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ABSTRACT

Encompassing a synthesis of studies exploring folktales and culture (more specifically cultural character) this report points out that the anthropologist or folklorist must gain familiarity with the culture and its members to gain some understanding of its integrative themes to determine whether they express wish fulfillment or reaction formation. The notion that a modal personality can be delineated for empirical examination through intensive study of the particular folklore of a particular society is examined through discussion involving examples of Polish, Zuni, Chinese, and Rhodesian culture. (RL)

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# FOLKLORE AND CULTURAL CHARACTER*

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The relationship of folklore to modal personality has been studied on an intermittent and cursory basis leaving much still to be explored. In this context, modal personality is used to represent the statistical distribution of the behavioral characteristics of a cultural character. This report will be another survey, a synthesis of studies exploring folktales and culture, or more specifically, cultural character. The idea of cultural character infers that cultures encompass the personalities of individuals. "Culture's distinctive configurational features come to pattern the existence and to condition the thoughts and emotions of individuals born into it, or who come to participate in its activities."[1] In attempting to relate configurations to folklore one must be aware that the groups using them change with each generation. The transition, in turn, creates difficulties for the analysis of configurations and folklore.

In most instances, the usual references are not used in discussing four diverse groups, with whose folklore the author is familiar. The cultures selected for discussion are the Polish, the Zuni, the Chinese, and the Rhodian Greek. It is, of course, impossible to present a complete series of folktales so, in most cases, examples will be used solely for illustrative purposes without the narrative of the folktale.

I choose to use Fischer's broad definition of folktale as inclusive of ". . . any traditional, dramatic, oral narrative," and in this he includes myths of the supernatural or those used exclusively for entertainment.[2] Folktales constitute a part of "expressive" culture with an empirical result designed to effect a reaction on the part of the participants. It is noteworthy that a folktale is a dramatic narrative insofar as it states a conflict that must be resolved. These conflicts are, of course, expressive and reflective of the particular culture they represent, thus making the folktale an important tool of analysis. Many folktales also serve to convey a moral or a lesson.

Today, as in the past two decades, there is a revived interest on the part of anthropologists in the area of "Culture and Personality." This interest is paralleled by an attempt to make the approach more scientific by using a wider variety of analytical tools. One of the aspects of "Culture and Personality" is that phase which stresses the study of the behavioral traits characteristic of a particular social group. These behavioral traits are integrated by certain normative and existential themes into a unified cultural character. Although there can be a central focus, I do not subscribe to the idea of a single causative theme, nor should one structure a set of themes based on the ideas of a single individual, even one as insightful as Sigmund Freud.

Cultural character and modal personality studies attempt to arrive at configurations by describing the correlative regularities of the individual's behavior in a culture.[3] Quite often these studies take child-rearing techniques as major clues to the personality most often projected. Some anthropologists choose to emphasize a particular feature of these techniques, sleeping arrangements, toilet training or others. A few years ago G. P. Murdock initiated the Human Relations Area Files, a cross-indexed compilation of ethnographies which also include a number of folktales. Although the Files have made some material available, anthropologists have made little attempt to correlate the significance of folklore to other parts of culture. It must also be mentioned that quite often anthropologists have chosen not to transcribe folktales and myths, severely limiting the amount of data available.

The approaches to "Culture and Personality" have most often used, as their basis, themes borrowed from psychoanalytic psychology, tests initially devised by clinical psychologists, questionnaires inspired by sociologists and the participant-observer technique commonly used by anthropologists. Most anthropologists have dealt with the large societal approach on such a limited basis that they do not structure their models prior to the study, but arrive at conclusions after the fact. To some extent their approach is similar to the one employed by folklorists, and similar in the fact that most of the studies conducted by the men of both fields are mainly with technologically simple, often non-literate societies.[4] As stated above a few of these studies of cultural character stress a single theme, a form of psychological reductionism at its worst. For instance, Geoffrey Gorer places extreme stress on the importance of swaddling of infants in Great Russia to which he attributes that country's national traits.[5] La Barre contends that the severe toilet training techniques of the Japanese are largely accountable for their obsessive-compulsive personality.[6]

Methods of discovering a cultural character or a modal personality include the use of projective tests such as Rorschach data, the Thematic Apperception Test, and drawing analyses. Anthropologists such as Hallowell, Honigmann, Mead and others utilize these techniques extensively. While it is true that some of these tests are not culture-bound, there is, nevertheless, considerable doubt as to

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their cross-cultural applicability in terms of the protocol used in scoring and over-reliance upon the partial knowledge of the language.[7] Modified series of TAT cards or protocol need testing themselves. Drawing analyses may reflect cultural traditions, but the interpreter may be subjective. These statements do not mean that all of these tests are to be disregarded, rather that they should be used only with great caution as adjuvants to other methods of analysis.

