alone, it cries out: "Who is there, talking to my darling?"⁷

Hadingus, therefore, acts like the traditional monster killer, when he slays the giant. Regnilda also behaves like a princess should: while he lies unconscious, she dresses his wounds and hides a ring in a wound in his leg. With this token she recognizes him amongst her other suitors and eventually they are married. Now, exactly at the right moment, the mysterious woman of the underworld appears with her poisonous plants in the room where the young couple have been left alone together. She covers Hadingus with her cloak and takes him with her to the dark abode of the dead. From the description it becomes clear that this world belongs to Odin, the god of the dead. At last the king arrives at a wall, which cannot be escaled and which must be the separation between the world of the dead and that of the living: a dead cock that is thrown over the wall starts to

crow again.

From the story may be gathered that Hadingus too is restored to life and therefore he must have got over the wall one way or other. However, we are not told how. I think there must have been someone to help him and that person must have been his twin-brother. At this point we are reminded of the Haddingjar, who are typical twinsbeings. In this story Hadingus' twinbrother was probably his blood-brother Liserus, as the blood-brotherhood was entered upon at the instigation of Odin. The whole story then is connected with Odin.

Before this Hadingus had been involved in another monster killing, in connection with Frey. In this case the consequences were not that farreaching: Directly after he had slain a monster at the sea shore, a woman appeared, who threatened him with the fury of the elements. In this case he only needed to offer black oxen to Frey, to atone for this killing. The fact that the animals had to be black, indicates a connection with a Frey who is in the underworld. But Hadingus had no need to go there himself. The two episodes shares some essential characteristics, and the one helps to clarify the other.

It will be evident that my interpretation of the Hadigus-Regnilda episode clashes with that of Georges Dumézil⁸. But I cannot say anything about this controversy at this time. I only want to add that in my opinion Saxo's story proves that the monster slayer with a twin-brother can be linked with those typical twins, the Haddingjar, who are believed to be the Scandinavian counterpart of the mythical twins usually denominated the Dioscures⁹. It is well known that the name of the Haddingjar is also found in that of the Hasding, the mythical royal family of the Vandals. I cannot go any further into this.

I will not mention the other stories I analyzed in my paper, that all show some meaningful variations, except the case of Helgi Hjörvardsson¹⁰. I have not analyzed the story of Helgi Hundingsbani that is represented by two Edda songs¹¹, but I consider it to be a rationalisation of the same tale. Here the place of the monster is taken by a human enemy, Hödbroddr. The part of the female monster has been filled by a male, his brother Gudmundr, perhaps meant to be identified as Gudmundr of Glæsisvellir, ruler over the dead. He is accused of playing the female part in a homosexual relation, (an extremely contemptible part), and therefore he must have a strongly developed feminine side. These variations will prove to have some relevance to my main subject, and I will return to them later.

I only want to make a few more remarks before I turn to Eric. Monster killer stories usually have some bearing on the destructive forces that cause infertility, and though there is necessarily a fight in them, we might expect them to belong in an agrarian society. But Scandinavian stories nearly always take us to military surroundings - they are often about vikings. I think that an older agrarian scenario has been militarised in them and therefore the meaning has been changed more or less. The

monster too has been changed. In the case of Helgi Hundingsbani he has been rationalised and made a human enemy.

As for the hero, he will not always be or become king, though there usually is a princess in store for him. Often he must be content with becoming the king's main champion. This also applies to Ericus Disertus. But the fact that a man becomes a king by marrying a princess, reminds us of matrilinear descent and succession, and many scholars have brought this in connection with an agrarian society. In the typically paternalistic societies mirrored in these stories, one cannot become a king by marrying a princess any longer.

There is certainly nothing mythical about the story of Eric the Eloquent, in the fifth book of Saxo's *Gesta Danorum*¹². On the contrary, it is a highly artificial literary creation with an extraordinarily sophisticated hero. He only wields weapons when it is absolutely necessary to do so, but he is always ready to fight by means of his eloquence and his wit, and by doing so he always gains victory. It is right that he should meet with some enemies who have their own kind of eloquence, although it is a negative eloquence. Saxo calls it impudence.

