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"Suan the Guesser": A Filipino Doctor Know-All (AT 1641)

Abstract:

This paper serves a dual purpose: first, it determines the basic value system or worldview conveyed by Philippine variants of Doctor Know-All (Aarne-Thompson type 1641); second, it demonstrates the complementarity of two methods of analysis — structural and psychoanalytical — by applying both to the study of the tales. The variants of the Philippine folktale are compared, both with one another and with variants of the same tale type from other parts of the world, in order to determine what the Filipino variants are narrating beyond the plot line. The results reveal specific elements that may signify a distinctive Filipino worldview.

Key words: Philippines — AT1641 — Doctor Know-All — structuralism — psychoanalysis

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> Someone asked [Swamiji] what [the myth] meant. "He said, 'You should never assign a meaning to a myth because if you assign a meaning, the mind clamps onto just that one meaning. Then it's no longer active, because when a story is active it allows for new beginnings all the time. Don't give meanings to anything,' he said, 'it doesn't ever mean just one thing.'"
>
> NARAYAN 1989, 106

FOLKTALES, like all narratives, are created by the individuals and cultures that tell them; their meaning lies within those who narrate and those who listen. This paper utilizes a combination of structural analysis, psychoanalytical interpretation, and motif comparison in an attempt to clarify the meanings that the elements of a particular folktale may convey. This is not a search for "definitive" meanings — texts have no one definitive meaning, as evidenced by the diversity of analytical systems used in the field of folklore. Folktales do, however, have significance for the people who tell them, or they would soon stop being told.

NARAYAN notes that "the meanings stemming from each story . . . lie ultimately in the engagement of the listeners" (1989, 110). The purpose of a folktale is to help the listener find his or her place in the community and in the world through identification with the protagonists. Thus folktales "must not be really (factually) real, for a factual attitude would subvert their meaning; imagination would have to cede its place to the critical mind, and instead of identifying with the character, one would have to judge him" (LEROY 1985, 22).[1]

Narratives articulate patterns found in the symbolic system of the culture in which the tale is told. BARTHES writes that "it is impossible to combine (to produce) a narrative without reference to an implicit system

of units and rules" (1982, 255); he also expresses the need to "explode the text" of a narrative in order to discover these inherent rules and structures (1980, 89).

In a structuralist approach, "the individual elements of a [narrative] are arbitrary" and their meaning can be determined only in context through their relation to one another (KUPER 1989, 27). The context of these elements is found in the narrative pattern and in the multiple connections and relations that these elements have with one another. LÉVI-STRAUSS plots these relations in a manner he compares to the writing of an orchestral score (1955, 432), viewing the narrative as an article woven from the culture's symbolic system. The relations are often interpreted as illustrative of a dialectical movement in the structure of the narrative, a movement that begins with the presentation of opposite values and ends with their integration: "Mythical thought always works from the awareness of opposites towards their progressive mediation" (LÉVI-STRAUSS 1955, 440). This integration is accomplished through the action of a mediator — such as the protagonist of a folktale — with whom the storyteller and the audience can identify, leading to a presumed resolution of these "dilemmas of human existence" (MANDELBAUM 1987, 32).[2]

DUNDES uses the linguistic concept of the phoneme as an analytical tool for reinterpreting narrative elements: just as phonemes are the underlying units of meaning in speech, motifemes are the underlying units of meaning in a narrative (1986, 418).[3] A motifeme is interpretable by means of the individual ways in which any single unit of functional meaning is realized — in other words, by examining the individual representations, or allomotifs, of the motifeme. DUNDES notes that "allomotifs are both functionally and symbolically equivalent," so that the allomotifs that fill a particular functional role in stories of a specific tale-type reveal much about what that particular motifeme symbolizes (1987, 168).

This paper is a semiotic analysis of several Philippine variants of "Doctor Know-All" (AT1641). In response to the comment that "semiotics . . . tends to emphasize the *logical* rather than the *psychological* facets of the data being examined" (DUNDES 1980, 35), this analysis attempts to combine structural dissection with psychoanalytical interpretation. The results of these different analyses are then used to compare the Philippine variants with those of other cultures.[4] Combining systems of analysis gives greater coverage of the possible interpretations; like a valley from which only one face of a particular mountain may be seen, any one system of analysis can get at only part of what a tale may mean for the people who tell it.

