birth rates will not be found to vary much.

It is the death rates that will probably be found to vary the most from region to region. Since the rate of regional natural increase depends more upon these, if the birth rates are fairly uniform, as I suspect, survey research upon regional death rates is particularly to be encouraged at present. Humane considerations also are a strong motive. For if certain regions are found to have death rates considerably above average, more attention may thereafter be paid by interested parties to make the benefits of medical science more available to those regions.

Folktale and Folk Life

RUDOLF RAHMANN, S.V.D.
University of San Carlos
Cebu City

One of the great folklorists of our time, Stith Thompson, Professor emeritus of Indiana University, describes the folktale "as a tale of some length involving a succession of motifs or episodes, (which) moves in an unreal world without definite locality or definite characters and is filled with the marvelous."[1]

It would be wrong to conclude from this description that the folktale belongs in its entirety to the realm of utopia. Thompson's characterization of the folktale has to do with his specific approach, the historical-geographical method, also called the Finnish method, which is primarily interested in the establishing of the "complete life history of a particular tale."[2] But Thompson, although rather critical about the achievements hitherto attained by the psychoanalytical school, admits the value of other approaches. However, he considers, and rightly so, the knowledge "of all the facts about the life history of a tale" an indispensable prerequisite for the approaches of the psychologist, sociologist, and anthropologist.[3]

These latter approaches are implicitly contained in the succinct definition which a well-known Austrian folklorist, Leopold Schmidt, gives of folklore, of which the folktale is an essential part. To Schmidt folklore is "the science of life (as it is reflected) in its traditional orders."[4]

For the sake of a better understanding of what I want to explain briefly, it is necessary to say a few words about the difference between myth and folktale. Wilhelm Grimm saw in the folktale a broken-down myth.[5] Jan de Vries, the outstanding Dutch specialist in Indo-European studies, who is at the same time a distinguished folklorist, specifies this view when he states that numerous elements of primitive religious or magic thinking have become divested of their essential character in the folktale. Many old rites, customs, or cults may be traced in the folktale, yet they have been emptied of their proper meaning

[1] Stith Thompson, *The Folktale* (New York: The Dryden Press, 1961), p. 8.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 430.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 448.
[4] Leopold Schmidt, *Geschichte der cesterreichischen Volkskunde* (History of Austrian Folklore) (Wien: Oesterreichischer Bundesverlag fuer Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunts, 1951), p. 10.
[5] Cf. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 370.

and have become simple form-elements. But the fact that these elments are very numerous seems to indicate, according to de Vries, an origin in which they played an essential role. De Vries, furthermore, thinks that if one places the folktale beside the myth, one is tempted to speak of a re-styling. This re-styling has first of all eliminated everything really mythical. One could speak of a "de-divinized" world which, however, and this is just the astonishing factor, has thereby not become void of meaning. For the folktale, even while renouncing everything metaphysical, still remains the mirror of all the essential elements of human existence. Only, this existence is not mirrored against the background of a luminous world; it is presented, as it were, in itself. The archetypes now appear in purely human contours.[6] The German folklorist, Lutz Roehrich, makes, as far as our point is concerned, the same remarks. In his work *Maerchen und Wirklichkeit* (Folktale and Reality) he finds the exciting characteristic of the folktale in the fact that we encounter in it, amidst our modern rationalized world, a way of thinking that seems to establish a spiritual connection of the present with an archaic world-picture.[7]

Roehrich's view clearly combines the psychological with the historical approach. However, as regards the latter, the history of the folktale is for Roehrich the history of the slowly changing views man has had about reality, i.e., the world around himself.[8] In contrast to Thompson, he is not concerned with the life history of the individual tale. No doubt, Roehrich (whatever may be said about his opinion that we have in the folktale a development from the magical to a rational view of reality adds an important view to the historical aspect, one that has eminently to do with folk life.[9]

If we now combine the historical aspect, taken in its broadest sense, with the psychological, we may apply to the folktale what another German folklorist, Adolf Spamer, wrote more than thirty years ago, *viz.*, that folklore is an historical science with a psychological outlook.[10]

This psychological approach has since found its most outstanding advocates in the late Swiss psychiatrist, Carl Gustav Jung,[11] and the Rumanian psychologist and historian of religion, Mircea Eliade.

Jung deduces myth and folktale from the archetypal collective imaginations of primitive mankind.[12] These narratives are, as a rule, tribal doctrine handed down from generation to generation by retelling. But this is not all: the same forces, out of which the first myths originated, are active even today in the human psyche. Some of its products are structurally so much like the basic types of myths and folktales that they must be considered as related. It seems therefore quite possible that both the mythical and the individual types originate under highly similar conditions. The narratives of the remote past are the archetypes, the dynamic image of the

[6] Jan de Vries, *Betrachtungen zum Maerchen* (Meditations on the Folktale) (FF Communications No. 150. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1954), p. 170 f.