According to Barnouw, there are "three general kinds of studies which concern folklore in relation to personality."[8] First, the work of the psychoanalysts who stress symbolism. Most recently, it was Fromm who stated that a type of universal symbolism exists; the idea that an individual interprets symbols similarly if the cultural contexts are alike.[9] A second approach to folklore involves cross-cultural surveys, for example, the studies conducted by John Whiting and his colleagues on child training.[10] The third approach involves a more intensive study of the folklore of a particular society, sometimes in addition to other socio-psychological evidence based on the idea that a modal personality can be delineated for empirical examination. This paper is primarily conceived with a critical survey of this aspect in relation to cultural character and where applicable, to modal personality.

## *POLISH CULTURE*

The people of Poland have long been subjected to a series of wars that have continually placed them in precarious or subservient positions. Most of the Poles are landless peasants who live in small villages, but who maintain fairly close contact with the neighboring towns, comprising a fairly cohesive territorial kinship system. Another integrative force is the Roman Catholic Church which influences many aspects of this culture, and its influence pervades even the syntax of the Polish language which recalls the Latin of the Church.[11]

The Pole places a high value on his national origin even though he often feels animosity toward the seat of government which generally proves to be more factional and divisive rather than unifying.[12] There is unity in his language, religion, and national consciousness, but a sense of cooperation is weakly developed and this is exhibited even among the peasants who show a reluctance to share land, work with neighbors or lend tools.[13]

According to some students of Polish culture, respect is considered a highly valued courtesy, and except for very close kin relationships, most contacts are kept on a rather formal and reserved plane. A Pole is easily offended, finds it difficult to admit faulty judgement or to understand why a person changes his mind regarding particular objectives. Close friendships are very limited, but highly valued and durable.

Work is not idealized or even valued; it is seen as a necessity; however it must be noted that after immigration to the United States, many of the former peasants did begin to idealize work and the consequent attitude is that "manual labor has more dignity than commercial occupations."[14]

The child-rearing practices in Poland traditionally emphasize that a child must be raised under strict rules and unquestionable obedience is demanded of the child. It is true that immediately following World War II there was an attempt to change the familial values so that the individual's allegiance was shifted to the authority of the state. Except for the upper and middle classes who constitute a distinct minority, the plan has not caused overall changes although it gives some credence to the adolescent's arguments for greater control.

The husband is regarded as the head of the family, but the wife rules over household matters. He is hard and unbending while she often assumes the role of the protectress. The infant is seen as an extremely fragile being that must be hardened. "Swaddling is conceived as a first step in a long process of 'hardening' the child."[15] The Poles who tend to value suffering feel that it is also necessary for the child's upbringing, and further, swaddling differentiates between the clean and dirty zones of the body, the latter being the genitals and feet. "In peasant villages it is good for a baby to cry without attention, for it strengthens the lungs; beating the child is good because it is hardening."[16] Food is not denied and its withdrawal is never used as punishment as it is necessary for strengthening; nevertheless, weaning is scheduled for a saint's day and occurs suddenly. The peasants possess a strong fear that the child is especially susceptible to the evil eye so a mother seldom allows anyone else to feed her child.

The Polish child is taught to be brave, self-reliant, and respectful. "Children's games often involve competitive performance for feats of bravery and ability to sustain pain."[17] As the child grows and seeks independence the conflict with the parents sometimes becomes quite intense. The parents do expect, however, that they will depend upon their children for at least partial economic support in later years.

Much of the Polish folklore contains an admixture of religious and secular motifs in which it is not uncommon to find God or satan included as natural characters. An overwhelming emphasis is placed on stories of conflict between good and evil. Good usually triumphs, but many of the tales are sad with themes of subjugation and suppression with the longing for unrestrained freedom. One may cognize these as examples of wish-fulfillment not only in relation to familial relationships, but to the political sphere as well. The Poles tend to regard their country as being identified with the crucifixion; a country that has been crucified by many oppressors, but in the end, resur-

rected. The protectress of the Polish nation is the Blessed Virgin of Csetochowa who has, on occasion, intervened against foreign invaders. She is also identified with womanhood in Poland, especially the peasant wife, who is depicted in many folktales as a thrifty and hard working individual who often intervenes on the part of the children. This theme is elaborated on by a modern poet, Maria Konopnicka.

Several Polish folktales deal with the child's susceptibility to evil, and some begin with the idea that even an embryo may be cursed or influenced by the devil, reaffirming the idea of the fragile and weak infant.[18] Because of their belief that the nervous system of the mother and the embryo are connected, the mother is depicted in the folktales, as a person to be given special protection. In reality this is the case, and it is not unusual for a pregnant Polish woman to be accorded special consideration, an element uncommon among European peasants, with the exception of the southern Balkans.

Folklore about children seldom points out a playful nature, rather the emphasis is on a child learning to accept adult-like responsibilities, and unquestioning obedience of adults.[19] The adults, on the other hand, display, as a matter of course, a complacent acceptance of their suffering.

