

Reminiscences of an Octogenarian Folklorist

(An interview of Dr. Hari S. Upadhyaya with
Dr. Stith Thompson)

By
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I

INTRODUCTION

On a bright and beautiful afternoon in early November, 1965, Dr. Stith Thompson, emeritus professor of English and Folklore at Indiana University, met with me in his office, room 417 Ballantine Hall, to tape the first of a series of Interviews on his life as a folklorist. Ranging from sixty to sixty-seven degrees, the weather was quite beautiful. The interviews were taped in three sessions. On November 4, 1965 the first session began at 3:25 p.m. and lasted until 4:30 p.m. The following morning at 9:30 we recorded until 11:00 a.m. That afternoon the final taping session began at 3:15 p.m. and ended at 4:15.

To the sessions Dr. Thompson wore a light blue suit and a tie which had a sketch of a primitive man on it. He sat in his rocking chair which was near a desk. Occasionally with his left hand he rolled a pencil gently across the top of the desk. In his right hand which usually shook due to his old age, he held the microphone.

Before beginning the interview, I explained to Dr. Thompson my purpose and plan for taping his biography. We agreed upon using the following procedure throughout the taping sessions: first that he should without any interruptions relate his life history, and secondly that I would ask questions only when further clarification was needed.

With the portable Sony tape recorder set at the speed of $3\frac{3}{4}$ we began the interview. While speaking he made no gestures except for an occasional smile. Generally he appeared to be very serious and most interested in the work that he was doing. Although it was a great ordeal for a man of his age to fit into his already busy schedule a series of interviews, it was clearly evident that he was pleased to let me have the opportunity to interview him. Usually he spoke from his memory; however, from time to time he took out scratch paper when referring to the names of scholars or dates. His estimation of the value of his work was most modest. In fact, sometimes he would even stop to ask me if I wanted him to include certain topics; usually my answer was yea. At other times he paused for ten or fifteen minutes to smoke his pipe or just to relax. Enthusiastically he answered the questions that I asked him. Several times he asked me to replay the tape to make sure that the recording was proceeding properly.

I should like to thank Dr. Stith Thompson who in the weltering heat of May 1968 rechecked twice the transcribed material which numbered approximately eighty-seven pages. The corrections made by Doctor Thompson reassure me that what has been presented here is factually accurate, and that it bears his approval. I should also like to thank Bettye Wilkins who patiently and thoroughly transcribed this material. To Miss Roselyn Johnson I should also like to express my affectionate thanks for preparing the introductory note and for also reading the proofs. Finally I wish to thank Mrs. G. Harris for her promptness in typing the entire manuscript so neatly and accurately.

II

INTERVIEW

This is Stith Thompson from Indiana University. Dr. Upadhyaya has asked me to talk about some of my experiences as a folklorist and I am very glad to do that, because a man of my age always likes to reminisce.

I was already in my senior year at the University of Wisconsin in 1908 when I first became interested in folklore though I had been brought up in Kentucky where a great deal of the most interesting folklore in the United States is to be found in the hill, my home was in the outer Blurgass and I had never heard that there was such a thing as folklore. At Wisconsin however, I was

in the class of Professor Arthur Beatty who was interested in collecting of old English and Scottish ballads. At that time these old ballads seemed to be the only kind of folklore of interest to anybody in the United States. One surprising thing to me about Professor Beatty was that he was rather skeptical about the theories that were being held about these old English and Scottish ballads. Professor Gummere and Professor Kittredge were supporting the idea that these ballads were really very primitive expressions of the emotions of what they called singing and dancing throngs. In this class of Professor Beatty's, I became acquainted not only with the ballads but also with a great deal of the theoretical materials, and for the first time realized that there was such a thing as Anthropology. In this class I read such anthropological classics as Tyler's *Primitive Culture*, and became interested in the general problems of the Priority of poetry and prose in telling a story. It was in this class that I wrote a paper involving the reading of a great many European folktales and ballads, and also for the first time, American Indian tales. I think of Professor Beatty then as my godfather in the study of Folklore, so that I dedicated my book on *The Folktale* some twenty years ago to his memory.

After leaving the University of Wisconsin and spending two years in teaching, I entered the University of California at Berkeley in 1911 and there worked mainly under Professor Walter Morris Hart. Professor Hart had recently come from Harvard and was thoroughly convinced of the rightness of this communal origin theory of the ballads. I was to have a course in the communal origin theory twice more in my life, but I was never convinced that it was correct. Through Professor Hart, I became interested in studying under Professor G. L. Kittredge at Harvard, and when I entered the Harvard Graduate School in the fall of 1912, I was admitted to Professor Kittredge's course. This was a great experience, for he was one of the greatest teachers that I have known. Queerly enough my work in folklore came out of his course in the medieval romances. One day the old man came into the seminar and said, "Gentlemen, yesterday I received a letter from Professor P. E. Goddard, who is collecting American Indian tales out in Saskatchewan. He sent me two tales that he had collected from the Chipawian Indians. Professor Goddard is quite sure that these tales are not American tales, but are European. "I want to read one of these to you." And he proceeded to read a tale that is generally known as the "Blue Band." He pointed out that he,

himself, had been studying this tale and that it was primarily a Rumanian story, but with a few versions in the rest of Europe. Unfortunately, he said he did not know of any French versions, but he thought the whole problem of the European tales borrowed by American Indians was extremely interesting. It was from that suggestion that my thesis at Harvard on the European tales among the North American Indian came.

Professor Kittredge was excellent as a director of the thesis. I do not approve of all of his methods of handling undergraduates, but for us who worked with him in the graduate school, he was a great teacher. I recall one day that he asked to keep my thesis, and when I came back he had rewritten two pages in long-hand. I still have this long-hand pencil document among my precious possessions.

After I left Harvard in 1914, as a graduate in English, I went to the University of Texas and taught English for four years. It must be remembered of course that I am primarily an English teacher and that folklore has always been an avocation. At Texas, it happened that I had to find a place to live and, being a bachelor, I got a room in a very pleasant home. It turned out that this was the home of John Avery Lomax, the collector of ballads and cow boy songs. This was a fortunate thing for me, because I not only became acquainted with him, but also got into the center of Texas folklore interests. For a while I was the secretary of the Society and issued the first volume of the publication: The Texas Folklore Society. This has now gone on as an annual for forty years. During those four years, I did nothing about the Harvard thesis and now I realized that it was too long winded and that it is fortunate that it was not published as originally written.

After I entered a new phase of my life, having married and taken a new position at Colorado College, I found myself with some time on my hands and completely revised the thesis which I had written at Harvard. By this time a great many new books had come out and I was able to fill in blank spots among the tales of the American Indians; and also the large volume of notes of the *Grimm's Folktales*, by Bolte and Polivka had appeared and I went through them with a great deal of care. The result of all this was the publication at Colorado College in 1919 of my first real study in folklore, *European Tales Among the North American Indians*. I was very much pleased only a few months ago to be

invited out to Colorado College to receive an honorary degree, mainly a result of the issue of this study of mine. From Colorado College in 1920, I went to the University of Maine for a year. The only important thing from the folklore point of view concerning this year was my discovery in Harvard library of an index of European folktales. Aarne's *Verzeichnis der Märchentypen* was a revelation to me and I thought so much of it that I actually made a longhand copy of it for my own use.

When I came to Indiana University in 1921, it was not as a folklorist, but to supervise freshmen composition, which I did for the next fifteen years, until 1936. It was only after being here about two years that I had time to think about doing any work in folklore.

In connection with the study of the European tales among North American Indians, I had made notes on all of the American Indian tales that I had read and I had a great many interesting problems to discuss, especially when I found analogs between American Indian tales and those of the rest of the world. So, in the summer of 1923, I began to work seriously on these. I found that there had been no classification of the smaller motifs in folktales and I needed such a classification to carry on the work that I had in mind. Finally after searching in vain for one I decided that I would have to make one myself. I thought I might be able to do that within six months or so. As a matter of fact, this index occupied a great part of the next forty years.

I began to work on this during the school year and finally in the summer of 1924, when I taught at Northwestern University, I had some leisure and an office and I began to write up such materials as I already had. Through the encouragement of Archer Taylor, a friend from Harvard days, I went ahead with this motif-classification as originally planned, but with the thought that this would form the nucleus of a larger work which would cover a good many aspects of folklore all over the world. When Taylor went to Finland in the summer of 1925, he took with him the rough draft of this motif-index of folk-literature.

This was very important and interesting for me. In those days the center of folklore scholarship was certainly Finland. Students from all over the world went to Finland to have some time with Professor Kaarle Krohn. This was why Taylor went that summer. Professor Krohn read my manuscript and was pleased with it. Now it happened that that time a real tragedy

for folklore scholarship occurred. Krohn's ablest student, Antti Aarne had died. Aarne had been the author of the *Types of Folktales* that I have mentioned earlier. Many different countries had classified their tales according to this system, which had now become international, and every new classification suggested additions and changes in the original index. A revision had been planned and now Aarne had suddenly died. On consultation with Taylor, Professor Krohn invited me to become the reviser of this work, and after consulting with my old friend Dr. Beatty at the University of Wisconsin, I decided to undertake it.