Differences between variants of a tale provide clues to cultural val-

ues and worldviews. In this paper, variations of AT1641 are compared as a set, so that variants illuminate one another and assist in determining the meanings that elements and patterns may have for the storytellers and their audiences in the Philippine context.[5]

SUAN THE GUESSER

The tale centers on Suan,[6] a young man who, by solving the first "problem" of the tale, tricks his family into believing that he has the exceptional ability to know things that would normally be impossible to know (see Appendix A for summaries).[7] His reputation spreads, and, as frequently happens with trickster-type characters, his cleverness overreaches him. A credulous relative (usually his mother) brings the young man to the attention of a higher authority, furthering the narrative by entangling the hero in a challenge from outside the family.

The nature of the solution to Suan's second problem (the Stolen Ring) differs slightly from variant to variant. In variant A, Suan solves the problem through a combination of luck and brains, while in B and C the solutions come through luck alone (in B he serendipitously uses, as he laments his misfortune, words that are homonymous with the name of the thief; in C the thief admits guilt while being casually teased by the youth).[8] In A, B, and C the young man next has the ring placed inside a bird so that he can pretend to discover its location. The reward is prestige, wealth, and association with the higher authority, whether sultan, king, ship's captain, or *datu* (village chieftain).[9] Three of the four variants include marriage to the ruler's daughter.[10]

In each variant the third problem is a guessing game or contest (usually between the father-in-law and a visiting man) that involves riddles Suan must solve.[11] The riddles are about something concealed, such as the number of seeds inside a fruit or the contents of a container.

In variants A, B, and C, Suan learns the answer to the first riddle by eavesdropping,[12] but is stumped by the final riddle. Desperate because of his ignorance of the answer (and because of the consequences of failing his powerful father-in-law), Suan makes an exclamation that coincidentally sounds like the right answer. The resolution is the same in all of the variants that Dean S. FANSLER mentions: an inadvertent statement of the correct answer to the riddle and thus an application of the pretended power (1965, 7). Fansler calls this the "ejaculation guess" (1965, 8).

The young man is thus saved not by his cleverness, but by the very ability to which he pretends. The tale thus relies on both active problem-solving and serendipity to resolve its tensions. This integration of pretense and accident hints at a psychological level of the story, with the

story's progress reflecting or even guiding the listeners' involvement as the roles of agent and recipient are unified in the protagonist. PROPP points out that in a tale "the sequence of events has its own laws" (1968, 22). These laws have meaning, whether intentional or not, in the process by which the events of the tale are constructed by the storyteller and his/her audience. This raises the question of what the resolution to our tale may symbolize to a listener.

When one examines the variants, a pattern emerges that can be organized in terms of the problems:

Problem 1: concealed items + (hidden by Suan) + (secretly discovered by Suan) Locale: Familial	→	Result 1: prestige (reputation of power)
Problem 2: missing item N (hidden/stolen by stranger) + (secretly discovered by Suan) Locale: Local	→	Result 2: prestige (wealth and/or marriage)
Problem 3: hidden item(s) – (concealed by challenger) + (secretly discovered by Suan) Locale: Nonlocal	→	Result 3: prestige (preserved or strengthened)
Problem 4: hidden item(s) – (concealed by challenger) N (discovered by accident) Locale: Nonlocal	→	Result 4: prestige (ensured)

([+] indicates that Suan actively controls the situation; [–] that the challenger does; [N] that neither Suan nor the challenger have control)

Not every step appears in each variant, but the pattern is always present and shows several general tendencies. There is always a problem and resolution, and the seriousness of the problem always increases as the distance between Suan's origin and the locale of the problem increases. There is also a movement from problems of Suan's own making to those made by challenging forces; the overcoming of the problems becomes increasingly dangerous as the forces that pose them become increasingly hostile, and the solutions lead to ever greater security and prestige.

The structure of the tale is one of resolution, the dialectical develop-

ment of a fundamental dichotomy between high and low. Each resolution raises the position of the mediator, Suan, to one of greater importance and risk. There are several levels of this dichotomous structure:

rich	husband	new family	security	reality	consciousness	high
poor	bachelor	birth family	danger	pretense	unconsciousness	low

Despite his earlier autonomy, the protagonist is rescued from his final predicament by the operation of powers not of his conscious mind, powers that are neutral in terms of his own volition and control. Suan ultimately triumphs through the operation of the unconscious rather than through the schemes of his conscious mind. This preserves the alliance between the protagonist and the "higher" social authority through the operation of the eschewed "lower" powers, representing an integration of the two sides of the dichotomy as the individual becomes a more fully integrated and important member of society.

This higher/lower dichotomy is found in the motif of the ring, a symbol of marriage and of the movement from bachelorhood and birth family to the creation of a new family unit. Placing the ring in the guts of a turkey (A) or a goose (B) links the protagonist to the physical, or lower plane, making his pretense at knowing the location of the ring even more miraculous. This sets the stage for the final riddle, when he happens upon the answer in the "bowels" of nature through a truly lucky guess: the "ejaculation guess," a term with sexual overtones that connect it to the lower level of the dichotomy.