The traditional national symbol of Poland is the white eagle which is part of a prophetic legend.[20] Although many of the tales involve stories of battle heroes and wars, and the characters seem quite concerned for their country, the hero does not involve himself until the war takes on a personal meaning for him.

In this case the folktales tend to support the modal personality studies conducted on a number of variables and to display the value of folklore data as complementary to other areas of study.

## *ZUNI CULTURE*

The Zuni is a Pueblo tribe located in the southwestern part of the United States, basing its subsistence primarily on gardening. Perhaps the best known study of Zuni cultural personality was conducted by Ruth Benedict.[21] She emphasizes that the Zuni are a people who stress the importance of ritual observances, and often spend their time interpreting religious omens or practices. They tend to be rather compulsive regarding the ritual formulas designed to promote rain or human fertility. The men's societies are responsible for depicting the masked gods, Kachinas, for whom they have much affection and respect. The young boy is initiated into one of these cults in exorcism rites designed to "take away the bad" by frightening and whipping him. Yet, the initiation serves to establish bonds with the supernatural, modifies the boy's ties with the matrilocal household, and integrates him into an approved male role.

The family is matrilineal, that is, descent is traced through the female unilineally, and it is also matrilocal, the husband and wife reside with or near the home of her parents. As expected, the woman is a dominant figure. Benedict describes the Pueblo's ceremonial approach as "Apollonian," practice in moderation, as opposed to the "Dionysian." In the Apollonia *ethos* "the Pueblos distrust and reject those experiences which take the individual in any way out of bounds and forfeit his sobriety."[22] Torture is never used and the frenzy sought by the Plains tribes is alien to the Pueblos. The dances are prescribed and tend to emphasize the communal aspects of religion, quite evident in their folktales and mythology.

In describing the "ideal" man in Zuni culture, Benedict states "Personal authority is perhaps the most vigorously disparaged trait," and praise for a person mentions that no one hears much from him and that he is not ambitious.[23] Traits of modesty are also valuable for women as well, and while the responsible head of a household is the mother's brother, authority is largely lacking. The virtue of cooperation is consistently emphasized, and discipline of even young children is discouraged. The exorcism mentioned above, is purifying and initiatory, and the boy is accompanied by a supportive sponsor. Another important trait is the fact that the individual is submerged within a group which is the functioning unit. In no way is the individual autonomous as reflected in their main prayer, "We shall be one person."[24]

As mentioned above, violence is rare and tales of homicide are just as rare. Suicide is too violent an act even to contemplate, and two folktales that deal with this subject are masked to the extent that they deny that it is suicide. For instance, a deserted wife goes out to meet an Apache raiding party and is killed; the Zuni acknowledge her vengefulness, but do not go any further.

Sexual symbolism is usually minimized in folktales and ceremonies, often by inappropriate substitutions, perhaps a result of puritanical recorders. Benedict compares it to our own puritanical attitudes of the past, but there is a vast contrast in the fact that sin is not associated with sex among the Zuni.

Their cosmological ideas bring them close to their supernatural. If the supernatural are prone to performing certain acts so does man, life is inevitable and so is death:

> Do not despise the breath of your fathers,
> But draw it into your body . . .
> That we may finish our roads together.
> May my father bless you with life;
> May your road be fulfilled.[25]

The Zuni do not have a class system, but status differentiation is apparent in the language used for ritual purpose because it is the prestigeful language associated with old people.

Benedict either does not perceive this aspect or fails to attach any importance to this linguistic phenomenon. Newman makes a point of it and states "vocabulary levels reflect cultural phenomena of a very general nature. Words acquire connotative gradations in accordance with the cultural values assigned to ideas, status groups, and situations."[26] Thus what Benedict appears to overlook is exhibited in a linguistic study by Newman.

Another linguistic approach is one in which Benjamin Colby looks for word forms and themes in the patterns of narratives in conjunction with the administration of the Thematic Apperception Test. One part of the study compared Zuni conceptual areas against those of other preliterate and literate cultures. On the test results regarding word-groups encompassing meteorological interests, the Zuni showed much concern with forms of moisture, and less concern for exposure to the elements. The Zuni are horticulturalists in an arid area where they welcome some snow in the winter for early spring water to germinate their corn. In comparing the frequency of the meteorological terms the student achieves an idea of the relative importance of terms. The Zuni scored low on the word forms for "travel", but interestingly enough the word "home" gave an indication of a place of discord and tension. In order to cross-check this interpretation based primarily on the TAT, the anthropologist administered a word test in conjunction with the word "home", using such key words as "assist, comfort, easy, affection, play" as themes of relation and words like "destruction, discomfort, difficult, dislike, sad, battle and anger" to denote the theme of tension. The Zuni showed more tension at home, for instance than the Navajo, which suggests an interesting and perhaps contradictory phenomenon in view of Benedict's study. Nevertheless, Colby cautions that "this does not necessarily . . . reflect actual Navajo or Zuni life. What we have is an objective measure of two modes as they appear in tests."[28]

Colby contends that it is not enough merely to ascertain patterns or structures in folktales; that these schemes should not only be the investigator's scheme, but also objectively determined conclusions that are part of the culture.