First Trip to Europe

This was in the late summer of 1925, and during the next school year 1925-1926, I finished a collection of American Indian tales on which I had been working off and on, and this was ready for publication by the end of the school year. With my family, I went to Europe to spend the year 1926 to 1927. My main task during that year was the translation and revision of *The Types of the Folktale*.

On my arrival in London in August of 1926, I had a letter from Professor Krohn saying he was going to be in Copenhagen the following week and would be very much pleased if I could come over there and consult with him about the revision of the Aarne Index. As a result, I left the family in London and went over to Copenhagen to see Professor Krohn. I found him a delightful person. We talked in German to each other and I am not sure that his German was as bad as mine or not. In the course of the long afternoon, we made plans for the revision of the Aarne *Types of the Folktale*.

The next day was a memorable one for me for I visited for the first time the Danish Folklore Institute at the Royal Library. There I met Hans Ellekilde, the curator, and saw Professor Krohn again, and went out to a late breakfast with him. In the middle of the afternoon, Professor Ellekilde invited all of us to his home for dinner, and we were joined by Professor Johannes Bolte, the editor of the notes to the Grimm folktales. I had no idea he was in Copenhagen, but it turned out that he was down stairs working in the library. We all went by train to Holte and to a very beautiful spot on a lake and had dinner and discussed many

matters and eventually, went out to the old twelfth century church to visit the grave of their old friend Axel Olrik. Since I had decided to spend most of the year in Paris, they asked me to get in touch with Arnold Van Gennep, who was an old friend of theirs before the war, but they had had no contact with him since 1914. This was something I was able to do during the year there.

In Paris during the fall of 1926, I translated the *Verzeichnis der Märchentypen* into English, and I began to go through all of the surveys that have been made of the folktales of various countries and made a concordance of all of them. Then it occurred to me that the descriptions that Aarne had made of his tales were very scanty and that only the specialist in the folktale could understand what the tales were about. Therefore, with the help of the new Bolte und Polivka, I made rather elaborate descriptions of the types, and also gave some reading references to help readers with the materials. In the course of the winter, I finished this task as well as I could and went back to work on my *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*.

In the spring the family took the grand tour down through southern France and into Italy and up through Switzerland and into Germany and Denmark. Through the help of Archer Taylor, I began to meet interesting and important folklorists in Switzerland. In Basel, I called on Eduard Hoffman and his friend Hanns Bächtold-Staubli. These men were editing the great encyclopedia of superstitions which came out eventually in eight or nine volumes. They were also issuing the Swiss Journal of Folklore. I am glad to have met these scholars then, because I never saw them again. In the last few years, I have become well acquainted with a successor, Dr. Wildhaber, who has taught at Indiana University twice. As we went north, I had the opportunity at Freiburg in Breisgau of meeting the director of the great German folksong archive, John Meier. He was very cordial. He was of an older generation, and I was glad to make contact with a German folklorist of the 19th century. He also furnished a phrase that has helped me a great deal. In talking about my motif-index, he said that it is a *Gerüst*, a framework, and I always remember that happy term; for it is simply a framework, and what goes on to this frame depends upon what other people do and not upon me. This was the first time I had ever seen a real folklore archive. The German folksongs were arranged with great system, from the point of view of the collector, of the district where the theme was collected,

of the tune, and of the subject matter.

At leaving Freiburg in Breisgau, we went to Heidelberg and there were shown about by Eugen Fehrle. It was too bad that in the course of the years Fehrle joined the Nazis and we lost complete track of him. In 1956, when we went to Heidelberg to spend some months, we called on the old and failing Gauleiter. After leaving Heidelberg, we went to Frankfurt and there met Hans Naumann, who was teaching at the University of Frankfurt and had issued a book of particular importance called *Primitive Gemeinschaftskultur*. The primitive common culture, according to Naumann exists everywhere independently, but there are certain other things where you have to look for a genetic relationship. Naumann later came to the U.S. and taught at the University of Wisconsin. I saw him over here, later and I am not sure what happened to him during the Nazi regime.

I will mention something of my trips to Holland later. We went through Germany and stopped in Berlin where we saw Professor Bolte, and then went to Copenhagen where we stayed three months. There I worked in the Royal Library, and the folklore collection. In the course of these three months, with Professor John Spargo, who later was Professor at Northwestern University, I went to Helsinki to have a week with Professor Krohn.

This was a very important event in my life, this week which I spent with Professor Krohn. He had come in from the country where he had a summer home, and we worked in his empty house for four or five days all day long. I had finished my work on the types of folktales except for some questions that had to be worked out with him. There were, for example, certain items mentioned by Aarne and his only indication was that this tale was still known in Finland. Professor Krohn would take me down to the great archive and would get down the old yellowing notebooks that were collected 75 years before, and would translate them from the Finnish dialect into German and then I would translate them into English. This week with Professor Krohn was a great inspiration to me in every way. He gave me to understand that he was counting on me strongly to carry on the work in folktale scholarship not only in another country but also in a new age. This I have never forgotten. Among other things that Professor Krohn told me the day before I left was about his experience as a young student. He had taken his doctor's degree in 1882 I believe and then had gone to Weimar to see the aging Reinhold Köhler the

librarian of the Ducal library at Weimar and leader in the folktale scholarship of the 1860 and 70's. He says that he had been with Köhler for several days and as he left, Köhler said to him, "Now, Dr. Krohn, I hope that when you go back you will remember that I am an old man, that I have done all I can in the advancement of folktale scholarship, but cannot do much more. For the next generation, I am looking to you." Then Professor Krohn said to me, "I hope you'll remember what I said to you yesterday."

On my return to Bloomington in the fall of 1927, I had finished, to all practical purposes, *The Types of the Folktale*, and very soon sent the manuscript to Helsinki for publication. It came out in the next year 1928, and has served its purpose ever since that time.

Preparation of *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*

The next few years, from 1927 on through 1931, I worked very steadily, in so far as my duties would permit, on the *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* which I had started six or eight years before. This was a tremendous task, because I undertook to read and take notes on a great variety of bodies of narratives, such for example as *The Arabian Nights*, and all the Greek myths, much of the Icelandic materials, the *Panchatantra*, the *Ocean of Story*, all of the world mythologies, and the like. But I finally closed shop and decided that I had read as much as I was going to read. It was in the summer of 1928 that I actually started with Chapter 'A' of the Motif-Index and had this down into Chapter 'K' by 1931. In that year, I was granted a so-called Large Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies, and I received a leave of absence and some assistance from Indiana University.

Accordingly in the Spring of 1931, I went for several months to Harvard to settle down to finish the Motif-Index. There I finally came to the end of the first draft of the Index in early June of 1931. That summer I spent in Europe, mainly in London, to see that the first two volumes of the manuscript were ready for publishing. Professor Krohn was to issue this as a part of the distinguished series called *FF Communications*.

To Europe Again

Several experiences during that summer may be worth recalling. I went to Giessen in Germany and took Taylor's daughter to stay the winter with the family of Professor Hugo Hepding, the editor of the *Hessische Blätter für Volkskunde*. From Giessen, I went to Prague and had an interesting experience with the great Czech folklorist, Albert Wesselski. It would not be to the purpose of this talk to tell of the adventures with Wesselski. He turned out to be what one of my friends called a learned Falstaff. He knew well the Renaissance and Oriental literatures. He had in his pocket a booklet he had bought, just that day, of old Spanish jests. Once in a while, after he had drunk enough beer, he would bring this out and read some of the rarer parts of this book and then tell us about its relationship to Indic, Persian, and Near Eastern folklore.

The memorable part of my visit with him was an interview I had the next afternoon. Long after the experiences of the night had vanished and after he had walked me for many miles over Prague, and we had had an excellent dinner, we settled down to talk folklore. He showed me his wonderful library and I saw some of the rarest books including the fifteenth century edition of John Bromyard's *Summa Predicantium*. This work is in two thick, double-column volumes in Latin. He had not only read these but he had made notes in the margins. I had imagined that nobody today ever read Bromyard. It happened that two weeks later in London, I mentioned this to Father Welter from Paris, who had written a book on the Exempla. Father Welter told me that he had never read all of Bromyard twice the way that Wesselski had, but that he had collected it with the manuscript of a century earlier. So I suppose that I saw in a few days the only two people in the world who had faithfully read Bromyard.