On the other hand we can see that the author must have understood the original meaning of the monster slayer story quite well, because the story of Eric is clearly a case of reintegration contra desintegration. This may be taken as a spiritual transformation of the old controversy : powers of life and healing contra powers of death and destruction. As a matter of fact, the original theme is here more clearly expressed than in any other story I have come across.

I am only dealing with the first episode in the story of Eric. As Joaquin Martinez-Pizarro has already pointed out at the Munich Saga Congress 1979¹³, the second episode is essentially another story, in which our hero has no special use for his eloquence.

Here I wish to acknowledge my debt to Martinez-Pizarro, who has cleared the path to a considerable extent for me, even though I cannot always agree with him. Of course, it is virtually impossible to decide exactly to what extent Saxo has altered the story. Maybe we blame him too much. For instance : we may suspect that he added much to Eric's long speeches in which he railed at the laxity of morals at the Danish court. We know what Saxo thought about this from other stories, like that about Starkad and Ingjeld. Yet there must also have been something about the subject in the version before him, as it so nearly touched upon the central theme of desintegration followed by reintegration.

As for the first part of the first episode, which Martinez-Pizarro suspects to be an addition by Saxo, I have arrived at a more or less different conclusion. It is evident that there are logical gaps between the first part and the rest of the story, most of which we need not go into here. We do need to realize, however, - and Martinez-Pizarro has rightly stressed this - that Gotwara must be the *mother* instead of the *aunt* of the Grep-

triplets. On the other hand, it is here, that we first learn of the deterioration of moral standards at the Danish court during the time of Frode's minority, and of some other points that are essential to the story. I draw the conclusion that Saxo must have combined the original with other sources without being always very successful.

There is another downright absurdity which perhaps cannot be laid at Saxo's door. When Eric and his brother Roller first set out on their journey, they go as spies for the Norwegian king Gøtarus and they are supposed to find out what goes on in Denmark. This intention is altogether forgotten the moment they have broken through the naval defence lines at the Danish coast, however. Then the brothers are only the sincere friends of the young king; all they want is to do away with the devastating influences that surround him. Frode is their enemy merely because he has been misled by evil advisers. In the second part of the story Eric arrives in Norway, not as a servant of the Norwegian king, but as Frode's messenger, suing on his behalf for the hand of Gøtarus' daughter. It seems to me that two originally separate stories were not put together until they had been completed, and that the Eric who came to king Frode, had nothing to do with the Norwegian king. The only motif that binds Gøtarus and Eric together in the first part, is the *nafnfestr*: Gøtarus declares that Eric shall be named "the eloquent" and gives him a present on this occasion, in keeping with an old tradition. This motif could well originally have belonged to Frode at the time when, thanks to Eric's eloquence, he had just been converted from his evil ways. I therefore want to skip the scene at the Norwegian court in the beginning altogether. It seems to me that the two episodes were put together in a rather clumsy way and that this particular court-scene was due to it. It must have been done either by Saxo, or by a predecessor. I am inclined to favour the second possibility but will not pursue it here. As I am going to analyze only the first episode, I shall only use the word "author" in connection with this story.

It can be shown that it does not only follow the main lines of the monster killer stories, but that also many details may be explained by it. But a hero who conquers not by means of his sword but by means of his wit and ready tongue - such a hero could not have been created by any other person but an Icelander, as Paul Herrmann has already remarked¹⁴. The author could not have made Eric an Icelander without having made himself guilty of a glaring anachronism, and therefore he made him come from Norway. It looks as if he combined the structure of the monster killer stories with that of the *Þættir* of the King and the Icelander¹⁵. The difference is that in the latter kind of stories the Icelander does not usually accompany his brother when he wants to visit the court in Denmark or Norway. But the relation between Eric and Frode is well described by Joseph Harris' formula: Alienation/Reconciliation.

At the beginning of Saxo's Book Five we learn about the sorry state of the Danish court during Frode's minority. The originators of the

desintegration are the triplets all called Grep, and the woman Gøtvara who turns out to be their mother. These triplets have but one personality and it speaks through the mouth of the eldest Grep. As a matter of fact, we learn nothing more about the other two after their introduction although we realize they must still be present somewhere.