In A and D, Suan hides and watches the activities of his mother, while in C, the boy hides and watches both his mother and his father. This hiding and watching is in lieu of the official ways of acquiring education and knowledge (i.e., attending school). This indicates that what Suan is learning is not found in books, and points to the tale as one of the acquisition of sexual knowledge and progressive integration into society. That sexual knowledge is essential for this integration is suggested by the fact that Suan ends up married in most of the variants.

In a psychoanalytical analysis of the tale certain aspects leap out. There is a strong attachment between the boy and his mother: the mother is watched but never stolen from, and the mother is usually the one who brings him to the attention of the ruler. For Suan to mature as a man this attachment must be broken and a new one made with adult male society. However, in all four Philippine variants the biological father is either absent or is the victim of Suan's deceiving theft. The father, then, cannot be the initiator. As mentioned before, it is Suan's mother

who leads him to the second problem in variants A, B, and D, providing the impetus for the young man to ally himself with the masculine power embodied in the male authority figure. Initiation rites around the world typically involve an older man — an uncle or grandfather — who helps the youth undergo the tests that must be passed before he can become a functioning male in society; this older man is the male authority figure of the tale.

What is concealed and where it is concealed assists the reading of this tale as one of sexual knowledge and initiation into society:

	Problem 1	*Problem 2*	*Problem 3*	*Problem 4*
(A)	bag: purchases	turkey: ring	orange: seeds	ball: coins
(B)	plow: location caraboa: location	goose: ring	melons: seeds	bottle: dung
(C)	parents' work family trunk: location	goose: ring	chests: dirt/sand	chest: dung
(D)	jar: cake cows: location		orange: seeds	

Suan spies on his mother in order to see what she has inside her bag or jar, which indicates curiosity about female sexuality. The jar contains a treat for Suan, the bag carries the family provisions, and the trunk contains the family possessions. In variant B, Suan establishes his reputation for knowing the unknowable by first hiding, then finding, his father's plow and his uncle's carabao (buffalo). These two male objects, used in preparing fields for seeding, have connotations of male sexuality and so indicate the theme of sexual awakening. In D, Suan's theft is of his father's cows, another male means of providing sustenance. The cows are also a source of milk, linking them to the mother, and so suggest an Oedipal attempt to take the means of reproduction out of the hands of the father.

The bird and ring motif is found in almost all of FANSLER's variants: "The discovery of the ring inside a domestic fowl (sometimes animal) is found in most of the European versions, as is likewise the 'ejaculation guess'"; both "are also found in Oriental forms of the story" (1965, 8). The physical connection between the ring and the internal organs supports the sexual interpretation, and it can be no accident that Suan acquires the daughter through finding her ring: the action of inserting one's finger into a ring is a direct analog with intercourse. Similarly, his placing of the ring within the body cavity of a bird and then "miraculously" locating it can be interpreted as a seduction scene, since Suan first finds

the daughter's ring through guile and later openly discovers it in a more socially acceptable way.

The third problem furthers this theme. The seeds identified by Suan are an obvious symbol for fertility, indicating Suan's attainment of greater awareness of the physical processes involved in human sexuality. Similarly, the dirt, dung, and coins are related to the bodily nature of sexuality. KUPER writes that "it is, of course, a familiar psychoanalytical thesis that there is a deep association between faeces and treasure, particularly gold" (1989, 26).

The psychoanalytic interpretation fits into the structure proposed earlier: maturation, both sexually and socially, is a progression from a low or lacking situation to a better one. Thus the two analyses support one another. Likewise, Fansler's term "ejaculation guess," whether intended as a pun or not, fits well with the interpretation of this folktale as signifying initiation into society and the realm of sexual awareness, and mediating such dichotomic divisions as unconscious/conscious and lower/higher.

"DOCTOR KNOW-ALL"

This is a widespread tale type.[13] Examination of several variants will allow comparison of the Philippine worldview with that of other cultures, as well as reinforce the structural and psychoanalytic interpretations given above. (See Appendix B for plot synopses of the non-Philippine variants.)

There are several clear similarities in these non-Philippine variants, which is, of course, what unifies them as a tale type. The presence of trickery is central to the tale: Goldhair lies to his uncle, Crab masquerades as a doctor, Joe eavesdrops, and Harisarman hides a horse. This is conscious trickery, often involving prior knowledge, as was seen in the variants of "Suan." Homophony is also a critical part of the tale, as the stumbling protagonist gets out of difficulty by sheer coincidence. Here the deception lies in the hearer's unconscious interpretation rather than in the trickster's conscious intention; again, the combination of the two allows the trickster to succeed.