The end of that summer was a very pleasant one for me, because I spent a week of it at the home of Professor Jan de Vries at Leiden in Holland. He went over the first volume of my Index with a great deal of care and made many additions and corrections, and I am sure that the work is much better than it would have been had it not had his help. I had also met deVries some years before on my first trip to Europe. It is too bad that in the course of time, because of the war, he became so out of favor with the

other folklorists in the world. He collaborated with the Nazis when they came into Holland, and it was only in the last two years of his life he began again to issue first rate works in folklore. I saw him only briefly, once, and the meeting was far from cordial.

Teacher of English

In 1931, I returned to Bloomington and settled down to teaching and I was to keep continuously at this for a good long while, about ten years. This was the time of our great depression and so we had to do the best we could, on small research aids, and small salaries. But I always had some secretarial help, which was important in aiding me to issue the Motif-Index.

I should mention before this time in 1929 that my large collection of *Tales of the North American Indians* had been published by the Harvard University Press, and had found its place in the large anthropological libraries. (It has been reissued by Indiana University Press in 1966.)

It must be remembered that folklore was only a side issue with me. I was, after all, supervisor of Freshman Composition at Indiana University, and the work became greater and greater as time went on. The student body was continually increasing, and I had as many as thirty-five teachers whom I had to supervise, so that I didn't have all the time to devote to folklore that I would have liked. Then, there was also the matter of issuing text books in English. I had issued texts in Freshman Composition as early as 1916, and this was followed by two or three others. Then around 1930 I agreed to revise an old anthology of poetry and in 1932 to revise another rhetoric, and unfortunately a little later, to revise a handbook of English. All of these were financially an entire waste, so much time away from my folklore.

During these years we were developing a special course in World Literature at Indiana University, and it was clear that we had no very good texts for these students to use. Eventually I decided I must make a text for my own use. The result of this was the publication in 1938 of a book called *Our Heritage of World Literature*. This book has been a very great commercial success and has made it so that, in my years of retirement, the financing of life has been rather easy. This was the end of my work on English textbooks; since 1940, I have confined my writing to folklore.

Founding of American Folklore Society

In 1936 I went to a meeting of the American Folklore Society at Washington. In those days, the American Folklore Society met with The American Anthropological Association, and the Folklore Society occupied only one session of the larger meeting. This year I think I was the only non-anthropologist present. Whether for that reason or some other, I was elected President of the Society and I presided for the next three years until 1939. When I went, I began to think about the Society, the low state of its life, and felt that something should be done. Fortunately, it occurred to me that the next Christmas would be the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Society. So we planned a fiftieth meeting and I succeeded in getting a great many people to come. This meeting was held at New Haven, and we had a whole day program and a dinner. Since that time the Folklore program has ceased to be just a part of the anthropological meetings and usually lasted two full days.

To Europe in 1937

In 1937 Mrs. Thompson and I had a most interesting trip. I had been called in the fall of 1935 to a meeting in Lund in Sweden, which would be concerned with the folktale. Twenty-five people from various parts of the world were invited and Indiana University sent me. This was an important meeting for me; and indeed, I think of it as the beginning of my relationship to the international folklore world. I was made a member of the Swedish Gustav Adolf Academy, the first of such honors to come. Among others that I met at Lund was Seamus O'Duilearga from Ireland. We agreed that we should exchange visits, and as a result, I was invited by him to give some lectures at the University College in Dublin in the summer of 1937. On this trip we were taken out to western Ireland, and there met old folktale tellers and saw something of the efficient activity of the Irish Folklore Commission and the way they were collecting tales in various parts of Ireland. We also, that summer, saw Dr. von Sydow from Sweden, whom I had come to know several years before, and whose friendship I value among the great experiences of my life.

After being in Dublin for a while, we all went to Edinburgh

to a general folklore meeting which was a result of the congress in Lund two years before. This was a pleasant experience for us, and we saw something of the folklorists in Scotland. Among others was Mr. J. G. McKay, who was issuing some of the unpublished tales that Francis Campbell of Islay had collected and had not included in his four-volume *Tales of the West Highlands*. With McKay I agreed to put motif numbers into this book.

This brings me down pretty well to 1941. I had considered seriously accepting a position at New York University in 1939 but remained at Indiana University under much more favorable conditions. Among other things, I was told that I might have Sabbatical leave in the autumn of 1941. Accordingly, we took a long leisurely trip to California and settled down in Westwood, close to the University of California at Los Angeles, where I had taught for the summer in 1936.

Here I began the getting together the notes on my lectures on folktales, for I felt that these lectures should be of some value to students. I was not only able to use the notes from which I spoke, but also had stenographic notes made by certain of my students. In the fall of 1941 I began a general treatise on the folktale. This treatise eventually came out in 1946 and is still being bought by students of folktales here and abroad.

On the Pacific Coast

Late in the fall of 1941 I arranged to go up the Pacific Coast and give lectures at Berkeley, the University of Oregon, Reed College and the University of Washington. Just before leaving I had a letter from Bela Bartok the musician. He had heard that there was a Serbian group in Indiana who had folksongs and he wanted to discuss these things with me. He had been lecturing just before I came and I was always on his trail. After we returned to Los Angeles, we got together at our house for dinner and we discussed this whole matter. In about two days, the Japanese attacked us at Pearl Harbor, and all thoughts of collecting Serbian folksongs were over. But I am glad to have had this interesting contact with this great composer.

The War Years

All I can say about the war years is that everything was thrown out of order, that although I continued to work on the folktale treatise, nothing was as it usually was. One by-product of the war, was the bringing in of a great many people from different parts of Europe into the language program, and many of these were interesting folklorists. Thus we had a very large folklore club during the war, such as we have not been able to equal since that time.

Just after the outbreak of our part of war, we returned to Bloomington, but on the way, went to Mexico, and spent about two weeks at the very beginning of the year 1942. Most of the time we were merely tourists, but I did speak to the Folklore Societies of Mexico, and got well acquainted with Professor and Mrs. Vicente Mendoza. We have kept up this acquaintance through the lifetime of Professor Mendoza, and even today correspond with her. The speech which I gave in English was interpreted rather badly in Spanish. On my way home, I resolved that the next time I went into a Spanish speaking country, I must be speaking Spanish. Accordingly, one of the things that I did during the war years was to learn to read Spanish easily and also to speak it with ease, but not very correctly.

The Folklore Summer Institute

When we returned to Bloomington, we found that the whole plan of the school year had been changed, and I was launched almost immediately into teaching. The summer institute of Folklore which I had planned before leaving for California was, nevertheless, approved and in the summer of 1942, we held the first of these meetings. I had got the idea of such an institute by attending the Linguistic Institute of America at Ann Arbor. The idea was to bring a concentration of faculty and students to the Bloomington campus occasionally in the summer. This was a small group, but on the whole our program was successful and a good many folklorists found their way to Bloomington for the first time, that summer. After the close of the institute, we formed ourselves into a kind of permanent body. We decided to have further institutes in the summer, and accordingly it worked out that the next one was held in 1946. This established a pattern so

that we have had these summer institutes since that time every four years. The institute in 1946 was much larger than the one before, and we were able to bring a number of important people here. I think especially of the elder Lomax, and of Roman Jakobson and his wife, and John Jacob Niles.

The next institute was held in 1950. We had the International Folk Music Council here at that same time for the first week and our general folklore meeting was held two weeks further. This was an occasion for bringing Europeans to the Bloomington campus for the first time, and a good many of them have returned since then. A special feature of the 1950 institute was that although we had a full eight weeks general institute, there was a concentration of two weeks on all these foreign visitors who were here. Their work was taken down on tape and eventually issued in a publication called *Four Symposia on Folklore*. The 1954 institute was the last in which I was active. It was successful I think, and brought to the campus a great many new students. Since that time these institutes have been carried on in a very flourishing way every four years by my successor.

First to Trip South America

In 1946, I was invited to South America to act as technical adviser to the Ministry of Education in Venezuela. They were instituting a service of folklore investigations and I was to spend six months with them. It happened that I had a sabbatical leave, and so with my wife and younger daughter, I spent six months getting to Venezuela. On the way, I made acquaintance with practically all of the folklorists in the rest of South America. Many out of these have remained as close friends ever since that time. We spent about a month in various places like Lima, Santiago, and Buenos Aires.

Perhaps the most interesting of these visits was that to Luis da Camara Cascudo in Brazil. He perhaps knows the folklore of Portugal and Brazil better than anyone else, and we had had a very cordial correspondence. It meant going out of our way about a thousand miles, but the three days we spent in Natal as guests of the city were very interesting and it is a fine memory for us. I was interested to find lately that the city of Natal had given a celebration in honor of Cascudo and had unveiled his bust,

At the end of our journey, we came to Caracas, where I spent four or five months in trying to organize this service of Folklore investigations. I got well acquainted then with Luis Felipe Ramon y Rivera and his wife Isabel Aretz. I have seen them lately two or three times, particularly on our returns to Caracas on two occasions. I don't know that my work in Caracas was particularly important, but I was pleased to find, on my return, in 1954, then again in 1960, that the general organization of the Archive which I had proposed was actually in effect. My interest was not of course in dance and song, which was of the special field of the other people, but in legends, tales, and to some extent in material culture. The folk material in Venezuela seems to me now, largely because of Luis Felipe and Isabel, to be better organized than anywhere in South America and perhaps better than we have in the United States.