The most intensive studies stressing the value of folklore for an understanding of culture in terms of the Zuni must again be credited to Benedict whose interpretations are made as a participant-observer in contrast to an objective analysis. She contends, and I believe with much justification, that an analysis of folktales cannot be validly attempted unless one has a thorough knowledge of the culture. It is admitted that variants of tales exist and some may reflect customs and beliefs of many generations past. Also, current folktales are collected long after their origin which not only displays conservatism, but also variations. Nevertheless, folklore, even among non-literate groups is brought up to date by the tellers who adopt them. Quite often, a variant in the tale may be an idealization of the culture or even an exaggeration indicating prowess in a particular area, used in a compensatory manner.

An extremely contrastive theme found in several Zuni folktales is the abandonment of children which is completely alien to their practices even for illegitimate children. In the tales the audience identifies with the child who is protected by supernatural forces, and finally grows up to a fine adult while the parents who abandoned the child lead a miserable life, or the mother is punished because she did not confess her pregnancy. Benedict states an interpretation with a Freudian bent, the idea that children daydream of their parent's sorrow over their own death, and she compares this to fantasies of children in our culture. I think that although there may be some validity in this interpretation, it would seem more precise to say, on the basis of the data collected, that it is a means of asserting a moral sanction and justifying it with illustrations.

Tales dealing with a deserted husband or wife (see above) approach the idea of suicide as he (or she) calls the Apache and exposes himself to be killed. The Apache apparently do not stop with one killing, but cause a calamity; thus Benedict concludes that in daydreams a Zuni who is unhappy wishes that others should suffer. Taking one of her earlier interpretations of this culture, one will remember that the Zuni are an extremely communal group where the individual is submerged, thus the idea that if one suffers then the group will suffer; furthermore, overt vengeance can lead to disaster. If we are to borrow a Freudian theme, we may point out that carrying a grudge or wishing to seek revenge is frowned upon in reality, but permitted in fantasies which give vent to suppressed emotions (note Colby's findings of discontent). The person who is hurt, despised, deserted, not appreciated, finds an outlet.

Most Zuni folktales dealing with courtship, sex or marriage usually place the woman in the role of the aggressor, and in fact it is almost always the woman who rapes the timid man who tries to flee the "Toothed Vagina Woman." The reverse is seldom perceived, but when women are victims it is seldom for sexual reasons, rather for some form of violence.[30] It has already been mentioned that the grouping of kin is with the wife's family which may be a factor in showing the woman as the aggressor in the folklore. In real culture the woman waits for the man to court her and is instructed not to turn him down if he asks for marriage. Interestingly, if divorce does occur, it is usually initiated by the woman. As for the reasons for the violence referred to by the male figures in folktales, perhaps this is a form of wish-fulfill-

ment. Nevertheless, the importance of the unified family is a major theme in Zuni folklore which is generally much milder than the examples presented in this report.

Zuni tales are generally expressive of the social values of the culture, allow a person to evaluate human actions, and serve to exemplify knowledge of tradition. Yet, it is also apparent that they reveal some striking contrasts to behavior unacceptable to "real" culture; they serve, in effect, to express ideas and actions otherwise forbidden and to give vent to suppressed wishes. In some ways they reveal the underlying currents of tensions that may prove disruptive; however, the tales are usually a means of rectifying, correcting and unifying.

## *CHINESE CULTURE*

The Chinese culture has been undergoing vast changes in the last quarter century, but indications are that the values surrounding the family unity remain fairly strong, and that even the new government has had to adapt some of its policies to the realization of this conservatism. The value of filial piety, for instance, is an extremely difficult attitude to dislodge for this idea defines many of the roles with their related obligations and duties. The child is inculcated with the theme that it owes a great deal to the parents who bore him and sacrificed to rear him. The family structure is given major credence with sets of rules regulating a mutual dependence unequalled by other literate cultures. According to Hsu, the Chinese are raised in a situation-oriented world where different rules apply to different situations.[31] An individual is secure and complacent in the knowledge that he has "multiple standards" and the morality varies with the situation. His main objective is to live in harmony with the universe, not to change it and this theme is evident in Chinese folklore and mythology. The Chinese acceptance of the universal determination of natural and supernatural tends to structure a society which through the centuries has shown little impetus for internal change. In contrast to Americans, for instance, the Chinese do not cognize practical phenomena as polar opposites, good-bad, and right-wrong. On the other hand, the Chinese do perceive of a polarity of forces, Yin, which signifies dark, dry, passive, female; and Yang, light, moist, active, male, which are almost if not in total importance, cosmic forces.

The parental bond is extremely valuable, and the pattern of mutual dependence with those in one's own primary group produces a deep sense of security. Conversely a schism with the primary group may produce an individual with little identification or few affiliations, in effect, an outcaste. Even economic pursuits are in no way divided from the familial bonds, and they do not hesitate to expose the children to the world of adults, economically or socially. Parents that act according to the philosophy of Confucius are in complete control of their children.