I think that a three-headed monster has been more or less rationalised and split into three different persons, as happened in one of the Grimm Märchen: "Der gelernte Jäger"¹⁶. In the same way a monster can ravage the country so the triplets demoralise the court and hold it, as it were, in a deadly "grip".

But the second - female - monster is also present here; she does not appear afterwards as she would have done in the original story. Presumably the author saw no other way to give her a plausible introduction, but he expanded her part too.

In this case the princess is Frode's sister Gunwara. Since the monster has been humanised, it must needs want to marry her. To "devour" her in a literal sense of the word would not do. Of course she refuses, and she retreats to her lady's bower where she is protected by thirty slaves. But now she is "beleaguered" by the monster; it vanquishes the unhappy suitors who might have put her free, and puts their heads on stakes as trophies, just as the original monster might have done with the unhappy would-be deliverers: "Oranti rex merita iuvenum inspectanda permittit. Primum itaque cunctos Gunwaræ petitores convivii simulatione contraxit ac deinde conclave, cui puella assueverat, desectis eorum capitibus crudele ceteris spectaculum præbuit".

"At his request the king granted him leave to examine the merits of the young men. So he first gathered all the wooers of Gunwar together on the pretence of a banquet, and then lined the customary room of the princess with their heads - a gruesome spectacle for all the rest".¹⁷

But Gunwara remains steadfast in refusing him, and on this subject there is nothing more to be said for the moment. Meanwhile we learn what happens to a maiden, who does succumb to the forces of desintegration.

It is Gøtvara who asks Hanunda, daughter of the king of the Huns, to become Frode's queen. After a long time of hesitation she consents but it looks very much like a seduction. This is, of course, an example of black magic, one of the usual devices of the forces of desintegration. After the wedding Hanunda becomes the lover of the eldest Grep and probably a new force of evil to her young husband.

At last we are ready to be introduced to the hero and his brother. We skip the scene at the Norwegian court, for reasons mentioned before, and arrive at Eric's home. Eric and Roller are only half-brothers and therefore no real twins but they do fill the part of the twin-brothers very well and are quite close to each other. Rightly Eric states that Roller is indispensable to him. Roller is a strong man and skilful at weapons, which Eric evidently is not. So he can help him, when Eric cannot help himself.

Many variants of the tale of the twin-brothers start with a miraculous birth : The twins are born due to the mediation of a mysterious person, whom we may suspect to be a god. Moreover, the boys often get some wonderful gifts, which later on will prove to be a great help to them.

In this case Eric is provided with a wonderful gift : his eloquence. He also obtains it in a wonderful way. Moreover, he gets it from his step-mother, who is of a partly godly descent, as she herself reveals to him. On the other hand he displays an innate intelligence by turning the plate and thus getting the share meant for his half-brother Roller, the son of his stepmother Kraka. It is not necessary for us to pursue the motif of the magic food in this connection.

Roller is eager to visit foreign countries and Eric decides to accompany him. Their father provides him with his treasures. It is unusual that the brothers should journey together, but probably the author could not manage their being together at the crucial point in any other way.

While they are still at sea, they meet Odo, to whom the naval defence of the Danish coast has been entrusted, as we have been told in a previous passage. This probably means that he is employed by Grep. In the description of the way Odo fights we come across some remarkable lines which give us a vivid visual expression which might well have been inspired by the way a fiery dragon is supposed to look :

"Idem, inito cum Normannis conflictu, ita vi carminum hostilem hebetavit aspectu, ut dstrictos Danorum enses eminus radios iacere et tamquam flammabundos scintillare putarent. Ceterum adeo retusus obtutibus erant, ut ne ferrum quidem vagina detractum visu excipere possent ; victa quippe fulgore acies præstigiosi coruscaminis impatiens erat".

