

Having demonstrated the nature of the original subject-matter of mythology, it was quite logical to argue that in those cases where divergent versions of the same myth occurred, that version which approached the original subject-matter most closely, was historically the older. Where there existed clear-cut references to celestial actors such an interpretation seemed natural enough. But how are we to deal with those myths where the references are either extremely attenuated or, to the naïve eye, even absent entirely? For these Ehrenreich provided by predicated certain criteria as distinctive of celestial actors and celestial activities. It is in these criteria and the use made of them that Ehrenreich seems at his weakest. Lowie has shown this quite clearly. But, after all is said and done, Lowie's analysis merely makes it clear that Ehrenreich's position was not the only possible one, and that, for instance, it was possible to reverse the interpretation and insist that the activities of celestial heroes were but the transferred activities of human heroes. Ehrenreich realized this clearly and answered quite correctly that here we were dealing with a matter of opinion. Speaking of certain phenomena of the heavens, he says, "Für manche Forscher, zu denen u.a. auch Lowie zu gehören scheint, sind derartige Vorkommnisse freilich die natürlichsten Dinge von der Welt, an dessen irdischer Unterlage nicht zu zweifeln ist. Das ist eben Ansichtssache, die keiner weiteren Diskussion bedarf."¹ Ehrenreich, it seems to me, had a much better answer, for he might easily have pointed to the fact that celestial heroes and celestial events had of necessity to be represented in terms of human heroes and human activities.

In fact, any general critique of a theory like Ehrenreich's hardly touches the core of his position. From his point of view it would represent merely another position. Even a more specific critique, like the demonstration of a literary tendency for a specific area, as in the case of the Pawnee, where practically all myths are interpreted as star myths, would fare no better, for Ehrenreich would conceivably answer that in so far as you chose to call this identification of myths with stars a literary tendency, it was a matter of opinion; for him it was a survival.

¹"Allgemeine Mythologie," pp. 104, 105.