In the political field, the familial idea is also manifest insofar as officials are charged with a sense of mutual dependence, and it is contended that this is the case in Communist China today.[32] Rampant nepotism of past regimes has been modified recently although the foundational ideas are still relevant. The extended family of all living generations residing together is still the ideal of those who can afford it. The mythology of the past classical times clearly defines hierarchies and gradations that are reminiscent of Imperial China. It is contended that in the past it was not uncommon to include ones ancestors in some of the myths that were already popular thus insuring that his memory be kept alive.[33] In fact, several authors claim that the intense historical orientation of the Chinese, along with their tendency to reject supernatural explanations, often causes them to accept myth as history.[34]

Perhaps one of the most popular pieces of Chinese folklore is *Monkey* which is now considered a children's classic. "Monkey is of supernatural origin, yet his character is quite humanly aggressive and assertive." [35] Monkey is most often intelligent, uninhibited and victorious, with a sense of justice and fairness. His conquests are checked by three supernatural father-figures, and on occasions when he rebels, he is punished by imprisonment. Through various means of intervention by the goddess of mercy, Monkey finally learns the path to salvation by following the moral code of a good Buddhist.

The anthropologists who interpret this story point out that the narrative displays the potential source of conflict with parental authority. A child, who resembles Monkey, believes that he deserves a higher place in society, but after a series of frustrations settles down to a well structured order that benefits the entire family.

Studies of Chinese child-rearing practices indicate that the period from six to ten years of age seems to be the most difficult. The child leaves the tender care of his mother and is placed under the tutelage of a teacher, but in the meantime he fairly avoids his father. The mother no longer shields the child from punishment, but offers moral support and urges him to identify with the father. The resemblance to Monkey, who is immobilized when he deviates from the norm, is unmistakable.

Another character in the tale resembles a pig who seems mentally slow compared to Monkey, and is depicted as a greedy individual. "The Chinese commentator remarks, and with good reason, that Monkey symbolizes the mind of man and Pigsy his carnal appetites." [36] The relationship between these two reminds one of sibling relationships with its accompanying rivalry. On occasion, Monkey shows acceptance of his sibling and even extricates his cohort and

other friends from difficulties, especially lewd female spirits with the implication that sex may be used as a weapon. The Chinese closely identify vitality with sexuality and this is manifested in a psychological illness known as "suo-yang", where the person afflicted feels that his penis is disappearing. The Chinese believe that the loss of semen through nocturnal emissions, masturbation or frequent copulation with the wrong persons may cause the loss of vitality. This idea is also noted in another tale, "The Mandarin-Duck Girdle" where the unfortunate hero succumbs to the wiles of several nuns who seduce him causing his eventual demise.

As Monkey develops he achieves some extraordinary powers by the good spirits who are now willing to help him in his worthy mission, and he is granted the power of immortality. Chinese folklore contains many examples of concern with immortality of the flesh and fear of the separation of the body and the soul. In the final analysis, Monkey learns that the only way that he can truly achieve some of the powers he envies or rebels against, is through service to the group. In "real" culture, the idea of rewards and punishments among children are definitely associated with certain types of behavior. Chinese children's games also emphasize the idea of unity or of several working together as a single body. Confucius quoted Motzu in the statement, "I have transmitted what was taught me without making up anything of my own." [37]

Some may argue that the description takes account only of the Chinese upper classes; however, much the same values are upheld by the peasants who make a living of small scale farming. The peasant, of course, comes from a basic group that is smaller than that found among the gentry but the feeling of familial security is apparent in both. The social unit is part of a system of collective responsibility where the entire family receives praise for a contribution, but may all be punished for the offense of one.

Among the gentry as well as the peasantry, patriarchal authority is imminent as described in the literature, *The Dream of the Red Chamber*. In addition, it points to the fact that there is a system of mutual dependence between families of the lower class to those of the upper, and it is not uncommon to find that peasants rely on a particular group of the upper class for protection against political officials.[38]

The folktales of the Chinese appear to present conflicts, but are adjustive. They emphasize the unity of the familial unit or clan, but there are those who point out that internal unity can only be achieved by emphasizing the contrasting segments. The mores of a society may be patterned uniformly, but individuals show allegiance only to their own particular unit which, of course creates a system which becomes extremely static. Segments of a society such as an extended family or clan minimize their conflicting interests regarding society as a whole, but the mere fact that such units exist may prove divisive. Note the fact that in their works the Chinese stress modesty in reference to their own group while identifying with them fully; "in general the self-aggrandizement of a special interest group within a society will be more restrained than the self-aggrandizement of the whole society." [39] This potential conflict is seen both in the division between the peasantry and the upper class. To some extent, the present government of China is aware of this divisive element in the class system, but attempts to replace this by instilling a complete identity to the state. As stated above, the Communist government of China has attempted, on an experimental basis, to do away with the family by herding large units into communes, but apparently this experiment has not been successful so that they are now attempting a compromise.

