

This book addresses terminological matters, research procedures, theoretical models, and a survey of the research history as necessities for founding a new academic field. It was written for students of anthropology and sociology; however we recommend it to any one who has an interest in sport, especially to those who are engaged in sport science. Recently the interest in the anthropology of sport has increased in the area of sport science. In Japan, for example, a department for sport anthropology was founded last year in the Japanese Society of Physical Education.

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DUNDES, ALAN. *Parsing through Customs: Essays by a Freudian Folklorist*. Madison, Wis., and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987. Cloth, xvi+216 pages. Illustrations, bibliography, index. US\$22.75; ISBN 0-299-11260-8.

Contrary to the author's attempt to justify this compilation of reprints, this is one book that did not have to be published: except for a seven-page preface in which he laments the lack of interest by fellow folklorists in applying psychoanalytic theory to their work, the seven essays are readily available to anyone who shares Dundes's peculiar views.

The essays present the history of psychoanalytic studies of folklore, his fecal-anal interpretation of the potlatch ritual, his homosexual-anal interpretation of Turkish verbal duelling, the *piropo* in Spanish-speaking countries, couvade and men's alleged pregnancy-envy, the rabbit-herd motif with—of course—comments on homosexual-anal submission, the game of "Smear the Queer," as well as the alleged homosexual nature of football, basketball, and warfare.

As learned and widely-published as Dundes is, one finds it difficult not to dismiss much of his research as absurd speculations: in one way or another, the author twists even the most innocuous cigar into a Freudian symbol of anality, feces, or homosexuality. One wonders what his pro-Freudian colleagues think of Dundes's preoccupation with those three topics.

While accusing others of reductionistic thinking and lacking an open mind, Dundes himself suffers from the same shortcomings unbecoming a genuine scholar. His prejudice towards Germans is well known. In one of his recent books and in this

volume, he equates Germans with anality and love of feces; he claims that Germans love sausages because they are “stuffed [i.e., feces-filled] intestines”—but why do Mexicans and others love sausages? Because they look like penes?—and that Germans dropped bombs [i.e., feces] “from the bowels of airplanes.” Poisoned by his narrow-minded anti-German prejudice, he conveniently ignores the bombs dropped by American, British, Japanese, and Russian airplanes. Those bombs were not rose petals, I can assure you, having survived years of bombing by American and British airplanes.

When not engaged in his tiresome German-dumping, Dundes finds sexual and especially homosexual meanings everywhere, even in names. The name of one *Star Wars* character, *Han Solo*, twisted by Dundes to *Han[ds] Solo*, “has a bit of an on-anistic ring about it.” If we apply Dundes’s sleuthing, we note that his first name, Alan, is an anagram of *anal*. Aha!

Even though everything Dundes writes contains much valuable information, I can recommend this book only to readers with a strong Freudian point of view or pronounced anal and homosexual fixations.

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DUNDES, ALAN, editor. *The Flood Myth*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. vi+452 pages. Index. Paper US\$15.95; ISBN 0-520-06353-8. Cloth US\$48.00; ISBN 0-520-05973-5.

In spite of the great diversity of their methodological leanings, most modern students of myth seem to adhere to the hermeneutic principle of immanence. To put it into Schellingian terms, if myth is a “tautegoric” system subsumed by specific laws, it has to be understood in itself instead of being reduced to its referent. Another well known rule of myth analysis is that no version should be given priority over the others. However, even the staunchest advocates of the semiotic approach admit that it is difficult to comply with these two principles when dealing with written traditions such as those of the Old Testament. The Flood myth is perhaps the best example of the specificity we are referring to. This is not to say that the “kerygmatic” nature of the biblical texts should be opposed to the semantic simplicity of the “totemic” traditions, to use Ricoeur’s ethnocentric dichotomy (1963, 630–632). We don’t think either that the Christian belief in the absolute truth of the biblical narrative is in itself a sufficient reason to grant it a special status: after all, in most of the “tribal societies,” myth was considered as a true story. What makes the Flood myth a special case, and what explains the massive scholarship it has inspired, is that “no other myth has been examined so meticulously from the point of view of its being reconciled with the findings of science” (357). Hence this curious situation: the mythologist has to take into account the reductionist interpretations because they have become a part of the problem. In this context, we understand why the aim of this eclectic and thought provoking casebook is to present the Flood story not only as a narrative, but also as a cultural complex.

For conveniency’s sake, we shall treat this book under four sections. The first one focuses on the biblical narrative and on the cognate Assyro-babylonian and Sumerian versions. The presentation of the Genesis account of the Flood is followed