LINDAHL comments that "only when the game changes context does it grow out of control, and only then does old Joe face failure" (1982, 201); this danger from an uncontrolled situation is seen in each variant, Philippine and non-Philippine. There is a progression from household to court, with an accompanying increase in danger. This is a dialectical movement that incorporates unconscious and conscious elements, higher and lower, thus fitting the structural analysis of "Suan the Guesser":

Problem 1: how to get attention → Result 1: prestige
+ (trickster creates a "problem") (reputation of power)
+ (trickster solves his own "problem")
Locale: Household

Problem 2: missing item → Result 2: prestige
N (concealed by stranger) (prestige strengthened)
N (accidentally discovered by trickster)
Locale: Court

Problem 3: rebellion → Result 3: prestige
– (set by challenger) (preserved)
N (accidentally solved by trickster)
Locale: Court

Problem 4: hidden item → Result 4: prestige
– (concealed secretly by challenger) (ensured)
N (discovered by accident)
Locale: Court

The problems set for the trickster in the non-Philippine variants are coherent:

Problem 1	*Problem 2*	*Problem 3*	*Problem 4*
(China)			
Uncle's disdain	help baby emerge	drive away army	bag: cat
(India)			
Master's disregard	help solve theft		pitcher: frog
(Grimm)			
Social status	help solve theft		dish: crab
(U.S.)			
Master's attention			box: raccoon

Theft is an element common to all these variants as well as to those from the Philippines. It often involves buried treasure, with the thief revealing its location to the protagonist; this fits the view that what is being discovered is something that integrates the lower and higher parts of the dichotomy. Like the removal of the ring from the bird, something valuable is brought out into the open from concealment in the lower, physical plane. This dis-covery is occasioned by the unconscious, in the form of the protagonist's homophonous statement or ejaculation guess. It

is often exploited by the conscious mind of the trickster as well, such as when Doctor Know-It-All (Crab) uses the confession of the thieves to convince the nobleman that he has divined the location of the treasure.

All of the final guesses in the non-Philippine variants involve animals; since animals represent the lower level, these guesses are similar in nature to those involving dung and seeds in the Philippine variants. This final guess integrates the higher and lower levels of the dichotomy, securing the trickster's position in society or in the esteem of the authority figure. It is also significant that all four of the guesses in the non-Philippine variants refer to the emblems or totems of the tricksters themselves, indicating a growth of self-knowledge as maturation proceeds.

Thus the structural analysis fits all of the variants discussed. The psychoanalytic analysis is more difficult to apply cross-culturally, however. In "The Old Coon" there is clearly no growth in sexual knowledge; Joe's position is secured, but this does not result in marriage or the formation of a new family. None of the non-Philippine tales ends in marriage; in fact, Harisarman and Crab are already married. The things that are guessed also do not lend themselves to an interpretation of increased sexual knowledge. However, they do lend themselves to the interpretation that knowledge of the self is gained, and therefore to the general psychoanalytic explanation that this tale represents a maturation process.

In all of the variants, the younger man encounters a male figure, a ruler at some level whose favor needs to be gained. In the psychoanalytic analysis of the Philippine variants it was suggested that this masculine figure represents someone who initiates the protagonist into adult male society. In response to this argument it could be claimed that since only men served as authority figures in many cultures (like pre-Communist China), only a male makes sense in such a role in stories as well. However, in the Philippines women are traditionally more influential than they are in many other areas, with women occupying positions of strength in business and society.[14] Bilocality is found in many Southeast Asian groups, implying that great importance is placed on both the maternal and paternal lines in the region. Thus it is quite conceivable that women could serve as authority figures in a Philippine tale, and one would expect them to appear as such in at least some variants of "Suan" if this were a tale about gaining power alone. None, however, are seen — in each of the eight variants, Philippine and non-Philippine, the motifeme of the authority figure is male, and is outside of the initial household or family locale.[15]

The theme of joining a male society that is beyond the confines of

the household is seen in each variant. In the Philippine variants, Suan wins attention and esteem from the mother, steals from the father (if there is one), and goes on to seek attention from the external male authority figure. In "Goldhair" the uncle is an overt male parental figure who takes the place of both mother and father, giving rise to a clash between the aspects of maternal attention and paternal conflict; Goldhair leaves home for two years as a result. In "The Old Coon" the relation between master and slave is inherently ambiguous, with Joe trying to win his master's favor and to fool him at the same time; a warped familial relation could be present in the conflict between the paternalism of the slave master and his absolute power over the slaves.[16] Similarly, in "Harisarman" the householder's neglect of the servant produces an inordinate resentment in the latter, who thus attempts to get attention. This begins the search for alliance with the authority figure that motivates all of the variants of the tale.

