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**Working Paper #120**

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## Hispanic Los Agüelos and Pueblo Tsave-Yohs

by Thomas J. Steele, S.J.

The premier New Mexican linguist and folklorist Aurelio M. Espinosa (1880-1958) published the following interesting and informative article in a Spanish journal nearly half a century ago. Not only has it never been translated, it has rarely been noted by subsequent scholars.<sup>1</sup> It is worth our attention not only in itself but also as an occasion for some comments on the "grandfather" bogeyman that is Espinosa's central concern and the masked whipper of the Pueblo Indians that he mentions as an instructive parallel. I will especially suggest that the Native American words tsave yoh, chaveyo, and so forth are all identically the Spanish word abuelo as pronounced in different indigenous languages. In translation, Espinosa's article:

### "The 'Agüelos' of New Mexico"

by Aurelio M. Espinosa

One of the more extraordinary and picturesque New Mexican customs, today [1945] almost altogether forgotten, was that of

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<sup>1</sup> An exception is Espinosa's posthumous Folklore of Spain in the American Southwest, ed. J. Manuel Espinosa (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), pp. 247-48, 271nn15, 17. The original article appeared in Boletín de la Biblioteca Menéndez y Pelayo 21 (1945), 71-78; it was also issued as a pamphlet: (Imprenta de Santander, 1945), pp. 7-14. (TJS)

the very popular "Agüelos."

On Christmas Eve or some night just prior, the visit of the Agüelo was mandatory for any house with children under the age of about twelve. The children were led to believe that the Agüelos were supernatural beings who lived in the mountains, whence they came each year for the abovementioned visit. From the early hours of the day on which the Agüelo's visit was anticipated, the children went out to look for any distant traces of smoke on any peak which would indicate that the Agüelo had roused himself and was having breakfast before beginning his approach.

The Agüelos came to determine first of all whether the children were good and knew the catechism and the ordinary prayers of the Catholic religion. Woe to the children who didn't know how to pray! There weren't many of them, for the children reviewed their catechism and their prayers before the visitation; but there was always some thoughtless unfortunate who had to submit to a smart but hardly cruel whipping. With the children of more tender age, from three or four up to five or six years old, the Agüelos were as a general rule very kind and tolerant, and after the child had prayed an Our Father or a Hail Mary they became playful and then danced "Las Palomitas." As a consequence, the children feared the visit of the Agüelos very much, and for two or three weeks before Christmas most of them spent their time preparing their catechism and conning their prayers.

For the grownups, the Agüelos offered help in religious instruction and a pleasant diversion. If the children anticipated the Agüelos' arrival with fear and trembling, their elders looked forward to it eagerly. They usually took part in the event and knew which neighbor took the part of the Agüelo.<sup>2</sup> For the help and diversion they offered, the Agüelos got some little delicacies from the families -- sopaipillas, empanadas, puddings, sugar candies, even at times money. Sometimes they paid the Agüelo not to whip a child who didn't know his prayers very well but who promised to know them perfectly the next year.

The figure of the Agüelo was frightening. He usually wore a costume of home-tanned skins -- gamuza -- along with a wool cape called a serape which he doffed as he entered the house. He wore a mask, at times a simple tortilla of white dough tied over his face, and horns on his head. In Peña Blanca and Santa Fé, the Agüelos wore black clothing, masks of white tortilla, buffalo horns on their heads, and a horse's tail. This last bit of costuming suggests the devil or some leading wizard in certain medieval witchcraft ceremonies. The Agüelos always came well provided with a scourge called a

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<sup>2</sup> The Agüelo was probably empowered by (and enacted by a member of) the Brothers of Our Father Jesus the Nazarene. Lecture by and conversation with Arsenio Córdova, 26 June 1992. (TJS)

chicote to whip the bad children who didn't know how to pray.<sup>3</sup>

The Agüelo announced his arrival by banging on the door, and everyone cried, "The Agüelo! Here comes the Agüelo!" They immediately opened the door to him, and he entered, cracking his whip in the air and demanding the children. When the parents had summoned the children, the Agüelo stated the reasons he had come and began to question them. He quizzed each of them individually, scolding them when they didn't respond well and continually cracking his whip in the air. Some of the smaller children were deathly afraid and could scarcely open their mouths. Of course, most of the children knew their catechism and their prayers quite adequately.