Deanship

After several months in Venezuela, in 1947, I received a letter from President Wells asking me to serve as Dean of the Graduate School at Indiana. For this reason, I returned to Bloomington, where I spent the next three years, from 1947 to 1950 as Dean.

Because of the considerable increase in my general duties, I was afraid that I could not carry on my work in folklore; but I was allowed to bring from Europe Professor Jonas Balys, who had been the chief of Lithuanian Folklore Archives before the Russians came in. He arrived in 1948 and helped me for four or five years. Among other things, he worked on the revision of the *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*, and also did some work on a Motif-Index of the Tales of India.

Folklore Program

Since I was now Dean of the Graduate School, it was natural that I had more general influence than I would have had otherwise. One of the things that happened during my tenure was the formal arrangement of a program in folklore leading to the Doctor's Degree. This began about 1950. I think the first student actually to take this degree was my successor in the folktale seminar, Professor Warren Roberts.

A word about this whole folklore program might be worth while. When I came to Indiana University in 1921, there was no folklore given, and as a matter of fact, there was no folklore class as such given in the United States. I was given an opportunity about 1923 to offer a graduate seminar and was told that I might do that in any field that I felt competent to work in. As results, I did offer a course on the Folktale, and I continued that for the rest of my active life. The students in the early days were entirely English majors. I went to Indianapolis for weekends some years and gave this Graduate Seminar in the Extension Division, and during the 1920's, some of the best of my folklore students were these in Indianapolis. It was in the late 20's and early 30's that my folklore program was expanded. Eventually I was giving a series of courses running through two years: one on Literary Origins, one on the Medieval Romance, one on the English and Scottish Popular Ballads, and one on The Folktale and Allied Forms. During the early 1930's the students that came to me were all English majors, but about 1936 or 1937, I began to have students who came to Indiana University primarily for Folklore.

After the war, more students came in wishing to have folklore. This movement was stimulated to a large extent by the Institute in the summer; so that by 1949, when the regular program was organized, there were, perhaps, a dozen to fifteen students wishing to do advanced work in folklore. In this program, the best years during my time were the 1950's. Beginning about 1952 and going down to my retirement in 1955, I had a very distinguished group of students.

Distinguished Students

I might mention a few of them, merely to show what they are now doing. There was Bruce Buckley, who is now an assistant professor in Cooperation Farmers Museum, and who is doing very well indeed there; William Koch is at the Kansas State University at Manhattan, and has been the leader in the development of Kansas's Folklore; William H. Jansen, of the University of Kentucky, who has not done much work in Folklore in the last few years, but for a long time made good use of his stay in Kentucky and especially in the Kentucky Mountains. He has gone very much into administration at his university, and has spent large amounts of time abroad, especially in Turkey, Japan, and Indonesia.

One of the most interesting students in many ways that I have had was Marie Campbell. Marie had already published four successful books before she came to us to study Folklore. While she was here, she taught some classes in English. She is an excellent writer and had had a background which fitted her excellently to do the folklore work, since she had taught school in the mountains of Kentucky. She issued a very successful Doctor's thesis, "Tales From The Cloud Walking Country," and has been teaching for several years, now at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where we visited her last spring. She is doing very well indeed and has several works ready for publication. Hiroko Ikeda knows about as much about the Japanese folktale as anyone and now she has had the training in European folktale and tales of the rest of the world. She wrote a very good thesis on the European parallels in the Japanese folktales and she has been working on this lately. Professionally, she has worked in the library of the University of California at Berkeley, and for the last ten years or so, has been at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu. Among other things, she is translating into Japanese my types of the folktales. I think of her as a very fine link between ourselves and the Far East.

A student who came in, in 1952 about the same time as many of these others, was Dov Noy from Israel. In many ways Noy was the most brilliant student I have ever had. His training in languages, for example, was extraordinary and his ability to digest the essential points in books was such as one very seldom finds. In the institute of 1954, just after he had received his Doctor's Degree, he gave a course in Jewish folklore. He has returned to Israel and has become a very important person in the educational system, teaching at the University of Jerusalem, and also supervising the Ethnological Museum at Haifa. I have seen him several times at the European meetings in the last two years. He is carrying out all of the fine promise he had as a student.

About the same time as Noy came, Bacil Kirtley came from Texas. It will be noticed that a good many of our students were from foreign countries. Kirtley, different from some American students, was not at all afraid of learning foreign languages. On a very short notice, for example, because it was necessary for a study he was making, he learned to read Portuguese. He has continued to study and to write and is different from many of my students because of his interest in comparative literature. He is now teaching at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu. He did a

thesis on the motifs in the tales of the Polynesian peoples in the Pacific and he is out where he can now continue this work.

Somewhat earlier Warren Roberts had come from Reed College in Oregon. Roberts, as I have said, was the first person to take his Doctor's Degree in Folklore and he has remained here on our staff where he is giving my favorite course The Folktale and Allied Forms. He has branched out, however, into material culture, and knows a great deal about arts and crafts. Another student of that same generation was Ernest Baughman, who is now a professor of English at the University of New Mexico. Baughman did a thesis in which he made an analysis of all of the tales in English, both in England and America. This is at last in press and it may be arriving almost any day from the publishers in Holland. The Baughman home in Albuquerque has become a stopping place for all of us as we go to the West Coast. To that generation also belonged Remedios Wycoco. She was from the Philippines, and took her major in English with a minor in Folklore. I think in many ways, her examination in English Literature was the most brilliant performance that I have listened to, and this is surprising in a student brought up in a non-English speaking world. Later, after she had received her degree, she served as secretary for me for two or three years and I came to realize how important a workman she was. She did not hesitate to work through material in English, French, German, and Spanish. I gave her no opportunity to handle her native Philippine language. She is married and is living near Seattle. Her main work was a Type Index of the North American Indian Tales.

These are the most outstanding students that came to us during my last few years of active teaching.

The 1950's on a whole were the most active years of my life. I not only taught these students, excellent as they were, but also brought to a head a number of works that had been planned through the years. I shall mention some of these works in order.

Work with Indic Material

In 1935 I attended a meeting in Sweden in which one of the things specially considered was the revision of the *Types of the Folktale*. It was agreed then that the original form which Arne had worked out and my revision of 1928 were both very heavily

loaded in favor of North Europe and that Southern and Eastern Europe and especially the countries as far east as India were not adequately represented. Before the end of the meeting, I had agreed that I would try to see that the Indic material was brought together, insofar as the published documents were available. As a result, shortly after my return in 1936, I began with the assistance of students to go through the collections of Indic tales. This was a huge task and the preliminary work of going through and making notes on these tales continued for ten years or more. Of course, we did not have all the works here at Bloomington, but through the help of such large libraries as the White Collection in Cleveland, we were able to borrow books on interlibrary loan and by 1950 we had rather well exhausted the Indic material available in the United States. We made no attempt to get hold of manuscripts from India, or to include the great literary collections. The real question was whether or not to do a work which could be finished in my lifetime. At any rate, when Dr. Balys came to help me in 1948, one of the first things we began to do was to bring together the accumulated notes on Indic tales.

Gradually he or I went through all the collections and marked them by motif and type numbers and in this way, we got together by about 1955, a book which by mere accident in the publication office was called *The Oral Tales of India*. The title which should have been, and I supposed was going to be, was *A Motif-Index of The Oral Tales of India*. But now, I still have to tell people that this is only a motif-index and not a type-index.

After the *Motif-Index of The Oral Tales of India*, there remained many notes, obviously examples of full length folktales, in many cases parallel to those in Europe though sometimes distinctly confined to India. As a result Dr. Warren Roberts and I issued a work called *Types of Indic Folktales* in the F.F. Communications, number 180. This came out just about the time my new revision of the *Types of The Folktale* appeared and we very carefully checked through to see that the numbers corresponded. I am very glad that we have done this work with Indic tales, because in the course of the last few years, we have had a number of students from India and we know a little more about some of their problems.

Revision of *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*

One large work which I had considered doing for a long time was a revision of the six-volume *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*, which had come out in Finland between the years 1932 and 1936. There was hardly a year in which some work based upon this did not appear, and obviously in the course of time, I accumulated a great many extra notes. So it was that I began even as early as 1946 to consider seriously the revision of this work. During the year when I was in South America, I was able to have a student assistant paste up a copy of the old edition on work sheets. When I returned and had a little time from the Graduate School, I began to make notes of additions and corrections. This was not finished until after my retirement in 1955 and was eventually published by the new Indiana University Press in six large and handsome volumes between 1955 and 1958.

