

Schurtz in his "Altersklassen und Geheimbünde." In the main the same critique that I have applied to the latter¹ can be applied to Ehrenreich.

The motifs, according to Ehrenreich, are conditioned by man's apperception of the phenomena of nature and what he associates with these phenomena. They thus serve as demonstrations that the myths were originally concerned with these phenomena. As a proof of this, a number of myths were pointed out that still possessed all the features of a nature-myth. Taking these, then, as a starting point and as reinforcing his primary assumption of a single original and correct version, Ehrenreich reconstructed primitive mythology.

As we have repeatedly pointed out, it is quite essential for Ehrenreich's theory that motifs and episodes serve as a means for reconstructing his original versions, and it is just here that the importance of the literary analysis becomes apparent; for we have shown that the motifs, themes, and episodes are used as free elements and are altered not through accidental causes but by the exercise of an author-raconteur's artistic instinct. Consequently, even if many of these motifs did conceivably belong to old versions of a myth, there is no possible way of discovering that now. We know, of course, that nature-myths exist, but, considering the nature of the literary tendencies at work, it seems quite justifiable to assume that certain author-raconteurs showed a preference for developing nature-myths or for interpreting any myth in terms of natural phenomena. There is abundant evidence for such a tendency in the mythologies of many North American tribes. Among the Pawnee, for instance, the identification of heroes with stars has become almost a formula.

It will thus be seen that the discussion of North American mythology from a literary point of view presents the problems customarily dealt with in an entirely different light, and, if it does nothing else, it demonstrates at least how intricate are the facts involved and how great the data still to be obtained before ultimate problems can be attacked.

¹ Cf. P. Radin, "The Ritual and significance of the Winnebago medicine dance," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXV, 1911, pp. 149-208.