"When he began to fight with the Northmen, he so dulled the sight of the enemy by the power of his spells that they thought the drawn sword of the Danes cast their beams from afar off, and sparkled as if aflame. Moreover, their vision was so blunted that they could not so much look upon the sword when it was drawn from the sheath : the dazzle was too much for their eyesight, which could not endure the glittering mirage".¹⁸

When the eldest Grep hears that Eric has arrived in the harbour, he hurries down to meet him. His defense line has already been broken, now he himself is going to be defeated in a flyting, that is more a *senna* than a *mannjafnaðr*. Whenever a killing takes place by means of words, the flyting is the form to be expected, and Eric excels in this. It is also fitting that Eric should accuse Grep of exercising an evil influence over the king and queen, thereby factually putting an end to it. Grep admits that he has been defeated. His real strength is broken, even though he puts another obstacle in Eric's way : he orders a troop of wizards to put up a *níðstöng* with a horse-head on it, but Eric undoes this piece of black magic with a kind of counterspell with the result that the horse-head is shaken down, shattering its bearer in its fall.

When the hero enters the palace, yet another trick is played on him : the slaves of the king try to make him fall by jerking a slippery hide from underneath his feet. But Roller saves him from falling by catching him on his breast as he totters, thus proving that his help is indispensable to Eric. Our hero shows that he is aware of this by quoting the well-known saying : "Bare is the back of the brotherless".¹⁹

At this point princess Gunwara makes her presence known by reproaching her brother for the conduct of his servants. It is evident that she has left her lady's bower now, because she herself does not feel threatened by the presence of Grep any longer ; Grep has already been essentially vanquished and the princess delivered.

The king and his court witness the last phase of the battle between Eric and Grep. Martinez-Pizarro's comment was that it is illogical that the *senna* did not take place in the palace and that the king could not really have known what had been said at the occasion. This is true, but the mistake needs not to have been Saxo's. It could have been due to the fact that many monster-killings take place at the sea-shore. We also know of other flytings in the vicinity of water²⁰. It is also to be expected, though it is not quite logical, that Frode will believe every word of the accusations Eric makes against Grep and the queen ; kings tend to do so in this type of story.

It is necessary for Eric to make these accusations, because his essential task is to expurgate the Danish court. In addition to which he also has to overcome the king's pervertedness and ill-will by means of artifices and long speeches. He has to do his utmost to put Frode on the right track, and on top of that he has to see to it that he does not lose his life in the effort. He also has to make use of a deception in order to win the hand of princess Gunwara, who should have been given to him freely, as the due reward of a monster-killer.

Again it is necessary that Roller should help Eric with his weapons. When the eldest Grep wants to pierce Eric with his spear, Roller prevents this by killing him, the "first head of the dragon", so to speak. His two brothers and their followers are overcome and killed in a mass combat on the slippery ice, again by means of a ruse of Eric. This is a fitting answer to the trick of the slippery hide.

Gøtvara sorrows for her children and wants to revenge them. This is equivalent to the motif of the death-goddess who demands satisfaction. Gøtvara chooses to have her revenge by means of a flyting, in which she is going to gage a costly necklace and her enemy his life.

This flyting has been compared with the flyting in the first song of Helgi Hundingsbani - part of which may also be found in the second song²¹ -, where we find another opponent, who, in my opinion, represents death. The comparison is justified because both contents and functions are similar. Above I have expressed the opinion that the sex of the opponent of Helgi's brother Sinfjötli has been altered, from which may be concluded

that the episode in the Eric story cannot have been borrowed from the Helgi songs. Both episodes go back to a very old motif.

Both flytings contain rather strongly coloured insinuations pointing to a sexual relationship, whereas we can also find sexual allusions in the debate between Atli and Hrímgærdr, the female monster in the song of Helgi Hjörvardsson.

The function these flytings have in common seems to me to be a kind of spiritual fight between the death-goddess and the twin-brother of the hero -or in the case of Helgi Hjörvardsson a fight with another companion. The sexual insinuations seem to point towards the possibility of a marriage between the death-goddess and either the hero or his twin-brother, and we understand now, what the meaning of such a marriage must be.