[7] Lutz Roehrich, *Maerchen und Wirklichkeit*. Eine volkskundliche Untersuchung (Folktale and Reality. A Folkloristic Investigation) (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1956), p. 4.

[8] *Ibid.*, cf. also p. 197.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 196.

[10] Quoted (with no page citation) by Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 15, from Adolf Spamer, *Die Volkskunde als Wissenschaft* (Folklore As a Science), Berlin 1929.

[11] The brief summary is taken from Carl Gustav Jung and Karl Kerenyi, *Einfuehrung in das Wesen der Mythologie*. Amsterdam-Zurich 1941 English edition: *Essays on a Science of Mythology*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1949.

[12] Jung usually speaks of myths, but in his analyses he also deals with folktale motifs.

present-day expression of the human soul.[13]

According to Eliade we discover in the myths of the different peoples of the world again and again the same human desire to suspend the profane time, and to live in the sacred time in which man finds the archetypes of all earthly existence and happenings. This desire for eternity corresponds, according to Eliade, in a certain sense to man's nostalgia for Paradise. Man always remains a prisoner of his archetypal notions, which arise the moment he becomes conscious of his situation in the cosmos.[14]

About this tendency to discover in folktale, myth, and hero tale, the archetypes of human existence, one author, Ladislaus Boros, remarks that it is good that the depth psychologists endeavor to tell us upon what our psychic life unconsciously draws, and which vistas we obtain as soon as our existence opens a little more to the depth of things.[15] It is wonderful for us, the same author says, to know all this, although we have felt all the time that life is nothing else but the "compactness of childhood".[16] If the folktale is endangered, one not only deprives the child of the magical (here evidently meant in the sense of fascinating), but also destroys the root of psychic life. If somebody were to gain full control over the folktale, he would hold in his hands one of the levers of psychic dictatorship. It is not just accidental that in Soviet Russia the folktale is under strict control: ideology begins with the folktale, indoctrination starts in childhood. We cannot fathom where this is going to lead. On the other hand Boros points out (thereby not intending to place religion and metaphysics on the same level with the folktale) how wonderfully a child under-

[13] Cf. C. G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (Bollingen Series XX. New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), p. 108.

[14] Mircea Eliade, *Pattern in Comparative Religion* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1958), Ch. XI, pp. 388-409: "Sacred Time and the Myth of Eternal Renewal"; furthermore the paragraph "Nostalgia for Paradise" (pp. 382-385) in Ch. X. Eliade developed his ideas more fully in his work *Le Mythe de l'Eternel Retour*, Paris 1949; English: *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, London 1955.

[15] Ladislaus Boros, "Das Maerchen: Einfuehrung ins geistige Leben" (The Folktale: Introduction to Spiritual Life), *Orientierung* (Zürich), February 28, 1959, 37-39.

I have rendered Boros' term "Legende" with hero tale (about the terminology, see Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 8).

De Vries (op. cit., p. 162), developing Eliade's views of the archetype, characterizes the hero tale as follows: the hero tale does not intend to retain an historical reality because archaic man is not interested in history as such. A hero tale develops out of an historical event only if in its carrier an archetype is discovered. It is for this reason that the great heroes of all peoples are slayers of dragons or other primeval monsters; they do just what in the beginning of time the Creator-God did when he overcame the chaos appearing in the form of a dragon. God has manifested himself, as it were, in the hero, and it is therefore not surprising that heroes sometimes were the object of cultic rites.

According to de Vries (*ibid.*, p. 167), there is a basic difference between folktale and hero tale. The former is in the same degree consciously optimistic, as the latter is directed towards the downfall and death of the hero. Folktale and hero tale therefore reflect two entirely different attitudes; not, however, in the sense that the folktale would make its appearance in the lower levels of society and the hero tale in the higher. But in their entire psychological structure they form two opposite poles. One feels immediately, de Vries states, that the folktale is not a shortened hero tale in which the tragic end has simply been omitted or changed into a conciliatory situation; still less, it should be imagined that the hero tale is a folktale that has been extended by providing it with a tragic end. In spite of the fact that the same motifs may occur in both, and that even the same scheme of action is found, the basic difference must be stressed.

The similarity of motifs is based, according to de Vries upon the use of similar "archetypes", and it is in this connection that he gives special credit to C. G. Jung for having brought about a fruitful collaboration between mythology and depth psychology.