Revisions of the *Types of Folktale*

After the motif-index had appeared in 1958, it also seemed to me that I should try to revise the *Types of the Folktale* which I had issued in 1928. I thought of this as something I could do in about a year. In the event it occupied about four years of hard work, and I am not even yet satisfied with the results. But it is the best I can do. The original work of Aarne was in 75 rather small printed pages, and the present one is almost ten times that long. It makes the study of the folktale, from Ireland to India, possible for the beginner. This was not possible in 1910. Although this is not a piece of constructive scholarship, but only an index for other people to use, it will nevertheless help the work of the future students in folktale.

Also on the occasion of my teaching at the University in Oslo, in 1951 I used the opportunity to complete a work which I had begun long years before on the North American Indian tale called "*The Star Husband*." I was interested in doing this because one of the great problems in the study of the European folktale is the mutual influence of the written and the oral tale. With the American Indian Tale, such as *The Star Husband*, there is no question of written influence. The people who tell the tales normally are illiterate. They receive the tale by word of mouth

and in an illiterate situation. I was able to work with 86 versions of this tale and made maps of each of the incidents. It represents a modification of the so-called historic-geographic method. In the last years, this method has come under some attack, but both in my books on *The Folktale* and *The Star Husband*, I have tried to modify the method considering the various points of attack.

Aside from these large works, *The Oral Tales of India* and *The Types of Indic Folktales*, the revised editions of *The Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* and *The Types of Folk-Tales*, and the study of the *Star Husband Tale*, I have of course, done a great many reviews and small articles which I hope someday to get together in a convenient publication.

Trips

It should be clear from what I have said that I have done much foreign travel and have met many foreign folklorists. The first trip I made to Europe was with Archer Taylor, when we were fellow students at Harvard in the summer of 1913. On this occasion I did not meet folklorists but got acquainted with Western Europe and also with the great libraries. It was not until 1926 that I went to Europe again, and on this occasion I took my family and we spent a complete year in London and Paris, and especially in Copenhagen. It was on this occasion that first I met such people as C. W. Von Sydow of Lund and Reidar Christiansen from Oslo. Then in 1931, I spent the summer completing the Motif-Index. This was mostly spent in London, but it did include a side trip into Germany and Czechoslovakia. Again then in 1935, I made a very quick trip to Sweden for a meeting on the study of the folk-tale. This I have mentioned several times, but it was a very important event in my scholarly life, because for the first time I became really acquainted with such people as Walter Anderson, with the great Norwegian and Swedish folklorists and O'Duilearga from Ireland. I have mentioned the trip of 1937 which Mrs. Thompson and I made to Ireland, but I failed to say that later in the summer, we went to Czechoslovakia and Sweden. In Sweden, we were the guests of the von Sydows for some days and became really well acquainted with this very delightful couple. It pleases us now to see that their son is one of the leading movie actors in the United States. We knew him when he was a small boy

and before he had assumed the name Max. The von Sydows were one of the most lovable couples that I have met.

The trip in 1937 was the last that we had until after the war. Then in 1946, we went to South America for a year and there got acquainted with the people who are working in folklore. Most of the South American folklorists are working very much alone and they welcome the opportunity to talk with their North American colleagues. We made many friends at that time whom we keep in touch with even today.

The next important trip that we took was in 1952. After I had retired from the deanship but was still active as a teacher, I was invited to come on a Fulbright Grant to act as visiting Professor at the University of Oslo for a semester. We became well acquainted with such widely known folklorists as Knut Liestol, and saw a great deal of the Reidar Christiansens. During that time we also went to Sweden to a large international meeting and there met many of the folklorists of Europe for the first time. This was a fine meeting and it was the occasion of my becoming actively interested in the work of C.I.A.P., the International Commission for the Popular Arts and Folklore. Several years later, I found that I had been made vice president of this organization, and remained so until about a year ago.

After returning from Norway, the folklore program here went on very well indeed, this was the period when I had the best students that I have ever had.

Just before my final retirement, I attended at the invitation and expense of the Brazilian government the international folklore meeting at São Paulo in Brazil. This was a combination of a congress of the international folk music council and a general folklore meeting. I saw some of the old friends that I had known in 1947 and in general had a good social time. I cannot say that I learned very much at this meeting. I was the president of one of the five sections of the meeting, and could only attend this one session. On the way home, I revisited Caracas and saw that the institute which I had been working toward was now a full fledged organization.

Retirement and Trips

The next event of any importance in my life was retirement,

because on the seventh of March in 1955, I came to the magic age of seventy, and that means for the university professor in America that his time is up. Since that time I have not been teaching at Indiana University, though I have given occasional lectures. Since retirement, I have made a good many trips to Europe. In 1955 we made a quick trip via Iceland to Denmark and Holland. In 1956, we went abroad on a Guggenheim Fellowship for a full year and spent most of the time in Heidelberg. I visited nearly all of the folklore archives in Europe at that time because I was revising *The Types of The Folktale*. I would go to an archive and would examine their collection of tales and see what changes ought to be made in the main index. Then at the very end of that year in 1957, before we returned home, we were invited to participate in the Congress for Jewish studies in Jerusalem. This invitation was undoubtedly under the auspices of the Dov Noy. It was a good meeting and we especially enjoyed going over all parts of Israel and on a specially conducted tour. In 1959, we spent a summer in England, Scotland, and Ireland, but mainly in Yugoslavia and Austria. At the end of the summer, we attended a large first meeting of the Society for Folk-Narrative Research in Kiel, Germany and met most of the important students of the folktale in the world. On that occasion, Archer Taylor and I received honorary doctor degrees at the University of Kiel.

In 1960, in the autumn, I was sent by the State Department to South America primarily to a meeting of an international folklore congress in Buenos Aires, but also to give lectures in nearly all of the Spanish-speaking parts of South America in Argentina, Uruguay, Chili, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Columbia. Later I lectured in Trinidad, British Guiana, Jamaica, and Guatamala. These four months was a very interesting experience for us and it was also an excellent work-out for my Spanish. The next summer of 1961, I spent teaching at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu. There we got well acquainted again with Hiroko Ikeda and her work and also with Katherine Luomala and other students interested in Polynesian material. That was 1961. In the last few years, I have been to Europe nearly every summer, in 1962 to Antwerp and Brussels and in 1963 to Portugal. In 1964 Mrs. Thompson and I went to Greece and had a most enjoyable revisit, especially a cruise through the Aegean Islands; and just this last year, in 1965, I attended a short meeting of the S.I.E.F., the successors to C.I.A.P. at Antwerp. Mrs. Thompson and I have discussed travel con-

siderably and have decided that perhaps we do not want to go to Europe any more. If we do any traveling, it would probably be out westward, maybe to Japan or the Orient.

Acquaintance with Foreign Folklorists

In the course of this long talk, I have mentioned casually a good many folklorists. A short notice of some of the important ones may be worth while. I begin with Kittredge of Harvard. He was a student of Professor Francis J. Child who had issued the masterly work, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. Kittredge was a picturesque figure with a white beard, which was not then at all in style, and a pose as an old man. Actually, as he would tell us once and a while in class, he was fifty-four years old at that time. He did live to a great age, but I think of this white haired and white bearded Kittredge as definitely a poseur. He always dressed in rather loud, unconventional clothes, mainly tweends. Crossing the campus, he would light up an expensive cigar, and after a few minutes and after having used up only a half inch of it, he would throw it away. Nevertheless, with all his eccentricities, he was a very scholarly person. He knew more perhaps than any professor I have ever had, and he was at heart a very kindly person. He always patronized his students, and that was something that I had difficulty in forgiving.

Another professor that I came very close to was Kaarle Krohn. Krohn too was a very learned person. His father had been a professor, an assistant of Lönnrot, and now the son carried on this tradition bringing it down to my own generation. Krohn was a lovable person who did not overbear his young students with his importance. There was nothing at all of the patronizing attitude of Kittredge. One always felt real friendship for Krohn and his death in 1933 was one of the real blows in my life.

Johannes Bolte was editor of the *Notes on the Grimm's Folktales*. He was never more than what we may call a secondary teacher in Berlin, but was one of the most learned men of his time. I met him, as I have already said at a dinner in Copenhagen, and later, called upon him two or three times when I was passing through Berlin. He made these short visits pleasant by thinking of things that would be of special interest to me. I recall that on my last visit he was working through the correspondence of the

Brothers Grimm and he knew of course, that I was well acquainted with the *Tales of Lorraine* of Emmanuel Cosquin. He said, "I think you will be interested in this correspondence between the Grimm Brothers and Cosquin when he was a very young man." So he showed me these letters in which the Grimm Brothers had encouraged Cosquin to go out into Lorraine collecting tales.

