

cussions myths are so frequently treated as simple units, that we are immediately led to the conclusion that over and above their analytical separation into constituent elements lie certain theoretical assumptions. What these are in the case of Ehrenreich, Lowie has clearly demonstrated.¹ But Lowie was concerned primarily with an examination of Ehrenreich's mythological theory as such and paid only passing attention to the manner in which the latter may have justified his treatment of the myth. It is, however, precisely by an analysis of Ehrenreich's handling of the myth that a refutation of his position is at all possible. Such an analysis brings out quite clearly that he started with the definite assumption that for every myth one correct and historically primary version existed. It is hardly necessary to go to the trouble of proving this as a main element in Ehrenreich's theory, for it is quite transparent. Our line of argument will, therefore, consist in examining, first, how Ehrenreich arrived at this conclusion, and then, in turn, to inquire whether it is tenable.

EHRENREICH'S MYTHOLOGICAL THEORY AND THE ASSUMPTION
OF AN HISTORICALLY PRIMARY VERSION.

It would, I believe, be an injustice to assume that the thesis of an historically primary version was based merely on *à priori* reasoning. A study of the subject matter and *dramatis personae* in many different areas seemed to point clearly to the fact that myths are frequently concerned with phenomena of nature or more specifically with the celestial bodies—sun, moon, and stars. Again, it was noted that many non-celestial episodes and actors were interpreted in terms of celestial phenomena. It was thus easy enough to generalize and assume that myths originally dealt with natural phenomena, further circumscribed to mean specifically the sun, moon, and stars. Some students of mythology went even further and attempted to prove that the myth primarily dealt only with one of these luminaries. Into these discussions we need not enter. All that we wish to point out is that theoretically there exists a certain amount of justification for the assumption of the naturalistic school of mythologists.

¹ Lowie, *ibid.*, pp. 97-106.