[16] According to Jung, we have in the thumbstall and similar stories the archetype of the child-god, which, as he states, has a very wide distribution and is intimately connected with all other aspects of the child motif. See C. C. Jung and Karl Kerenyi, *Zur Psychologie des Kind-Archetypus. Das goettliche Kind* (On the Psychology of the Child-Archetype. The Child-God) (Amsterdam-Leipzig: Albae Vigiliae, Heft 6/7. Pantheon Akademische Verlagsanstalt, 1940), p. 113.

stands his catechism, if a new dimension of understanding has been opened in his mind by the folktale. How can he otherwise grasp it that, when a forbidden fruit was eaten, mankind was precipitated into a mad catastrophe. It is clear to anybody who has "seen" once how the mere forgetting of a word led to the destruction of cities, how a box was opened and all evil slipped out of it; and, if we may here refer to a Filipino tale: how Quicoy crossed the line between the two buried pieces of the coconut and now must stay on the coconut tree for a hundred years.[17]

In passing it may be remarked that the pansexualistic school of Freud has also seized upon the folktale. According to de Vries who, as we have seen, on principle welcomes the psychological approach, the folktale has thereby become the guinea-pig of reckless experimenters.[18] Also Thompson finds that approaches of this kind are not "realistic".[19]

Perhaps Scharbach stands on more solid ground when he finds in the myths and tales of the Clackamas Chinook Indians (Oregon), which were collected by Melville Jacobs, "certain resemblances to the existential dramas of Jean-Paul Satre."[20]

If we still add to the historical and the psychological outlooks the sociological, then, we seem to have the most adequate modern approach to the study of the folktale. The sociological outlook may be called the special contribution of American anthropologists. As early as 1916, Franz Boas stated in his monumental[21] study of the mythology of the Tsimshian Indians (Pacific coast, Canada) that obviously "in the tales of a people those incidents of the everyday life that are of importance to them will appear either incidentally or as the basis of a plot" and that material of this kind presents "in a way the autobiography of the tribe."[22] To a study on the Kwakiutl (Vancouver Island), Boas gave the title *Kwakiutl Culture as Reflected in Mythology*,[23] and he inspired other studies of this kind.[24]

It is almost superfluous to mention that these three aspects, the historical, the psychological, the sociological, will often overlap, especially the psychological and the sociological. The historical aspect may be said to be of a twofold nature: it may either concern the origin of the tale (historical-geographical method) or its content. The latter may sometimes be a true historical source. Thus Herskovits says about Cora Ehrlich's *Tribal Culture in Crow Mythology*:[25] "If we were to lose the ethnological studies made of the Crow Indians and retain solely their folklore, we could still reconstruct with surprising accuracy the culture of the tribe."[26]

[17] John Maurice Miller, *Philippine Folklore Stories* (Boston: The Athenaeum Press, Ginn and Company, 1904), pp. 23-34.

[18] de Vries, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-39.

[19] Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 385.

[20] Alexander Scharbach, "Aspects of Existentialism in Clackamas Chinook Myths," *Journal of American Folklore*, 75 (1962), 15. Cf.: Melville Jacobs, *The Content and Style of an Oral Literature. Clakamas Chinook Myths and Tales.* Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology No. 26. New York: Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, 1959.

[21] Jacobs, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[22] Cited by Donald S. Simmons, "Analysis of Cultural Reflection in Efik Folktales," *Journal of American Folklore*, 74 (1961), 127. The Efik are a West African society in Nigeria (*ibid.*, p. 126) — Cf. also Melville J. and Frances S. Herskovits, who in their work *Dahomean Narrative* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1958), p. 7 f., refer to the same statement by Boas.

[23] Published by the American Folk-Lore Society, 1935 (G. E. Stechert & Co., New York, Agents). In the Preface (p.v) Boas states, in referring to his Tsimshian material, that these "...tales probably contain all that is interesting to the narrators and that in this way a picture of their way of thinking and feeling will appear..."

[24] Cf. Simmons, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[25] Published in the *Journal of American Folklore*, 50 (1937), 307-408.

[26] Simmons, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

I think that to a large extent the same can be said about Fay-Cooper Cole's *Traditions of the Tinguian.*[27] As a matter of fact, in the lengthy Introduction to his work (pp. 5-32) he deals explicitly with the problems as to how far these tales reflect "the first times" (cf. p. 27) as well as the present-day conditions (cf. p. 20), including the material culture, and he concludes this two fold effort with the statement:

> ...we believe that a study of Tinguian mythology has shown us that we can gain a real knowledge of the past of a people through their folklore; that we can secure an insight into their (present) mental life; and can learn something of the valuation they attach to certain of their activities and beliefs, which to us may seem at the surface trite and trivial.[28]

This would seem to be the place to mention also Father Morice Vanoverberg, C.I.C.M., to whom we owe the recording of a very large part of the folk-narratives of the Lepanto Igorots in the south of the Mountain Province and of the Isneg in the subprovince of Apayao. In the introduction to his article series "Songs in Lepanto Igorot as It is Spoken at Bauco"[29] he remarks that "the best and surest means" of getting knowledge of a people's "religion and ethics, its likes and dislikes, its ideas about good and evil. . . . the relations of the members of one family to each other . . . is to study their songs, prayers, tales . . ."[30]