The first part of the ritual concluded with the admonitions and threats of the Agüelo, making some children dance "Las Palomitas" solo as a punishment, or even whipping some; but then they all danced "Las Palomitas" in a happy and festive mood, singing all the words of the song under the

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<sup>3</sup> "A costume of home-tanned skins -- gamuza" ("un traje de pieles sin adobar o bien de gamuza") refers to the brain-tanned deerskin or pronghorn-hide clothing that served as the garb of traditional village moral wisdom and authority; see Lou Sage Batchen, "An Old Native Custom: El Abuelo," W.P.A. Writers' Project, reprinted here as Appendix A; J.P. Rael, "Los Pobladores de Questa," W.P.A. Writers' Project, l. 170; see Marc Simmons, Coronado's Land (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991), pp. 3-7.

The chicote can be a single willow switch or, in Pueblo style, a handful of them, but it is more often a "Spanish-style" whip made of a stiff stick and a tanned-leather strap; Alfonso Ortiz, The Tewa World (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 161n11; W.W. Hill, An Ethnography of Santa Clara Pueblo (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), pp. 306-07. (TJS)

Agüelo's direction, among the hysterical laughter of the very small children and the verses improvised by some of the more prankish and pert youngsters, who took the occasion to revenge themselves on the Agüelo, sometimes because he had whipped them the year before.

What was this "Palomitas" dance? It was a very simple dance the children had already learned from having danced it in former years or because older children who had often danced it taught it to them. It consisted of a slow monotonous dance rhythm, moving body and head from side to side either solo as I have said or with all the children joined together by holding hands in a circle under the Agüelo's direction. Sometimes there was a tambourine accompaniment, but it usually had no more accompaniment than the cracking of the Agüelo's whip. The prescribed rhythm was always the same, two lines repeated, and those four repeated often. The rhythm of the two repeated lines was as follows: the first, one of the characteristic forms of literary prosody with accents on the first, fourth, seventh, and tenth syllables; and the second, a strange line of two identical hemstichs, each one made up of four syllables, the first unaccented and the other three accented:

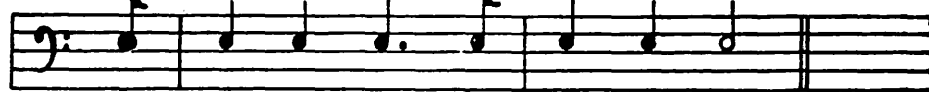
¡Baíla, palóma de Juan Durundún!  
*[Dance, dove of Juan Durundún!]*  
 ¡Durún dún dún, durún dún dún!  
 ¡Baíla, palóma de Juan Durundún!  
 ¡Durún dún dún, durún dún dún!



The musical rhythm of the two repeated lines is surely of Spanish origin:



Bai - la, Pa - lo - ma de Juan Du - run - dún.



Du - rún dun dun, du - rún dun dun.

It seems to me that the rhythm of the piece might be fully and simply explained as quantitative dactylic tetrameter: each line is a set of four feet, each foot containing a long-and-accented syllable followed by two short-and-unaccented syllables. Either or both of the short-and-unaccented syllables may be substituted for by pauses as in music, or two of them may be replaced by a single long-and-accented syllable. Thus:



Baī - lă pa - lō - mā de Juan Dŭ - rŭn - dŭn. Dŭ -



rŭn dŭn dŭn Dŭ - rŭn dŭn dŭn .

The text of the song has very few variations, the most widespread being the following:

¡Baila, paloma de Juan Durundún!  
 ¡Durún dun dun, durún dun dun!  
 ¡Baila, paloma de Juan Durundún!  
 ¡Durún dun dun, durún dun dun!

¡Baila, paloma de Juan Turuntún!  
 ¡Turún tun tun, turún tun tun!  
 ¡Baila, paloma de Juan Turuntún!  
 ¡Turún tun tun, turún tun tun!

¡Baila, paloma, señor Jurundú!  
 ¡Jurún dun du, jurún dun du!  
 ¡Baila, paloma, señor Jurundú!  
 ¡Jurún dun du, jurún dun du!

¡Baila, paloma, señor Jorrundú!  
 ¡Durún dun dun, durún dun dun!  
 ¡Baila, paloma, señor Jorrundú!  
 ¡Jorrún dun du, jorrún dun du!