It is relatively easy to demonstrate this in the case of Helgi Hjörvardsson. After the giant Hati has been killed by Helgi, his daughter Hrímgærdr engages Helgi's companion jarl Atli in a word-battle, then asks Helgi, if she may sleep for one night with him. Atli is able to detain her until the rays of the rising sun turn her into stone. But naturally the goddess of death can never be ultimately defeated. The next time she appears to Helgi's brother Hedinn. He refuses her request that she may accompany her : the meaning of this is that he refuses to be sacrificed. Therefore it becomes necessary for Helgi to sacrifice himself.

The songs of Helgi Hundingsbani are remarkable in the sense that a male person acts as the death-goddess, and also that the *senna* takes place *before* the killing of the monster and not *after*. But again, its function seems to be the highlighting of the second monster, who asks for compensation. Again, Sinfjötli succeeds in putting the monster off, but only temporarily. At the end of the second song Helgi himself is killed : he is probably sacrificed at the instigation of Odin.²²

To return to Eric : the combat here does not take place between Gøtwara and Roller, but between Gøtwara and Eric himself, and this is to be considered a deterioration of the original sequence. Evidently it was impossible for the author to avoid this course of action. It would be rather silly, if anyone besides the Eloquent himself would display an eloquence of his own. Besides, the reader might bewilderedly protest that Eric had made it impossible for his brother to obtain this particular gift by eating the magical food. Roller had to help his brother another way.

Eric was to wage his life in the contest ; Gøtwara's pledge is a magnificent gold neck-lace. As Martinez-Pizarro has remarked, this must be the neck-lace she got from king Frode as a recompense for her having obtained the hand of the Hunnish princess for him ; on that occasion it was described elaborately, which indicates that it was of some importance. Saxo has missed a link in the story when he does not refer to that particular neck-lace.

We might expect it to have a symbolical meaning. Ornaments like this, often given by the king to his retainers, are in many cases a token of

mutual obligation and affection. One should keep them as long as one lives, and certainly not pledge them in a contest. Yet she is obliged to do so. It can be argued that, if she looses it, the bond between the king and her will be broken, and that it is precisely what Eric wants to achieve. In the description it is said that there are : "...intersita... regum simulacra..." "Figures of kings interspersed on in it"²³. This description seems to strengthen the symbolical meaning of the gift.

Eric wins the contest and the king is delivered from the corrupting influences at his court. But he has grown so corrupt himself that he cannot appreciate what Eric has done for him. He openly shows his enmity and even tries to kill him. But Eric takes his education in hand and subjects him to very long educational speeches, that must have been much to Saxo's liking and that have probably been expanded by him. But eloquence is not enough : Eric needs to perform another trick not only to save his own life, but also to prove to the king that only he, Eric, is his true friend. In a naval battle Frode nearly drowns, thanks to a device of Eric. Eventually, however, Eric saves his life. The waves represent a spiritual as well as a physical bath, and the king is truly reformed at last. Now he recognizes Eric as his true friend, and now, of course, he gladly consents to Eric's marriage with his sister Gunwara.

Meanwhile Roller has suffered a great injustice : he has been denied the confrontation with the female monster. The fact that he was allowed to kill the "first head of the monster", cannot be considered a satisfactory compensation. But something else is still to be performed by Roller : the ultimate sacrifice, to which he gladly consents. He should have been married to Gøtwara, but she has been executed at the king's command, something that may be done to a mortal woman. He is spared this humiliation. But she is replaced by Hanunda, the adulterous queen, who has now been deserted by Frode. She had become utterly depraved and was a source of evil to her young husband. Because of that a marriage with her cannot be considered as an unmitigated honour, despite her royal blood. (Perhaps it is of some importance that she is daughter of the king of the Huns, about whom the Teutonic peoples had dubious feelings).

It is significant that the hero Eric himself should order the marriage of his brother. It is also significant that the two brothers are wed on the same day. But if we consider everything that has happened before, we can never regard this wedding as nothing more than the expected happy ending of the story.