Reidar Christiansen, I met first in Sweden at a seaside resort and we lay around on the beach for a couple of days and discussed all kinds of matters. Christiansen, everyone realizes, is a lovable person, and I am coming to realize more and more that he is a really great scholar. His most recent work on the *Irish and Scandinavian Folktales* seems to me a masterpiece of scholarship. Unfortunately, in the last two or three years, he has become terribly crippled and this has prevented him from being as active as he used to be. We were fortunate enough to have him at Indiana University for a year in the late 1950's and so most of our students got acquainted with him.

The first important monograph on folktales that I ever read was one by Walter Anderson. He was at that time professor at the University of Dorpat, and he had made a detailed study of one of the great folktales, which we know in English as *King John and the Abbot*. Anderson came from an academic family, his father having been a professor, as I understand it, in Finland. Anderson was a boy in Russia, and at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution he fled from Russia to Estonia and there eventually established himself; and then it seems to me he spent the rest of his life fleeing from Russians. He eventually turned up after the great world war at Kiel and it was at that time that we were able to bring him to Bloomington to the meeting in 1950. In many ways Anderson seemed extremely naive, but he was a great scholar and one of the most fearless of critics. He was very friendly to me and undoubtedly grateful to me for being able to bring him to Bloomington. On the other hand, perhaps his criticisms of my *Types of the Folktale* was the most severe of any that have ever been made. Unfortunately, he was run down and killed about three years ago.

I will not close this list without saying a word about a man that I mentioned several times, Dr. C. W. von Sydow. In 1927, John Spargo and I went from Copenhagen over to Lund to see him. We realized at that time what a fine cordial person he was and how helpful he was to any students working in our general field. I brought away with me a whole armful of pamphlets he

had written in the course of the years. I saw nothing of him until I received an invitation in 1935 to come to Lund for the large meeting. I realized then how genial he was, what a fine host, how well he carried off the meeting at Lund, and also something of his ability as a story-teller. He was interested in all aspects of folklore, but especially in the folktale, and I think now as we look on him probably two aspects stand out. One was his encouragement of the collecting of folklore in Ireland; because it is certain that without his encouragement the Irish Folklore Commission would never have come into existence. He learned Irish and did collecting himself in some of the bleakest parts of western Ireland and in the Blasket Islands. That is one aspect of his work. Another was theoretical. He was personally friendly to Professor Krohn and to the other Finns but he saw what he thought very important omissions used in the historic-geographic method. I personally do not agree with von Sydow in all these matters, but I think that some modifications of his criticisms are very much to the point. He had a great deal to do with the organizing of the archives all through Scandinavia and especially with putting in that at Lund. He was a very positive person and had ways of making enemies so that it was a long time before he received his promotion as professor. On the other hand, he has a good many students who are now carrying on the work of folklore in the Scandinavian countries and especially in Ireland. Probably his real workshopers are in Dublin. We saw him only about a month before his death, but he was in a coma and was not recognizing any one.

In 1939, we had two guests in Bloomington, whom I think are of real importance in the folklore world. In the spring came Seamus O'Duilearga from Ireland, and later Sven Lilfeblad from Sweden. I had been to Ireland two years before and had become well acquainted with O'Duilearga. He made a lecture tour over the United States and was received with enthusiasm everywhere. Seamus is an extremely pleasant person and makes friends with great ease. He has also accomplished much in organizing the work of the Irish Folklore Commission. It is his enthusiasm primarily that has made possible acquisition of this tremendous collection of Irish traditions. I don't know now how many pages there are in this collection, but even years ago when I asked about it, it was something over two million pages. He is now getting old as all of us are and the last time I saw him, he was rather deaf, but he made a successful trip to the United States only last spring and

he remains active.

I have already noted some of folklorists that I met in 1926-1927, but of course most of these are now dead and it is an entirely new group that we meet now. At the meeting at the International Folklore meeting in Paris in 1937 which followed almost immediately that one in Edinburgh, a number of folklorists came from South Europe and this was the first time I had seen them. When I had been in Paris in 1927, there was only one folklorist whom I had ever heard of, Arnold Van Gennep, and I found that he was very pessimistic about the whole future of folklore at that time. I was therefore surprised in 1937 to get the invitation to come to Paris to this meeting where I found a new group in Paris. The head of these was George Henri Rivière, who is now the director of the museum of popular arts in Paris. His main interest is in material folklore and songs and dance, and he has taken a prominent part in the various conventions of the museum people in Europe. He has been active in all kinds of folklore organizations.

Very soon after 1937, a folklorist began to be very prominent in the collecting and studying of the French Folktale. This was Paul Delarue, who began to make a large index of the French Folktale during the war and spent the rest of his life mainly upon this task. Fortunately, he finished his material in the form of notes on cards but only succeeded in publishing the first of three volumes. His work has been carried out by Madame Marie Louise Teneze, who was his secretary, and the second volume appeared only very recently. It was a great misfortune to folklore as well as a personal misfortune when Delarue died about ten years ago.

In talking about these folklorists that I have been asked to mention, I am mostly confining myself with people interested in the folktale. An important Belgian folklorist who writes not only on the folktales, but also on folksongs and folk dance is Roger Pinon. I see Pinon quite frequently and I am always impressed by his activity, by his general knowledge of folklore, and especially by his linguistic accomplishment, since he is trilingual, and speaks English, French, and German with equal ease. I met him first in Buenos Aires, and later at several other meetings. Only two months ago I saw him in Antwerp and he tells me that he is likely to come to Bloomington for a period rather soon.

One of the most active students of the folktale at present is Kurt Ranke, who for a long time was professor at the University of Kiel, but is now at Göttingen. He has been responsible for one

very important historical study, *The Tale of the Two Brothers*, and also of a very detailed analytical study of the folktales of *Schleswig-Holstein*. He has organized a society for the study of folk narrative, and had a first meeting at Kiel in 1959. The second large general meeting was held two years ago in Athens and it will meet again in several years in Bucharest. This organization is responsible for the publication of a journal called *Fabula* and certainly the most important folktale articles are now appearing in this journal. Ranke is very active and he tells me that his encyclopedia of folktales is progressing, and that he has several people working on it all the time at Göttingen.

There are, of course, a number of folklorists in Germany, and I simply picked out the ones that I know best. In Switzerland Robert Wildhaber is carrying on very effectively the work that was earlier promoted by Hoffmann-Krayer and Bächtold-Stäubli. We in America know Wildhaber rather well since he has been twice here at Indiana University. Another folklorist in Switzerland that I became fond of by meeting him at the International Folk Music Council was Anton Cherbuliez of Zürich. He was a person of great charm, and we became very well acquainted at the meeting here in 1950. I saw him also at São Paulo in South America, and visited him at his home in Zürich.

In Italy the folklorist who is perhaps best known is Paolo Toschi of Rome. Toschi is interested not only in folktales, but also folksongs, mainly of his native province of Romagna. He is a delightful person, and all folklorists who know him are fond of him. When I was in Rome, he directed me to various other Italian folklorists, but most of all to Giuseppe Cocchiara of Palermo. Cocchiara was a very busy man in University administration, but he was also a quite competent folklorist. His general history of folklore in Europe is outstanding. He also sponsors a large contest with a considerable prize for the best folklore work of the year. The prize is one million lira, which even though it does not work out to be one million dollars, is nevertheless about fifteen hundred dollars. It is fortunate for us that Mrs. Linda Dégh who is now with us in our institute won the second prize of five hundred thousand lira last year on her book about the tellers of folktales.

In 1959, Mrs. Thompson and I made a trip into Yugoslavia and there became acquainted with several Yugoslavian folklorists. In Ljubljana most of our time and attention was given to Milko Matichitov. Matichitov has done a good many studies in Yugo-

slavia. He has an advantage of Italian background and came into Yugoslavia only at the end of the second world war. I think he is a native Yugoslavian who has spent enough time in Italy to be thoroughly bilingual. He always writes me in Italian, since I do not know Yugoslavian.

In Zagreb, the head of the folklore institute is Madame Maja Boskević-Stulli, one of the best informed folklorists that I know. She has specialized on the folklore of the extreme west of Yugoslavia, and her collections of tales from the peninsula of Istria is outstanding. She also has been making a type list of the Yugoslav tales and was able to find flaws in my types of the folktales that had been overlooked both by myself and by other critics. She attends most of the conferences and has a great deal of influence on European folklore.

In Finland, a worthy successor in many ways of Professor Krohn is his student Martti Haavio. He is now an academician and he can spend all of his time on his folklore researches. Most of the things that he is doing are outside of my own field, since he is concerned with Kalevala and the folksong tradition. He has nevertheless kept the large Finnish archive in such a condition that it is better than it ever has been; and that means that it is perhaps the best archive in the world. I always see him when I am in Helsinki, and many of the practical arrangements for getting out the types of folktales have been done through Haavio.