The verses that prankish youngsters improvise when they dance "Las Palomitas" are legion. Among the most frequently sung are the following third lines, which have the measure and rhythm of the rest:

¡Alza las alas y baila tú!  
*[Lift thy wings and dance thou]*

¡Alza la pata y baila tú!  
*[Lift thy foot and dance thou]*

¡Vuelca el atole y verástelo tú!  
*[Knock over the porridge and look at thyself].*

That final variant is from the village of Peralta where, according to a local tale, an Agüelo burned his arms and legs when he overturned a pot of hot porridge on himself as he danced "Las Palomitas" with the children.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Charles Ethridge Minton, in his novel Juan of Santo Niño (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 1973), p. 54, offers the slight variant "Alta las alas y baila la tu"; Peggy V. Beck, "Abuelos y Abuelas: They're Coming to Take You Away," New Mexico Magazine 65 # 12 (December 1987), 34, provides another third-line variant: "¡Saca la porra y la bailes tu! -- Take the drumstick and dance with it/her!" But an informant (p. 34) describes the porra as "something like a ball wrapped in leather with a handle" which "sounded like the Indians used to do," so it is perhaps a rawhide rattle such as the Navajo use. The Agüelo material intersects with the Oremos custom of

We are doubtless dealing with an ancient Iberian custom, despite there being no evidence of its existence in other parts of the Spanish world in the same form we find it in New Mexico. In all houses where there are children, it is the custom to teach them their catechism and their prayers, punishing them when they refuse to learn. In all parts of the Spanish world the "bad and disobedient" children are threatened by telling them that there will soon come a bogeyman to eat them or carry them away. An almost universal manifestation of this custom is the mother or nurse who gives up and calls the wolf to come and take a crybaby, a fable known since classical antiquity.<sup>5</sup> The New Mexican Agüelo (Sp.

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the same period of the year; see Beck; Lorin W. Brown, Hispano Folklife of New Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1978), pp. 175-77; Joe Rivera manuscript, Regis Jesuit History Library, p. 14.

For another related bit of material, "Mis Christmas," see Paul Kutsche and John Van Ness, Cañones (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), pp. 107-08. (TJS)

<sup>5</sup> Espinosa referred his reader to the first fable of Avianus, a fourth-century Latin author whose tales often found their way into collections of Aesop's fables such as Caxton's. Avianus took this plot among others from the Greek of Babrius, a Roman author who wrote in Greek probably in the latter half of the first century A.D.:

It happened that when the little boy she took care of was crying, a peasant-woman swore that if he didn't stop she'd give him to a hungry wolf to eat. A credulous wolf heard what she said and waited attentively right outside the door -- a forlorn hope. For the infant abandoned his tired limbs to sleep and deprived the hungry beast of his expectation.

When the wolf returned to his den in his part of the forest and his wolf-wife saw him arriving empty-handed, she asked why he fetched none of his usual game but arrived instead with sunken cheeks and haggard, scrawny jaws. "You see a man cheated by a rotten trick," he

grandfather) is neither more nor less than the Spanish bogeyman (coco) in person.<sup>6</sup>

*[At this point Espinosa turns to the parallel figures from the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and the greater Southwest, the best known example of which today is the Tsave Yoh of the San Juan Tewa. Some of the material about these figures Espinosa collected personally, but much of it he cites from Elsie Clews Parsons (1875-1941), the principal worker in this defined area until the advent of Alfonso Ortiz.]*

*Gathering together the Indian names of the parallel figures collected by Espinosa, Parsons, Ortiz, and other earlier and later ethnographers, we find the following:*

*Among the Northern Tiwa of New Mexico: the names tsabaiyuna and chapaiyuna occur at Taos.*

*Among the Towa (Jémez): máágula.*

*Among the Tewa of New Mexico: tsabiyu, tsábiyo, saveyo,*

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replied. "I barely made it home, I'm so starved. What prey could I hope to conquer if a scolding nurse could fool me?"

See Ben Edwin Perry, ed., Babrius and Phaedrus (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), # 16, pp. 26-27; J. Wight Duff and Arnold M. Duff, eds., Minor Latin Poets (London: Heinemann, 1935), # 1, pp. 682-85; R.T. Lenaghan, ed., Caxton's Aesop (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), # 1, pp. 175-77. (TJS)

<sup>6</sup> The Spanish word abuelo derives from Late Latin diminutive aviólus or ávulus (grandfather), which in turn derives from the classical form avus; another diminutive, avunculus (little grandfather), provides the English word "uncle."

The Spanish word Coco (bugaboo) seems also to have migrated into some of the Pueblo languages, and the Agüelo is sometimes known in Spanglish as "coco-man." (TJS)

tsaveyo, and tsaviyo; the names tsabiyu, tsabiyo, cháviyo, çabeyo, tsave yoh, and tsabio occur at San Juan; savadjo at Santa Clara; tsabiyo and tsabiyu at San Ildefonso; and tsabaiyo at Tesuque.