NOTES

- 1 The two related monsters of different sex have been discussed by Joseph Fontenrose : Python, Univ. of California Press 1959.
- 2 Described by Kurt F. Ranke : Die zwei Brüder. Folklore Fellow Contributions 114, Helsinki 1934. A good example is that of the Danish folktale "Tvillingbrødrene", in Danske Folkeæventyr, efter utrykte Kilder, gjenfortalte af Svend Grundtvig, Kjøbenhavn 1876. In the Grimm Brothers' "Kinder- und Hausmärchen" (KHM) there is also an example of it : "Die zwei Brüder" (KHM 60). The edition used is that of Berlin 1888.
- 2a That is the days of the Toulon Congress. In the meanwhile it has appeared in Leitschrift für deutsche Philologie 104, 1984, pp. 77-102.
- 3 This explanation differs somewhat from that of Heino Gehrts, given in "Das Märchen und das Opfer", Bonn 1967.
- 4 Ed. Desmond Slay in Editiones Arnemagnæanae B I, Copenhagen 1969, pp. 51-86. The story is not found in Saxo.
- 5 Saxonis Gesta Danorum, ed. C. Knabe and Paul Herrmann, revised by Jorgen Olrik and H. Ræder, Copenhagen 1931, pp. 29-30.
- 6 Íslenzk Fornrit VI, Reykjavík 1954, p. 138.
- 7 o.c., p. 88, p. 92.
- 8 La Saga de Hadingus. Du Mythe au Roman, Paris 1953.
Du Mythe au Roman. La Saga de Hadingus et autres Essais. Paris 1970.
- 9 About mythical twins, see J. Rendell Harris : The Cult of the Heavenly Twins, Cambridge 1908, et al. About Germanic mythical twins : Jan de Vries : Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte II^a, Berlin 1956, p. 244-55.
- 10 Edda, ed. Gustav Neckel/Hans Kuhn, Heidelberg 1962, pp. 140-9. See Gehrts : o.c., pp. 150-61.
- 11 o.c., pp. 130-9 : pp. 150-61.
- 12 pp. 104-22. The Latin quotations are from this edition. The English quotations are from : Oliver Elton : the first nine books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus, London 1894.

- 13 The text of Joaquin Martinez-Pizarro was distributed to the participants of the Munich Saga Conference 1979. I also used : Paul Herrmann : Erläuterungen zu den ersten neun Büchern der dänischen Geschichte des Saxo Grammaticus, Kjøbenhavn 1892.
- 14 o.c., p. 338.
- 15 Joseph C. Harris : Genre and Narrative Structure in some Íslendinga þættir, Scandinavian Studies (SS) XLIV, 1972, pp. 1-27.
id : Theme and Genre in some Íslendinga þættir, SS XLVIII, 1976, pp. 1-28.
- 16 KHM 111.
- 17 Olrik and Ræder, p. 108 ; Elton, P. 154.
- 18 Olrik and Ræder, p. 109 ; Elton, p. 156-7.
- 19 Elton, p. 165 ; Olrik and Ræder, p. 115 : "... nudum. habere tergum fraternitatis inopem referebat". When first stepping on the Danish shore Eric's foot had also slipped. Like Martinez-Pizarro I consider the second incident as the original one and the first one due to redoubling.
- 20 In many cases the water is a "sundering flood". See Carol J. Clover : Hárbarðsljóð as a Generic Farce, SS LI 1979, pp. 124-45. This paper and another of the same author : The Germanic Conext of the Unfer Episode, Speculum LV, 1980, pp. 444-68, give a good general survey of the genre.
- 21 The flyting of Eric has been explained by J. Svennung : Eriks and Götvaras Wortstreit Bei Saxo. Arkiv för nordisk Filologi LVI, 1942, pp. 78-91. Because he acts like a female and therefore is a bisexual being Gudmundr has been compared to Loki by Heinz Klingenberg : Edda, Sammlung und Dichtung, Basel und Stuttgart 1974, pp. 78-91.
- 22 Otto Höfler : Das Opfer im Semnonenhain und die Edda, Festschrift Felix Genzmer, Heidelberg 1952, pp. 1-67.
- 23 Olrik and Ræder, p. 105, Elton, p. 151.

IV

ETUDES DE STYLE ET DE STYLISTIQUE