Several students of von Sydow are still active in folklore work. One of the most important of these is Mrs. Anna Birgitta Rooth of Lund. Mrs. Rooth, who is well known to all folklorists in the world was one of Von Sydov's last students and her husband, Dr. Rooth attended him in his last illness. She understands very well the strengths and weaknesses of Von Sydov's theoretical position. I think still her most important work is the study of the Cinderella tale in all parts of the world, but she has also done much first rate work on the study of the myths of the North American Indians and the relation of these North American Myths to Asiatic tales. She has traveled very widely and has first rate connections everywhere.

Also at Lund, another of Von Sydov's students John Oivind Swahn has been one of the most ambitious students of folktales. His large study of the story of *Cupid and Psyche* involved the bringing together of all 425 versions of the international type and studying them analytically. It is a little hard for me to under-

stand exactly his position. He seems to dislike the historic-geographic method, but if I had to point to one of the best examples of the study by this method, it would be to Swahn's study of the *Cupid and Psyche*. He has now taken the study of an equally widespread story, No. 313, that which starts with a Swan-maiden and has to do with the magician's daughter who eventually flees from the magician, and then it goes into the story of the "Forgotten Fiancée." Swahn still works on this story. He is making a collection of tapes and microfilms so that he can have in his own study practically all of the needed materials in the world.

In Copenhagen is another student of Von Sydov, Laurits Bødker. He now has an institute in Copenhagen concerned primarily with the tales of Scandinavia, and has some young students working with him in this institute. I have known Bødker rather well, since I arranged for him to come to Bloomington in 1950, and I see him whenever I am in Copenhagen and frequently at the international meetings. I think that his work is important, particularly in making us better acquainted in detail with the Danish folktales.

I have not become personally acquainted with any folklorists in Russia. Only through correspondence do I know such men as Isidor Levin, but I keep in rather close contact with him and we find that we are in agreement on most matters concerning folktales. He is especially interested in the oriental relation of the Russian folktales. I never got acquainted with Professor Propp, who wrote of the morphology of the folktale, but I have used his index where he uses the Aarne-Thompson system to classify the Russian folktales.

Until very recently, I knew nothing about the Eastern European folklorist at all but within the last year, I have become rather well acquainted with Professor Mihai Pop of Rumania, a very engaging person who is extremely active in the study of all aspects of Rumanian Folklore. He has a good archive in Bucharest and issues a journal. Unfortunately for most scholars the journal is in Rumanian but he tells me that he plans eventually to get up one number a year which will be entirely in one of the world languages. He is planning to have a meeting of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research in Bucharest in 1969. I am wondering whether I shall be able to attend this meeting since age may have come on me by this time.

The great folklorist of Greece nowadays is George Megas. He has a good archive in Athens and issues a large and very well known

annual called *Laographia*. This, unfortunately for us, is in Greek, and there are very few folklorists in the West who are willing to undertake modern Greek. Nevertheless this work of Professor Megas is of importance, and he is making it more available to everybody. He will be publishing an index of all the Greek folktales in *F.F. Communications* and also going to issue a selection of the Greek folktales in Dr. Dorson's new series, *Folktales of the World*. I saw Professor and Mrs. Megas about two months ago in Antwerp and became more convinced of his importance in the whole field of folklore.

One of the best students of the folklore of Turkey, and queerly enough also of China, is Wolfram Eberhard, now teaching at the University of California at Berkeley. Eberhard issued with his colleague Borotav an index of Turkish folktales and later because of his own interest in Chinese materials, two indexes of Chinese folktales. Eberhard is primarily a sociologist, but his work on folktale does not suffer because of this.

In South America aside from Camera Caseudo, whom I have already discussed, perhaps one of two most outstanding folktale scholars is Augusto Raul Cortazar of Buenos Aires. He is primarily a librarian. On my first trip to Buenos Aires, I was greatly disappointed not to see him, because while I was there, he was in Washington attending a big library conference. In 1960 however, we became well acquainted and I saw something of him also in Portugal about three years ago. He is especially active in organizing the collecting of folklore in all parts of Argentina, and he has a number of fellow-workers in Buenos Aires who have a beginning of a good archive. They have published an excellent bibliography of Argentina Folklore.

In Chile, Yolando Pino Saavedra is outstanding, perhaps the best folktale scholar in South America. I met him on my trip to South America in 1947 and I became very well acquainted with him and his work. He was by that time a director of a folklore institute and I have on my wall a membership certificate to this institute which I am very proud of. I lectured under his auspices at the University of Chile. At that time he seemed to have no special interest in the folktale, but I kept talking to him about the possibility of folktale students studying in Chile. As a result of my talking or not, he began collecting folktales a few years later in various parts of Chile. The result of this work is an excellent three-volume collection of folktales excellently annotated. He shows

a thorough knowledge of the scholarship of the folktales. He has frequently been the only South American attending conferences on folklore.

Acquaintance with North American Folklorists

In talking about North American folklorists earlier, I confined myself to my own students, but there are others who should be mentioned. One of them is one of my students whom I simply failed to mention. Herbert Halpert came to us in the late 1930's after having been a student at Columbia University where his interest was primarily in folksongs. He had a collection of New Jersey songs with him when he came here. He took my course in folktale and during the year I asked him whether or not these New Jersey singers ever told any tales, and he said it never occurred to him to ask them about tales. He returned to New Jersey and visited the same people and came back with a very fine collection of New Jersey folktales. After properly editing all this material he used this as his thesis. Halpert had been teaching all these years and is now a professor in the Memorial University of Newfoundland.

One of the organizations most important for folklore study now is the University of Pennsylvania. This department was built up by the late McEdward Leach. Leach was himself a specialist on the ballad, so that the tendency of this organization is to concentrate on the English and Scottish ballads. But it must also be pointed out that Leach put a great deal of his energy into the American Folklore Society for at least ten years. He carried the burden of all financial responsibilities for this society and was the effective secretary and treasurer and the American folklore public owes him a very great deal.

I have mentioned Archer Taylor several times but not into detail. I made my first trip to Europe with him in 1913 and we were in classes together at Harvard. For many years he was a professor at Washington University in St. Louis and then for a long time was chairman of the department of German at the University of Chicago. At Chicago he was influential in training such folklorists as Ralph Boggs and Wayland Hand. In 1939 he transferred to the University of California at Berkeley, and is recognized as one of the most influential folklorists in the world.

His folklore specialities have been the proverb and the riddle. These are only two of his specialities, because he is also perhaps the best known of all renaissance bibliographers. Taylor has many friends and the whole younger generation of folklorists go by to see him, and if possible get an invitation to visit him at his ranch fifty miles north of San Francisco. I was fortunate to be with him last August on his seventy-fifth birthday.

A folklorist somewhat different from any of those we have spoken about is Louis C. Jones, because Jones is interested mainly in material folklore. He is in charge of the Farmer's Museum in Cooperstown in New York, and under him it has become a model indoor and outdoor museum. Just recently I visited this organization to lecture to his students and found that now he is also beginning a certain teaching program. He has taken one of our students, Bruce Buckley, to help with this teaching program. Students come there to take general work in folklore or work in the techniques of Museology. Jones is very important as an advisor on all matters of folklore organization, and I am certain that as more folklore museums appear in this country we will get good advice from Jones.

A specialty of Austin Fife and his wife Alta is the folklore of the Mormons. They issued a common volume several years ago called *Knights of the Sage and Saddle*. Now they have pretty well cleaned up this Mormon folklore and are specializing on the cowboy material. They are hard workers. The archive which they have at Logan, Utah is excellently arranged and I expect that the final result of their work will be outstanding.

Two men in Anthropology in these last years have been particularly important in throwing light on folktale study from an anthropological point of view. I refer first of all to William Bascom, who is head of the Ethnological museum at Berkeley. His specialty is African folklore and he has many penetrating remarks to make about the relation of folk tradition to the people who belong to this tradition. Another student who was for many years at Berkeley is Dell Hymes, who received his advanced training here. He was an anthropology major but specializing in linguistics. He took all of the work in folklore that I was giving at that time, so that he is trained in folklore as well. He brings to his study a thorough knowledge of linguistics and of general anthropology theory. He does not write as clearly as he might, but on a whole, I look upon him as one of the best students that I have come in

contact with personally.

Of course in the list that I have been giving, I have picked out those that occurred to me here and there and I am certain that I have overlooked many important scholars such as Melville Jacobs and his study in depth of the tales of one Indian group, Alan Dundes and his structural investigations, and J. L. Fischer with his broad theoretical treatments.

Francis L. Utley, of Ohio State University, combines a great knowledge of medieval English and the general folklore tradition. His specialty has been the legend of Noah. Wayland Hand of the University of California at Los Angeles is very knowledgeable in matters of folktale study, though most of his time has lately gone to the study of customs and beliefs.

III

Dialog

Now I am sure, Mr. Upadhyaya, that you have some questions to ask. I seemed to have told you all I know, but if you have anything to ask, this is the time.