In each variant the alliance with a powerful male is part of the steady movement to a more secure position, toward joining society, achieving recognition, and reaching maturity. This alliance is threatened by a challenge, a problem that the trickster must solve correctly to preserve his acquired prestige. The authority figure goes along with the challenge to determine if the young man is worthy of leaving his earlier family-based relationships and entering the larger social realm. This reinforces the authority's function as initiator, thus supporting the theme of maturation and integration.

Specific elements of the Philippine worldview are expressed in the motifs used in the variants. Certain differences that come up relate to the role of women: as mentioned earlier, women are traditionally influential in Philippine society, and this is reflected in their more active role in the Philippine variants. Another aspect concerns how the trickster is integrated into society. In the non-Philippine variants the protagonist becomes an honored adviser and member of court, gaining wealth and prestige. In three of the four Philippine variants, however, Suan becomes a member of the ruling family. In typical European tales where a lowly hero marries a princess (L161), the hero turns out in the end to have been of noble birth, thus justifying his entry into high society. That this is not the case in the Philippines reflects the more fluid social hierarchy typical of Southeast Asian societies.[17] The marriage motif fits well with the Philippine variation of AT1641, enabling Philippine variants to be read as tales of sexual maturation as well as integration into society.

A lack of cross-cultural support for one aspect of an analysis does not reduce the validity of this aspect for the culture it appears in, nor the

general validity of the structural analysis of the tale. There is no reason why every culture should put the same interpretation on the same structure within a tale; a fundamental quality of narrative is its plasticity, which enables the teller and his or her audience to determine the appropriate allomotifs and narrative forms.[18] What is clear across cultures is the structure of AT1641: a development, or progression, from lesser to greater integration, maturity, and security. How this security is interpreted is up to the narrator and audience.

LeRoy emphasizes that "metaphorical statements cannot be replaced by literal translations without semantic impoverishment" (1985, 12); this limitation makes it difficult to catch cultural connotations between signifier and signified even when translating one's own field research. Thus a significant problem for this paper lies in its reliance upon the work of other scholars. The analysis of semiotic representation is possible, though, because of the abundance of elements that turn up in the variations of the sets regardless of who did the initial collection and translation. The unity of motifemes in the structure of the tale enables the analysis to propose interpretations that can inform research in other areas dealing with symbolic systems in the Philippines, such as social history or anthropology.

NOTES

1. Stories "contain indigenous models through which the culture can understand itself. They constitute a kind of auto-anthropology, a home-grown social science" (LeRoy 1985, x), and therefore are a means of helping people interpret their society. As such, "it is frequently the case that in folklore implicit worldview principles and themes are made explicit," and thus "to the extent that folklore constitutes an autobiographical ethnography of people, it provides an outsider . . . with a view of the culture from the inside-out rather than from the outside-in" (Dundes 1980, 70). Folktales are fictional prose: "They are not considered as dogma or history, they may or may not have happened, and they are not to be taken seriously" (Bascom 1984, 8). As such, their purpose must differ from that of a myth, legend, or history.

2. The structural approach generally isolates the elements of a tale in order to interpret them within the context of the tale and the implicit context of their relation to one another. Propp refers to these elements as "functions," and he defines a function "*according to its consequences*" (1968, 67, Propp's italics). This emphasizes the sequence of the tale's plot, in contrast to the approach of Lévi-Strauss, which rearranges these elements for the purpose of examining the relations. However, Propp's statement that "a large number of functions are arranged in pairs" (1968, 64) seems to reflect Lévi-Strauss's penchant for identifying binary relationships in his analyses.

The structural analysis undertaken in this paper combines the syntagmatic approach of Propp and Dundes, which stresses the unfolding of the narrative in its plot, and the paradigmatic approach of Lévi-Strauss, which takes constituent units out of the plot line and typically looks at the structure as a hierarchy of binary relationships involving the mediation of oppositions. These theoretical approaches, devised by scholars with different views on folk-

lore, address a fundamentally similar issue: the determination of the elements or units of folktales and their relationship to one another.

3. The term "motifeme" has obvious parallels to Lévi-Strauss's "mytheme" and to Propp's "functions," as well as the more common "motif"; "motifeme" might be seen as an improvement on these earlier terms since it points to the structural correspondence between surface variation and underlying meaning, which is at the heart of the cross-cultural comparison of tale structure.