### *RHODIAN GREEK CULTURE*

The last group to be discussed are Rhodian Greeks from the island of Rhodes, although the major focus of this paper is primarily on those who came to the United States as immigrants.

Rhodes is located in the southeastern part of the Aegean Sea. Its political history began prior to the Hellenic period as one of the early Minoan outposts and grew to the point where it spread settlements and controlled Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean trade. The Rhodians identified with the Greek world and shared so much of its culture that they came to consider themselves a part of it. After the fall of Classical Hellas, Rhodes came under the domination of a variety of conquerors: Romans, Genoese, Crusaders, the Ottoman Empire, Italy and finally in 1948, the islanders spoke of their deliverance as the Dodecanese Island chain was returned to Greece.

Up to the time of Roman domination Rhodes was one of the most progressive areas of the Hellenic world as reflected in its great sculptures, the Winged Victory of Samothrace and the Colossus; as seen by the Rhodian Maritime Law, the only living Greek law; by the establishment of government supported schools; the first insurance for cargo on ships; and the initiation of programs of exchange students with other states.

What was then one of the most progressive areas of the world was subjected to the extreme inhibition of its conquerors. This, in addition to the fact that the Rhodians reacted in a negative manner caused a major change in their attitudes, and they settled down to a stage of complacency and conservatism. They rejected innovations identified as "foreign" and looked to their religion of Christianity, intermingled with a smattering of classical polytheism, for justification. It is paradoxical that the Rhodians displayed an inconsistent attitude

towards religion which is still prevalent, reminiscent of their polytheistic days. Aside from religion, the most unitive factor was language, and the Rhodians fervently clung to the Greek through twenty centuries of foreign rule.

Rhodian mythology, as far as one can ascertain, was closely related to Hellenic myths, and to this day the inhabitants tell that Appollo claimed this island as his own. Actually, Helios, the sun god, was the main diety in the pantheon although these two appear to have merged in the minds of the people. It is interesting to note that female deities held a high position and this was correspondingly true of their human counterparts.

Rhodian folklore placed much emphasis on the "Great Idea," the idea that the day of deliverance was at hand, that the "Glory of Greece" would be restored to that area. Stories of modern heroes were mixed with ancient myths, but in the meantime they accepted their plight as the "will of God". This does not mean that they lost their will to struggle, rather they rationalized for the lack of change and idealized a great age of the past.

To a great degree, religion and folklore became, in the minds of the people, inextricably mixed and found expression in ritual ceremonies and tales. For instance, fertility rites of Spring evolved to flower festivals with songs to the ancient gods. Nilsson contends that "the distinction which has been made between religion and folklore since Christianity vanquished the pagan religions did not exist in antiquity." [40] Many of the beliefs persisted in some areas as part of the magico-religious customs because they were part of everyday life.

Many of the beliefs of Hellenic polytheism underwent only slight changes in their assimilation by Greek Christianity, and this can be seen in the infiltration of polytheistic mythology into Christian forklore: Poseidon, god of the Sea, became St. Nicholas, the protector of sailors and ships; Ares, the god of War, became St. George, the heroic warrior; Demeter, the goddess of Plenty, found a substitute in St. Demetrios, the patron of agriculture; and Apollo, the god of the sun, was later identified with the Prophet Elijah who ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire. Some of the names did not change in the folklore and on several occasions, they still use the ancient names interchangeably with the saint's names. For example, the church teaches a belief in afterlife, but according to the people's beliefs, the angel of God who transports the dead is Charon, mentioned by Homer. The statement that something is the "will of the gods," collectively or the "divine" is not so much a religious attitude as it is a magical fatalism. Also it is not unusual to talk of demons or superstitions which have to be overcome with religious rituals, for instance the evil eye.

The Rhodians began migrating to the New World prior to World War I, settling primarily in the large industrial centers as steelworkers. The immigrants from various villages settled together forming extremely cohesive units. They met in each others homes, as often as possible, where they exchanged conversation and drink, but the highlight of these evenings was when the folktale narrator arrived. As he unfolded his lore, the audience reacted in a serious manner to the hero's antics. Like most Greek myths, trickery was not abhorred; however, the folktales tended to happier endings than the classical myths, although the myths were clearly in evidence. The modern folktales often asserted that as good overcame evil the hero was then in a position to improve the plight of the world or his own group. Many of the folktales had a fatalistic ring that conceived that society could not change until the oppressor was vanquished. Any means of overcoming the oppressor, whether immoral or through trickery, was permissable. At the conclusion of the narration, the audience would applaud and commend the teller. On occasion, the tales were continued through several evenings.

Another favorite meeting place of the Rhodians was the coffee house. Here they also listened to folktales although this was not the usual place for this practice. Instead, they held puppet shows presented by a troupe of travelling puppeteers. Most of the dramas presented the same themes as the folklore although the combatting groups were more precisely identified; for instance, in this case, the villain was almost always the Turk who was inevitably vanquished.