Among the Tewa-speaking Hopi of Arizona: tça-veyo, chávaiyo, and tsábaiyo.

Among other Hopi: tsabiyo and chaveyo, the latter being the name of a well-known ogre kachina.

Among the Zuni: kápyo.

Among the Southern Tiwa of New Mexico: the names chapiude, kápíyo, and kápyo occur at Isleta, the latter two names perhaps borrowed from Zuni.

Among the Keres: chapio, chápiyu, and chapiyú; the name chapio occurs at Cochití for one of the River-Men; chapíó, chapio, chábeyo, and tc'api'u (described as "the Spanish slave-catcher") occur at Laguna and Ácoma; tcapio occurs at Zia and tcapiyo at Santa Ana.

Among the Tarahumara: chapeó and chapeón.

Among the Yaqui: chapaieka and chapaiyeka.

Stephen offers a Hopi folk etymology for Chávezo -- hunter-of-children -- and Bennett offers a Spanish etymology for chapeón from capeón -- one who plays with the cape; but Parsons concluded discussion at the end of her career by rattling off several Native American names and asking plaintively, "The derivation of the common clown term is

puzzling. Is it diablo?"<sup>7</sup>

The three dozen terms listed above have most certainly become Indian words in the various languages they've entered, but they are all directly or indirectly re-pronunciations of the Spanish phrase "los abuelos." The initial s, ts, ch, c, or k results either from the s transposed from the end of the word (as Espinosa pointed out regarding the Spanish word oremos, which became soremo among the Spanish themselves and then solemo and finally tsalemo among Pueblo speakers);<sup>8</sup> or it is retained from the end of the Spanish article los. The b of abuelos changes to v or to p, the latter phoneme appearing most commonly among the non-Tanoan. And the l of the original word shifts to a double-l or y in the Native American languages.

I would conjecture that the Tewa had brought the Spanish phrase los Agüelos into their language as tsaveyos before the Pueblo Rebellion of 1680. The Tewa who fled west to Hopi

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<sup>7</sup> Alexander M. Stephen, "Hopi Tales," ed. Parsons, Journal of American Folk-Lore 42 (1929), 14n2; Parsons and Ralph L. Beals, "The Sacred Clowns of the Pueblo and Mayo-Yaqui Indians," American Anthropologist (1934), 510n41; Parsons, Pueblo Indian Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 1005n. Leslie A. White, The Pueblo of Sia, New Mexico (Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1962), p. 279, got so far as to say, "I do not know the origin of ['tcapiyo,'] but it is probably not Indian since the character is not Indian." (TJS)

<sup>8</sup> Elsie Clews Parsons, "All-Souls Day at Zuñi, Acoma, and Laguna," Journal of American Folk-Lore 30 (1917), 495-96; Aurelio M. Espinosa, "All-Souls Day at Zuñi, Acoma, and Laguna," Journal of American Folk-Lore 31 (1918), 550-51. (TJS)

*First Mesa took the word with them and communicated it to their neighbors, and so it spread by way of Zuni as far eastward as Isleta and the Keresan pueblos; and Laguna and the pueblos of the lower Rio Grande may have gotten a double dose of the word because from the Tewa who remained in the upper Rio Grande basin the word spread not only northward to Taos but also southward to the Keres and Southern Tiwa.*

*Espinosa resumes:]*

In the New Mexican tradition, nonetheless, there seem to be some Indian influences in details. In the famous ritual dances of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, there are always two conspicuous individuals: the tsábiyos (Tewa), chapiyús (Keres), and tsabaiyunas (Tiwa), with faces painted like devils -- or better, masked and wearing tails, who run from place to place and pretend to direct the dance. From time to time they emit horrible cries in imitation of howling wolves, and they make threatening gestures with a whip. These Indian words tsábiyo, chapiyú, and tsabaiyuna signify "grandfather" (Agüelo).<sup>9</sup>

During the remarkable Mataachines or Matachina dance of these Indians, the origin and meaning of which are much debated and which are performed on Christmas Day in San Juan,

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<sup>9</sup> The Spanish is "Estas palabras indias: tsábiyo, chapiyú, tsabaiyuna, significan abuelo (agüelo)." I do not see here any suggestion that Espinosa realized that the Indian words were repronunciations of abuelo, nor do I find such a suggestion in the writings of any other ethnographer. The late Florence Hawley Ellis, in a conversation of 7 February 1989, acquiesced in my hypothesis. (TJS)