The three approaches may be very briefly illustrated with an example. Mrs. Mabel Cole has recorded the Ilocano tale about "The Presidente Who Had Horns."[31] She believes that "here we have an excellent example of how a story brought in by the Spaniards has been worked over into a Philippine setting".[32] The latter is true enough; however, the Spanish provenance of the story is less certain. There exists among the Santal in northeast India a very similar tale, appearing of course in an Indian setting, entitled "The Child with the Ears of an Ox."[33]

The Greek parallel, which Mrs. Cole has in mind, is the story of kind Midas of Phrygia, whose ears Apollo caused to grow into those of an ass because Midas had decided against Apollo in a musical contest, which the latter had with the rustic god Pan. But this tale, too, is not limited to Greece and the Near East; it is a migratory legend of which variants are found also in India (and, besides, in Gaul and Ireland).[34]

Now, the historical background of the Greek story is the blending of Greek and Phrygian culture; sociologically, it reflects the ways of the ruling class, and psychologically, it seems to give us a glimpse of the sophisticated civilization which produced this version. The Santal and Ilocano versions, on the other hand,

[27] Fay-Cooper Cole, *Traditions of the Tinguian. A Study in Philippine Folklore* (Field Museum of Natural History, Publication 180. Chicago 1915).

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 32. — It is of interest to note that Cole in the Preface to his work acknowledges (p. 4) his indebtedness to Franz Boas (and Berthold Laufer).

[29] Published in *Anthropos*: 14-15 (1919-1920), 193-820; 16-17 (1921-1922), 22-50, 712-736. 18-19 (1923-1924), 155-179, 819-835; 21 (1926), 583-594; 23 (1928), 665-681; 33 (1938), 584-613; 41-44 (1946-1949), 177-184. *Folklore Studies* (Tokyo), 14 (1955), i-iii, contains a List of Fr. Vanoverberg's Publications, ending with the year 1955 in which that periodical published his "Isneg Tales" (pp. 1-148). Since then further studies have appeared.

[30] *Ibid.*, 14-15 (1919-1920), 793.

[31] Mabel Cook Cole, *Philippine Folktales* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1916), p. 181 f.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 182.

[33] Cecil Henry Bompas, *Folklore of the Santal Parganas* (London: David Nutt, 1909), p. 171 f.

[34] Maria Leach and Jerome Fried (eds.) *Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology,* and *Legend* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1950), p. 722.—See also Thomas, *Bulfinch's Mythology* (New York: Thomas Y Crowell Company (n.d.), p. 47 f.

reflect the simple and straightforward character of folk life.

Summing up, we may say that the historical approach is indispensable and rewarding; the psychological difficult, but fascinating; the sociological very promising indeed.

The urgent task to be undertaken in the Philippines is no doubt the same which Dorson,[35] who himself travelled widely with pen and tape recorder,[36] has stressed for the United States; namely, the careful collection of all folk narratives. To the extent that we succeed in this we shall have in the folktale a true mirror of national life. Quite possibly investigations along this line will confirm what Hill more than thirty years ago wrote in the Preface of his work *Philippine Short Stories.*[37] He remarks that the stories collected by him illustrate on the one hand "other days and other times", but

> serve also to illustrate the truth that human nature changes but little. Wondrous inventions have made the world smaller and education tends to the equalization of mankind, but the sum total of the effect on man's primal nature is negligible. The wind ruffles the ocean but barely stirs the depth beneath.

However much he anticipated in this respect, Hill could not have even dreamt of how wondrous indeed would be the inventions that have been made since he wrote these words nearly thirty years ago. But his vision is, so to say, confirmed by what Dorson writes in our days:

> In spite of the accelerated pace of modern living, which seems to strike at our roots and very identity, the folklorist marvels at the tenacity of tradition. Veer off the main highway for a little distance, and the civilization of rocket ships and automation suddenly melts away.[38]

What Dorson says with these words about the United States is certainly not less, and probably even more, true for the Philippines. And thus the unreal world of the folktale will, in spite of the enormous changes all peoples of the world are undergoing in so many spheres of their culture, continue to mirror the realities of life.

---

[35] Richard M. Dorson, *American Folklore* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 5.

[36] Daniel J. Boostrin on p. ix in the preface to Dorson's work.

[37] Percy A. Hill, *Philippine Short Stories* (Manila: Oriental Commercial Company, 1934), p. v.—Hill does not use the term *short stories* in the modern sense of a specific literary genre.

[38] Dorson, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

NOTE: A slightly shorter version of this paper was read at the Visayan=Mindanao Sociological Conference, Cebu City, May 30, 1962.

The writer wishes to thank his confrere Joseph Baumgartner, S.V.D., for reading the manuscript and offering a number of valuable suggestions.