4. There are many versions of any one folktale. LÉVI-STRAUSS "define[s] the myth as consisting of all its versions" (1963, 217); in the same way, LEROY maintains that the narratives of a different culture can be unlocked, or decoded, "only in terms of others of its set" (1985, 13). The functions remain largely unchanged, because "the mythical value of the myth remains preserved, even through the worst translation" (LÉVI-STRAUSS 1955, 430). In deciphering functions, changes help to illuminate the function of the elements by giving, in Dundes's terminology, allomotifs of the motifeme.

5. Differences in variants could be used to explore diachronic changes in worldview as well as the synchronic value system of the storyteller. This might be done by comparing variants over time to see how changes have occurred as cultures interact with one another. This would be an interesting area to explore in Philippine folklore, since Southeast Asia has long been a cultural crossroads. Indian influences moved into Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia with the spread of Buddhism and Hinduism, and from there reached the Philippines; thus the Indian elements "were Southeast Asian interpretations of the original Indian forms" (CASAL et al. 1981, 71). Chinese influence came through trade (CASAL et al. 1981, 59). Islamic influence was more direct: many parts of the Philippines were Muslim when the Spaniards came and some are Muslim to this day. The West, through Spanish conquistadors and friars and later through American soldiers and teachers, directly influenced the Philippines for almost four hundred years. The question of the tale's ultimate origin and the geographic distribution of tale types and motifs is beyond the scope of this project, though it would be an interesting avenue to explore when examining the issue of Filipino worldview in a historical context.

6. The name "Suan" is used for convenience in the general discussion of the Philippine variants of AT1641. FANSLER identifies Suan as a "common nickname for 'Juan'" (1965, 1). This name points to Spanish influence.

7. Motifs mentioned are K1956. *Sham wise man*, and N688. *What is in the dish: "Poor Crab."* Variant D does not include all of these elements.

Maxfield and Millington, who collected "Juan Pusong" (D), give several episodes with a different storyline than the other versions. The tales in their collection were assembled in 1904 from students and teachers in American-run schools on Panay. They checked that the tales were known to other Visayans before including them in their article. They note that "Pusong" was translated for them as "Tricky" (MAXFIELD and MILLINGTON 1906, 97–98).

8. A also includes motif N275. *Criminal confesses because he thinks himself accused.* In B we find N611.1.1. *Name of criminal accidentally spoken out.*

9. Though a ship's captain may not seem as prestigious as a king or sultan, ships are extremely important things in an archipelago; a ship's captain is thus appropriate as a figure of prestige, as in Maxfield and Millington's "Juan Pusong" (variant D). Another point to consider is that this variant was collected by American teachers who were teaching their own culture, a fact that might have influenced the change from a ruler to a ship's captain.

10. The motif in these three is L161. *Lowly hero marries princess.*

11. H510. *Tests in guessing*; H515. *Guessing contest between kings.* Dean S. FANSLER notes that the only similar instance of a betting contest he knows of is in an Arabian story (1965, 8). While this may be evidence of Muslim influence, FANSLER points out that tales can travel in many ways (1965, xix), such as through the Moor-influenced Spanish. The motif of a guessing contest between rulers is also found in India, which makes identification of the source even less certain (see THOMPSON and BALYS 1958).

12. H573. *Answer found by trickery.*

13. AT1641 is mentioned in AARNE and THOMPSON 1961, THOMPSON and ROBERTS 1960, and THOMPSON and BALYS 1958. According to EBERHARD, this tale is found throughout Asia, Europe, and Africa, and is known among the African Diaspora, but "no early examples of this tale have been found in China" (1965, 203). TAWNEY comments on the similarity of "Harisarman" with the Grimms' "Doctor Know-All," and says that variants are found in the Siddhikur of Mongolia, Schleicher's *Lithuanian Legends*, and the *Facetiae* of Henricus Bebelius (1880, 274–75). Lindahl points to other variants in Saucier's *Folk Tales from French Louisiana* and Dorson's *American Negro Folktales* (LINDAHL 1982, 201). Other Philippine versions are "Juan the Guesser" (FANSLER 1911) and "The Wise Foolish Boy" (EUGENIO 1989). Eugenio notes other versions; hers is from ZIEGLER 1973. Finally, more Philippine variants might be located in BERNARDO 1972 and MANUEL 1965.

14. While characterizing women in Philippine society as "strong" may be debatable, Filipino women definitely tend to hold a higher position than do women in many other societies. "Even the gradual strengthening of the influence of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and Confucianism . . . has by no means eliminated a common pattern of relatively high female autonomy and economic importance," writes REID (1988, 146). Reid's work has a good discussion of the historical evidence on the traditional role of women in Southeast Asian society, including that of the Philippines. His observations can be applied to contemporary society as well.