Santa Clara, Cochití, and other pueblos as well as in some New Mexican Hispanic villages near San Juan, there is always a tsábiyo, chapiyú, or tsabaiyuna. He helps direct the dance, in which El Monarca, La Malinche (a young girl dressed in white), ten or a dozen matachines or principal dancers, the Bull, and the aforementioned Agüelo make their appearances. The Agüelo wears a mask and carries a whip and a knife. At the end of the dance he fights with the Bull and kills it. The Matachina music seems to be of Spanish origin. When the Hispanic villages perform the Matachines there are an Agüelo and an Agüela.<sup>10</sup>

But the bogeyman of the Pueblo Indians has much in common with the Hispanic Agüelo. In The Social Organization of the Tewa, by the distinguished American ethnographer Elsie Clews Parsons (1929), pp. 270-71 and 280-83, we find the following helpful information about the tsábiyo of the Tewa, the chapiyú of the Keres, and the tsabaiyuna of the Tiwa: a figure with these names appearing in the aforementioned dances is for the Indians a supernatural fantasy figure who lives in the caves of the mountains and who in addition to assisting the dances mentioned appears at Christmas in order to punish the "bad and disobedient" children, to "make them dance," and at times "to take them off and eat them." So that they don't take the children with them in the sacks or baskets which they always

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<sup>10</sup> See the bibliography in Flavia Champe, The Matachines Dance (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983). (TJS)



carry on such occasions, the parents must give them bread and other dainties. In the Indian tales, they nevertheless are said at times to punish and whip "bad and disobedient" children.<sup>11</sup>

Some of these details are nearly identical with those we have documented for the Hispanic Agüelos. They are so similar that we cannot suppose them completely independent developments. The geographic area where these beliefs and customs have existed and still exist is really quite limited: Hispanic New Mexico and the Indian pueblos of the same region. We have at present no indication that the New Mexican custom exists in other parts of the Hispanic world. I believe that we are dealing here with an ancient Iberian custom, as I have already stated; but it could be that it arose in New Mexico under the direct influence of similar beliefs and practices that had existed and still exist among the Pueblo Indians. On the other hand, nothing prevents Indian beliefs and practices from having been directly influenced by Spanish customs in this case as in many others that have been documented.

*[Not only the borrowed Spanish name but other Spanish traits as well identify an Agüelo clone such as the Tsave Yoh, Chapiyu, and so forth. These traits include clothing of a*

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<sup>11</sup> The paragraph seems to be a compilation of information drawn from various of Parsons' writings. The cited item was Memoir 36 of the American Anthropological Association. Parsons did not say that the Hispanic figures eat children, but it is in fact part of Hispanic folksay that they do. (TJS)

*Spanish sort, European equipment (Spanish style of whip, steel sword, steel saw), enactment by authorized persons who are not fully initiated in the native religion (usually the "Spanish-official" sacristans), and public appearance in mask in the Rio Grande pueblos (never allowed to native kachinas).]*

These Pueblo Indians have been in direct contact with New Mexican Hispanic culture for more than three centuries; the majority of them speak Spanish (or Castillian, as they call it at times), and some of them recite and sing traditional Hispanic romances, especially religious romances learned from the original Franciscan missionaries who Christianized them in the [seventeenth and] eighteenth centuries. The following lullaby in the Tewa tongue of San Juan Pueblo, which I collected in 1933 from a nine-year-old girl, is clearly of Spanish origin. The Indian tsábiyo appears again in place of the Spanish coco:

¡Arrarrú, arrarrú, oyó, jawabé!  
Wewo jugwi itó tsábiyo, tsábiyo sendó.  
¡Si piribó! ¡Oyó cumbe, nabí añu queyé!

¡Alarrú, alarrú, duérmete, niñita!  
Viene a llevarte el abuelo, el viejo abuelo.  
¡Quietecita! ¡A la cama a dormir, niñita mía!

Lullaby, lullaby, sleep, little baby girl!  
The Agüelo comes to carry you off, the old Agüelo.  
Stop your crying! To bed and to sleep, my little baby girl!

Similar Spanish lullabies are quite numerous. I will cite

only one more, from Rodríguez Marín's Cantos populares Españoles:<sup>12</sup>

Duerme, niño chiquito,  
que viene el coco,  
y se lleva a los niños  
que duren poco.

Sleep, little boy,  
for the coco comes,  
and he carries off the boys  
who barely sleep.