Haris Upadhyaya: I would like to ask you several questions, Dr. Thompson. I see here so many honorary degrees hanging in your room. Would you like to tell me something about this, when did you get and how did you get them?

Stith Thompson: Yes, I think you might be interested in them. I hope they are not too much of a display, but my wife thought they would decorate the office. The first of these I mention is a membership in the Gustav Adolf Academy in Sweden, which was the very first of these that I received in 1935. There is also one that you will notice from Finland, which touches me a great deal. It is an honorary membership in the Finno-Ugric Society. This is dated in the early months of 1940 and brings a tragic note because Finland was in the grip of its so-called Winter War and it was unable to have its meeting in December of 1939, but in the postponed meeting in 1940, I was elected a member of that society. There was not much in the way of joining societies during the great war, but in Spring 1946 the University of North Carolina was having its 150th anniversary and on that occasion they gave me a degree of Doctor of Letters. As far as honorary degrees are concerned, you will see another one for 1953 from Indiana Central College which is one of our neighboring institutions. I was very glad to receive this degree since this college was almost in sight of the place where I was brought up as a boy, and I always felt very close to it. Then, in 1958 the University of Kentucky offered me a degree of Doctor of

Literature. I was reared in Kentucky, and I was of course pleased to receive this degree from my native state. Then in 1959 at the first meeting of the Society of Folk Narrative Research, along with Dr. Taylor I was given the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Kiel. Finally in the last year, I was invited to Colorado College where I had taught from 1918 to 1920, and there received a degree of Doctor of Letters.

In the early 1950's I was elected member of the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and also of the Danish Society of Sciences. In 1948, I was elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society. As a member of a committee of the Society I go five times a year to help appropriate their research funds. There are also memberships in local Societies such as the Folklore Societies of Ireland, England, Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Israel, Sweden, and as well as the Finnish Literary Society. I value this last very highly, because that was the society that sent Elias Lönnrot out to get the songs for Kalevala. Most of the things you see on the wall will be clear.

Hari: In the folklore library, I see you have got so many pictures of very eminent European folklorists and some of the pictures of the conferences that were held during your Professorship at Indiana University. I have heard from so many students and have noticed myself that you enjoy explaining these pictures and telling their names to the new Folklore students who are present at Indiana University. Would you like to tell something about those pictures?

Thompson: We began to collect these pictures as soon as we had the Folklore Institutes. As a matter of fact, I began to collect most of these pictures on my various trips to Europe. I took along some of my own pictures so that I could exchange with some of these people. Thus, I have a rather old picture of Albert Wesselski, which I am sure was taken twenty to thirty years earlier than when I saw him as an old man of seventy. But there are also pictures of people like Kaarle Krohn and Bolte. Krohn gave me his picture, but the one that we have from Bolte was taken from a publication. We began to make group pictures at the very first of Folklore Institutes. I don't know whether the last of these institutes were ever photographed or not, but all the rest of them were. Now it could be a pious act if someone could go through and identify all the people in these pictures. My own picture is there, and it was a question as to where we would put my bust, but there was no room in that part of the campus, so that this bust is now looking out on the activities of the students of the English Department.

Hari: When I came to Bloomington in 1962, I was discouraged to know that you are not teaching here now. It was very unfortunate. However I have had an opportunity to hear you and for a time to be your student, but I'm wondering whether you will do much teaching after your retirement.

Thompson: I have done a great deal of teaching since retirement. First, a semester at the University of Texas in 1956. I taught during that semester a course in folktale and one in English Literature. At Texas they were interested in beginning a real program in Folklore Studies. In 1958 and again in 1962 I taught a semester at the University of Kansas, and in

the summer of 1961, at the University of Hawaii at Honolulu. I think I would rather not teach any more if it involves a great deal of paper work, but I did enjoy the opportunity which unfortunately came last year when Dr. Roberts had his heart attack. There was an opportunity to teach my old course on the folktale for a matter of a couple of months, and to get acquainted with the group of new students who have come in since my time. I am entirely on the sidelines and there are many students whom I don't get a chance to see any more, but on the other hand, I have made some very pleasant acquaintances with the later group of folklorists.

Hari: What is the future of the historic-geographic method?

Thompson: About the future of the historic-geographical method, I am quite sure that some changes have to be made in the interpretation of the materials brought together. The assembling of the material by this method is, I think, completely sound. I think this is a way in which I believe the material should be assembled until all of the material is in the tables. It is in the interpretation where some changes may have to be made. I have recently reread some of Dr. Von Sydov's criticisms of the method, and some of them I feel should be taken to heart. I feel certain that he is wrong about feeling that folktales must come down in the same way as language has and that one should go back and back and back to the origin of the tale as it was in a certain place two or three thousand years ago. That is probably an exaggeration of his point of view, but that is what he means to say. I am quite certain that tales have traveled around without any great respect to linguistic boundaries, and that the scholar must take all things into consideration. He certainly cannot neglect Dr. Von Sydov's criticism. I think also that more attention has got to be made to the actual social environment of the tales to see what are their regional stylistic points and to see what value, if any, is found in the structural study of folktales. I am sure that the value of structural study has been exaggerated, but I feel that any student who is going to study folktales has not only to use the laborious method of the historic-geographic method, but also to know about the favorite forms that tales take in various countries. A modification rather than an abandonment of the historic-geographic method seems to be the future task.

Hari: I am curious to know how, and when did you come to know my father?¹

Thompson: This acquaintance with your father has been of course entirely by letters. I have never seen him, but as early as about 1950 I had a letter from him and I replied and through the years, we exchanged several letters about his plans for the study of Indian Folklore. Then I was much disappointed when I found, although he was scheduled to come to the meeting in Kiel, he did not come, and on several occasions I thought that I was going to meet him, but I've never done so. Of course I was happy to see you turn up here, and bring in some real personal touch with your father,

1. Dr. K. D. Upadhyaya.

and I hope that before too long we will see him here in the flesh.²

Hari: I understand, sir, that you were Ph.D examiner of Dr. Goswami. How did you come to know him?

Thompson: I had considerable correspondence with Mr. P. Goswami in Gauhati at the time he was doing his Doctor's thesis. As a matter of fact I was one of the judges on this thesis. He did a good job in adding to our knowledge of a part of India that I did not know about. I also got acquainted with Dr. B. K. Barua who was likewise at the University of Gauhati. I would like to get better acquainted with Mr. Goswami, whom I understand that he is to be here within the next year, and I would like to see just what he is working on now. I found a good deal of what is being done in that part of the world from Professor Barua and I understand that Goswami is carrying this on. I would be much interested to hear about that.

Hari: Would you like sometimes to come to India and visit different places?

Thompson: Oh yes, I certainly would like to come to India sometime. It's been one of the ideas that I have had in my mind for a long time, but one has to remember that I am not as young as I once was and this may not be very feasible. I think, however, that rather than going to Europe another time, if I have the means and the health, my next trip would be out over the Pacific, to Japan and into Asia, and this would certainly include India. I considered several years ago the whole matter of going to several parts of India and advising in the establishing of some kind of Folklore Organization, but that did not work out and I was greatly disappointed.

Hari: We have got people in India who are very anxious to see you. They have read your books, and they know Dr. Taylor. These are two prominent names in India which are known very much, and when I was coming here in 1962, my father said I am very lucky to meet you and Dr. Taylor at the Indiana Campus.

Thompson: I am sure if Taylor were here, he would join me to say we are very happy that students would know us and welcome us if we come there on a trip. Taylor some years ago made a hurried trip through India.

Hari: It was, I think, in 1935 when he went to India. I do not think that then Indian Folklore was in any good shape.

Hari: How should a Indic scholar work and handle Indian folklore?

Thompson: Of course your question as to what the Indic scholar like yourself should do when he returns home is a very difficult one because I don't know all of the circumstances. For one thing, I am not sure how much organization there is, how active a society there is in India. I feel one thing extremely important is to remember that the folklore has first of all to be collected and then to be brought together in some kind of organization, some kind of archive. If possible, if one has a journal, a selection of this material

2. K. D. Upadhyaya did meet Dr. Thompson in August of 1966, during his trip to the U.S.A.

should be published and thus should get some publicity—enough publicity so that the powers that have any money will be willing to support this type of research. Then after you have these archives and some publications, real adequate study should be made of them. One of the great difficulties that I find in countries that have not a long background of scholarly study in folklore is the fact that there is too much hurry to come to important conclusions. I don't think very much is to be gained by having books entitled *The Folktales of India*. They may be of some interest to the public, but it is much better to make a real study of the tales of a particular place, rather than to cover the whole country. One has to remember that Folktale Study like all others is largely a matter of a series of very specialized investigations, and it is only after you have a series of these that you can come to broad generalizations. So for the young student of Indic material, I would suggest that he become a master of the folklore of a certain area before he attempts to generalize about the folklore of India.

Hari: Thank you very much, sir. I appreciate very much your having let me interview you.