15. It is interesting that women are present in the Philippine variants, even if only as mothers or potential wives. This shows their relatively greater prominence socially, though only the mothers are active participants. In contrast, no women have important roles in the non-Philippine variants, even as problem-initiators: Harisarman instructs his wife to say that he possesses magical knowledge, and Crab's wife is a passive observer. This may indicate that males have stronger structural roles in the societies that produced these variants, or that the actor of the motifeme concerned must be male since the development of the story concerns the social and sexual maturation of a male.

16. Lindahl interprets "The Old Coon" in social and historical terms, particularly with regard to the relation between slave and master. This is clearly a legitimate analysis in light of the material used in his article, but it is difficult to see the other variants in this light. For the Philippine variants, perhaps history intrudes in the fact that the challenger always comes from across the seas, and thus is obviously an outsider or even an invader. This "invader" theme is seen also in the Chinese "Goldhair," where the trickster must repel barbarians, a frequent problem in Chinese history, but it does not appear in the other variants. Although a historical analysis would be an interesting avenue to explore, this paper is concerned with the structural and psychoanalytic parallels among the variants.

17. See REID (1988, 120–21) for comments on the relation of dependents to a ruling member of a Southeast Asian household.

18. VAN BAAREN writes that "changeability is one of the specific characteristics of myth. Only the study of changes of myth makes it possible to discover the constant and variable elements of this phenomenon" (1984, 222). Firth and van Baaren have both written on the plasticity of myth; it is only natural that this quality would apply to folktales as well (see FIRTH 1984).

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APPENDIX A: "Suan the Guesser"

Title & Locale	Problem 1: Establishing reputation	Problem 2: The Stolen Ring	Solution 2	Problem 3: Guessing Game	Solution(s) 3
A. *Suan's Good Luck* Pampanga Philippines (Fansler) Suan is an only child. No father is mentioned.	Suan skips school, hides in a tree to watch his mother come home from market, and then pretends to divine his mother's purchases.	The daughter of the *datu* loses her ring; the *datu* offers her hand to anyone who can find it. Suan's mother volunteers her son's skills.	A soldier frightened by Suan reveals that he stole the ring. Suan hides the ring in a turkey gullet and "divines" its location. Suan marries the daughter.	A foreign *datu* comes and bets with the father-in-law on Suan's ability to guess. Suan is given several problems to solve.	Suan learns one answer (nine seeds in an orange) by eavesdropping. The other problem he "answers" correctly when his outburst, "Nonsense," resembles the real solution: nine cents in a golden ball.
B. *Suan Eket* Rizal Philippines (Fansler) Suan is called "eket" by the other children because he can't say "x". He quits school because of the teasing. Suan gets his mother to buy him a pencil and some paper, then says, "I'm the wisest boy in town now."	Suan steals his father's plow one night and hides it in a creek. He then uses paper and rhymes to "guess" the location. Next he takes his uncle's carabao, hides it in the mountains, then "guesses" the location of this too.	The local princess loses her ring, and it is proclaimed that whoever finds it can marry her. However, anyone who tries and fails will lose his head. Suan's mother offers Suan's skills; he is scared.	In the king's carriage, Suan says to himself, "Death is at hand, you will lose your head now!" The real thief overhears and is frightened into confessing. He reveals the ring's location. Suan tells the thief to hide the ring in a goose's gullet, then "guesses" its location. Suan marries the daughter.	A rich foreigner makes a bet with the father-in-law concerning Suan's ability to guess. Several questions are put to Suan.	Suan learns two answers by stealth (the number of seeds in some melons) but is unprepared for the third. Threatened with death, he is saved by the resemblance of his outburst to the correct answer; "I consider you all waste to me": bottle of dung.