It must be stated that some Rhodians continue to identify very closely not only to their human heroes, but also with their supernatural ones who are often, at least partially responsible for the successful outcome of the tale. It is also noteworthy that although the Rhodians (and those from other Greek provinces) engage in self-aggrandizement of their particular province, area, or island, the folktales stress a theme of national unity, the idea that they must present a cohesive force against outsiders. The Greeks in the United States, in fact, have organizations made up of members from their own province; for instance, the Macedonians, the Athenians, the Ikarians, etc., each with a specific name. The Pan-Rhodian organization is called Apollo. The idea presented here is that the Rhodians, like the Greeks, identify with the gods in their myths; gods who display human characteristics and assume local affiliations and attributes of the fiercely independent communities and who are free to intervene in everyday affairs.

The Rhodian child-rearing techniques, in many ways, are permissive for the first six years although they are a bit more rigid after that. When a child commits a wrong, pressure is usually exerted by teasing followed by a show of affection as soon as the child indicates a sense of shame. Trickery and deceit are used

by adults, on occasion, to induce a child to conform although the latter is usually made aware of the act immediately. A child below six years of age may show aggression toward a parent without the fear of corporal punishment; however, the adults usually feign surprised astonishment of his behavior. They may laugh about it later, especially if the child uses unusual or clever statements in his attack. The child realizes that mild forms of deception or cleverness are valuable in certain situations, although respect within the family circle is expected. "The total situation does not result in an inability to predict the behavior of others to the point of chaos in human relationships, but rather in an expectation on the part of the villagers of a wide range of alternative actions and responses by others. There is uncertainty within set limits, but there is also enjoyment of, and a taste for, the unpredictable." [41] In some respects, these attitudes are reminiscent of some of the myths in which the hero acts in a clever way, using deceit when necessary, usually for socially approved ends.

It must be noted that in many of the folktales there is another theme that crops up consistently: the child gains independence early, matures, undergoes difficulties, triumphs, achieves greatness, and finally ends up by assuming responsibility for his extended family or perhaps even his village. A detailed review of the folktales of the islanders and the Rhodians in the United States indicates a remarkable similarity except that in the New World career or occupation appears often, and achievement imagery becomes a major theme. The value of conflict and independence in childhood can be understood as variables that are already present in motivational striving through means of effective arousal that gives frequent evidence of motive formation.[42]

As an example of the change that is occurring among the Rhodians, it is significant that up to 1940 in the largest Rhodian settlement in the United States, no child had gone through eight years of school without failing at least once, whereas, twenty-five years later the educational level completed by Rhodians is higher than that of the U.S. national average. Most of the other Rhodian communities in the U.S. are ahead of the record set by the largest immigrant group. Folklore, in this case, is changing and adjusting to sociological factors. The popular themes reflect the culture somewhat obliquely because there are also contrasting conservative elements in the Rhodian family now undergoing assimilation. For instance, it is decreasingly fashionable for the family to select one's mate, and it is no longer desirable for the parent to depend on their grown children. The children still feel a sense of responsibility and do try to supplement the parent's income, but to a much lesser degree.[43]

Interestingly enough, quite a few of the immigrants and their descendants still believe in the power of the evil eye. Certain women enjoy the power of exorcism, and employ brief rituals to rid people of the psychogenic ailments. The remarkable element is that for most of these people, apparently it works. The unfortunate part of this is that in the 1970's the only part of the Rhodian folklore being expressed in the United States is descriptions of evil eye fantasies and cures.

Rhodian culture in the U.S. is undergoing change although there is an expressed wish to maintain traditional ways. The few elders left still express some faith in the power of folklore and myths; the values are to them still reminiscent of the classical age, and they still speak of the gods and the fates. In the near future, the only acquaintance the second generation American-Rhodians will have with folklore or mythology, is through academic concern.

In the case of the Rhodians in the United States, the changes in folklore reflect a shift in the values of a people noted for the rejection of innovations. The adaptation to their new culture, which permits them to continue to identify with their idealized past, creates a need for achievement that is almost lacking in their Old World cultural themes. It is significant that the orientation of the folktales, although making use of past themes, precedes the value change of the culture.

Before concluding, I realize that there are objections raised to such analyses. Barnouw points out that folklore may reflect patterns of an earlier stage in a society's history and may show a kind of cultural lag. Secondly, some anthropologists like Boas stress the fact that tales are often diffused from other societies. Thus, we cannot tell whether folklore motifs reflect wish-fulfillment or reactions against certain aspects of culture.[44]

A partial answer to these questions is that a society will adapt the reinterpret folklore and its motifs to its particular themes, if one accepts the idea that there are such things as themes. It is essential that the anthropologist or folklorist gain a familiarity of the culture and its members to gain some understanding of its integrative themes to know whether they express wish fulfillment or reaction formation. Folklore, like any other aspect of culture, must be understood in context not abstracted and scrutinized in a cultural vacuum.