C. *The Wise-Foolish Boy* Sulu Philippines (Ziegler) A father and mother send their boy to study with an imam. The boy picks up a discarded, blank book.	Hiding in a tree, he watches his parents work. The boy claims the book tells him about their activities. Next day, the boy hides the family trunk, and "divines" its location using the book and nonsense words.	The sultan sends for the boy when the queen's ring is lost, offering him a bag of gold if he finds it.	The despairing boy meets the sultan's butcher and jokes about the butcher having the ring; the butcher confesses. The boy tells him to make the queen's favorite goose swallow the ring. The boy then pretends to divine the ring's location. The boy is given the gold and taken into the sultan's service.	A foreign sultan comes to test the boy's knowledge. The boy is asked what is in four sealed chests.	The boy learns the answers by stealth, and the sultan promotes him. The sultan tests the boy by asking him the contents of another sealed chest, thinking to wed him to the princess; the boy tries to escape, shouting "the dung of the dog and the pig": the right answer. He marries the princess, destroys the book, and lives a long life.
D. Juan Pusong Panay Philippines (Maxfield & Millington) Juan is lazy, and doesn't go to school; his mother believes he is in school, though, and gives him treats when he comes home.	Hiding in a tree, Juan watches his mother in the kitchen; he makes her believe he is guessing where she has hidden a rice cake for him. Juan hides his father's cows and uses a book to "discover" their location.			His mother spreads word of his powers. A ship's captain comes to test Juan's power by asking him to guess the number of seeds in the oranges the ship carries.	Juan swims to the ship and overhears the crew being told the answer. Juan "guesses" correctly, again using a book as reference. Juan's reputation spreads and he becomes wealthy.

APPENDIX B: Variants from other cultures.
The following is a limited selection of variants of AT1641 from China, India, the Brothers Grimm, and the U.S. It is meant to be only a sampling of the variants found outside the Philippines.

Title & Locale	Problem 1: Establishing Reputation	Problem 2: Reputation	Solution 2	Problem 4: Guessing Game	Solution(s) 4
Goldhair becomes Minister China (Eberhard) A boy is called "Goldhair" because of the color of his hair. Both parents are dead; his uncle gives him money to go away to school, but Goldhair only wants to play.	Goldhair returns from two years of spendthrift wandering. He lies to his uncle, saying that he learned to be a midwife. Goldhair thinks himself clever since his ruse will never be discovered: only women are called upon to be midwives.	The emperor's wife needs help giving birth; uncle urges Goldhair to try after all the women have failed. Problem 3: Ministers do not trust Goldhair; he is promised a reward only after he drives away some rebelling barbarians.	Goldhair accidentally gets the empress to laugh, which causes the baby to be born. Solution 3: Goldhair does drive them away, accidentally scaring them with a small tree and a manure bucket.	He is given a new test: there will be no reward if he doesn't guess the contents of a bag the emperor holds up.	Goldhair, frightened, sighs "Oh Goldhair, Goldhair," which is interpreted as the right answer: a golden-haired cat is in the bag. He is rewarded.
Harisarman India (Tawney) Harisarman is a poor man with many children; he becomes an attendant for a householder, who forgets to	Resentful, Harisarman tells his wife to let it be known that he has magical powers. He then hides a horse and "discovers" it by drawing pretend magic diagrams.	The king hears of Harisarman and calls him in to find out who has been stealing gold and jewels from him. Harisarman tries to get out of it, but is locked in a room in	Berating his own tongue for getting him into this situation, Harisarman accidentally scares the real thief, whose name is Tongue. The thief confesses to Harisarman, telling him where the	A minister does not believe Harisarman, so the king tests Harisarman by asking him to guess the contents of a pitcher.	Harisarman is scared. He blurts out that the pitcher will be "Frog's" destroyer, calling himself by his childhood name. A frog is inside, so this is interpreted as the right answer. He is

invite him to a feast.		the palace overnight.	treasure is buried. Harisarman then "discovers" the location of the stolen gold for the king.		rewarded.
Doctor-Know-It-All Germany (Grimm/Zipes) A poor farmer named Crab envies the lifestyle of a doctor he sees; he is advised to get an ABC book and fine clothes.	Crab puts a sign on his door reading "Doctor Know-It-All."	A nobleman hears of Doctor Know-It-All and calls him in to find out who has been stealing from him. Crab brings his wife with him.	Talking to his wife at dinner, he accidentally scares the real thieves by saying, "That is the first," "That is the second," etc., as the servants bring in the dishes. The servants confess to him, telling him where the treasure is buried. Crab then "divines" the location of the stolen goods using his book.	The nobleman tests Crab by asking him to guess the contents of a covered dish.	Doctor Know-It-All is scared, and says "Poor Crab." This is interpreted as the right answer: a crab is in the dish. He is rewarded.
The Old Coon Louisiana USA (Lindahl) Joe, an African-American slave, lives on a plantation.	Joe always knows what his master wants him to do, and does it ahead of time. He finds out by hiding under the house and overhearing what the master says to his wife. In return, Joe is complimented by the master.			A carnival comes to town, and there is a contest in which anyone who can guess what is in a closed box will win $30,000. The master tells everyone that Joe will do it, and brings him in. Townsfolk and the master place bets on Joe.	Joe sighs, "You all caught this old coon at last," which is interpreted as the correct answer: a raccoon is in the box. He is rewarded.