## NOTES TO TEXT

[1] J. J. Honigmann, *Personality in Culture*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 8.

[2] J. L. Fischer, "The Sociopsychological Analysis of Folktales," *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 4, 1963, p. 236.

[3] M. Mead, "National Character," in *Anthropology Today*, ed. by A. L. Kroeber, et. al., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp. 642-667.

[4] S. Thompson, "Advances in Folklore Studies," in *Anthropology Today* ed. by A. L. Kroeber, et. al., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 592.

[5] G. Gorer and J. Rickman, *The People of Great*

*Russia: A Psychological Study,* (New York: Chanticleer Press, 1950), p. 123.

[6] W. LaBarre, "Some Observations on Character Structure in the Orient: The Japanese," *Psychiatry,* Vol. 8, 1945, p. 326.

[7] J. Henry, "Rorschach Technique in Primitive Cultures," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry,* Vol. 11, 1941, pp. 230-34.

[8] V. Barnouw, *Culture and Personality,* (Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1963), p. 301.

[9] E. Fromm, *Escape From Freedom,* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1951), pp. 6 & 7.

[10] J. W. M. Whiting and I. L. Child, *Child Training and Personality: A Cross-Cultural Study,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953).

[11] C. Barnett, *Poland: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture,* (New Haven: HRAF Press, 1958), p. 3.

[12] P. Cazin and K. Saipse-Tobiczyk, *Poland,* (New Cork: Hastings House, 1958), p. 15.

[13] C. Barnett, Op. Cit., p. 396. It must be mentioned that there are factional divisions in the religious area and that a schism does exist between the Polish Roman Catholic Church and the Polish National Church. The greatest differences here are not so much the dogma or rituals, but the authority of the Churches.

[14] R. A. Schermerhorn, *These Our People: Minorities in American Culture,* (New York: D. C. Heath and Co., 1949), p. 290.

[15] R. Benedict, "Child Rearing in Certain European Countries", *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry,* Vol. 19, 1949, p. 347.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] Barnett, Op. Cit., p. 352.

[18] M. M. Coleman (Editor), *Polish Folklore,* (Cambridge Springs, Pa.: Alliance College Press, Vol. 5, 1960), p. 49.

[19] Else Benecke (Translator) *Tales by Polish Authors,* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1915).

[20] A. P. and M. M. Coleman (Editors). *The Wayside Willow,* (New Jersey: White Eagle Publishing Co., 1945).

[21] R. Benedict, *Patterns of Culture,* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934).

[22] *Ibid.,* p. 89. She was apparently not aware of the widespread use of narcotics and intoxicants by the Zuni.

[23] *Ibid.,* p. 98.

[24] *Ibid.,* p. 128.

[25] *Ibid.,* p. 129.

[26] S. Newman, "Vocabulary Levels: Zuni Sacred and Slang Usage," in *Language in Culture and Society,* ed. by Dell Hymes, (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 402.

[27] B. N. Colby, "The Analysis of Culture Content and the Patterning of Narrative Concern in Texts," American Anthropologist, Vol. 68, 1966, pp. 374-388.

[28] *Ibid.,* p. 380.

[29] R. Benedict, *Zuni Mythology,* Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology, XXI. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935). 2 Volumes.

[30] E. C. Parsons, "Zuni Tales," *Journal of American Folklore,* Vol. 43, 1930, p. 25.

[31] F. S. Hsu, "Family System and the Economy: China," in *Personalities and Cultures,* ed. by Robert Hunt. (New York: Natural History Press, 1967), p. 292.

[32] E. O. Reischauer and J. K. Fairbank, *East Asia: The Great Tradition,* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960), pp. 28-29.

[33] B. Karlgren, "Legends and Cults in Ancient China," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities,* No. 18, 1946, pp. 199-365.

[34] D. Bodde, "Myths of Ancient China," in *Mythologies of the Ancient World,* edited by S. N. Kramer, (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961), p. 404.

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[36] *Ibid.,* p. 249.

[37] *Ibid.,* p. 368.

[38] H. Fei, "Peasantry and Gentry: An Interpretation of Chinese Social Structure and Its Changes," *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 52, 1946, p. 14.

[39] J. L. Fischer, Op. Cit., p. 260.

[40] M. P. Nilsson, *Greek Folk Religion,* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1940), p. 40.

[41] E. Friedl, Vasilika: *A Village in Modern Greece,* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1962), p. 81.

[42] D. C. McClelland and G. A. Friedman, "Child Training Practices and the achievement Motivation Appearing in Folk Tales," in *Cross-Cultural Studies of Behavior,* ed. by I. Al-Issa and W. Dennis, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 329.

[43] J. W. Kiriazis, *A Study of Change in two Rhodian Immigrant Communities,* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Pittsburg, 1967), p. 160.

[44] V. Barnouw, Op. Cit., p. 303-4.

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