Aurelio M. Espinosa  
Stanford University, California

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*Espinosa did not treat of the Agüelo figure or its Pueblo borrowing as a disciplinarian of adults. Joann Kealiinohomoku describes and analyzes the Chaveyo's interaction with adult Hopi,<sup>13</sup> and Appendix A reprints Lou Sage Batchen's helpful presentation of the Agüelo in the village of Placitas.*

*The Agüelo or Tsave Yoh is fascinating to the small boys of Hispanic village and Pueblo Indian town alike. As appalling as the figure is, the boys find it -- paradoxically*

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<sup>12</sup> Francisco Rodríguez Marín, Cantos Populares Españoles (Seville: F. Álvarez y Co., 1882), 1:8, 15-16; it is Nana # 38. (TJS)

<sup>13</sup> Joann Kealiinohomoku, "The Drama of the Hopi Ogres," pp. 37-69 in Charlotte J. Frisbie, ed., Southwestern Indian Ritual Drama (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1980), pp. 37-69. Some earlier authors who noted the Spanish-origin Coco or Tsave Yoh threatening or punishing Pueblo adults: 1934 Parsons and Beals, p. 510; 1939 Parsons, pp. 474-75; 1944 Titiev, p. 66; 1962 Parsons, p. 99; 1969 Ortiz, p. 75; 1970 Titiev, p. 268.

-- so appealing that they truly cannot stay away from it; but should the figure turn toward one of them, singling him out for a moment of its lethal attention, the boy flees in utter and abject terror, scuttling into a crowd of total strangers and clinging for dear life (literally, they suppose!) to some unknown man's leg. In so doing, the boys exemplify perfectly if at a low level the fascinatio -- the spellbound reaction to something simultaneously attractive and repulsive -- of which Rudolf Otto writes in his classic Idea of the Holy.<sup>14</sup>

As visitor to the Hispanic family, the Agüelo appears in the context of a novena of masses, performances of "Las Posadas," or at least bonfires. Of itself, the Agüelo operates at a very low level of moral reasoning, so low indeed that because all the adults eagerly anticipate the Agüelo's appearance, its arrival demotes the child beneath the familial-communal level of honor and shame and makes the child a shunned individual, seemingly isolated and abandoned to survive on his or her own. Having been forced to confront his moral derelictions and sheer mortality and made to undergo a passage into a threatening world of the utterly uncanny, the child is left with scarcely any family support other than (perhaps) a subconscious grasp that if the normally-loving adults have looked forward to the arrival of the Agüelo with such delight, his short-range prospects must be somehow all

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<sup>14</sup> Tr. John W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 31-40. (TJS)

right. The child soon emerges from the little ritual by way of a highly ambiguous dance into restored and even enhanced status within the family, and the period of return is marked with satiric lampoons directed against the ogre in its very presence. But the narratizing of the Agüelo seems to position it as a symbolic projection of adult cultural values, especially religious knowledge like prayer texts and catechism. Thus the Agüelo may be a personification of "la plática de los viejitos -- the discourse of the elders" that Charles Briggs has treated so well, the oral communication of village values such as respect, work, and religion.<sup>15</sup>

Using a Jungian model of interpretation, we find that the Agüelo is perhaps some sort of corporate moral personality, the embodiment of each Hispanic community's value system as "Great Individual." It is not really a Terrible Father, though for a time it seems one, for it induces "painful awakenings" from the "original, unconscious, and instinctive state" that cause the children (of whatever age) to realize that their only hope is to become a truly individuated person within their extended families and their villages.<sup>16</sup> The

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<sup>15</sup> Most completely, Charles L. Briggs, Competence in Performance: The Creativity of Tradition in Mexican Verbal Art (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988).

<sup>16</sup> Carl Jung, Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious, vol. 9:i of Collected Works (New York: Pantheon, 1953-76), 162-63; Erich Neumann, The Origins and History of Consciousness (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 183-86, 427. Even recognizing the great amount of chthonic content of the Agüelo, I would still prefer to

Agüelo serves as an externalized principle of individuation that takes the child through Cronos' eating of his children (shame or guilt?) into Saturn's agricultural world of harvest, dancing the dove of peace, and artistic-cultural creativity (rather than sexual-natural productiveness).<sup>17</sup> Thus the child is helped to become an individuated person well integrated into his or her community.

In Freudian terms, the Agüelo in the Matachina dance may be interpreted even more clearly as an externalized symbol of the superego. This culturally-created element of the developed individual psyche is an introjection and interiorization of the expectations of society in general and the family in particular; it is communicated less by conscious teaching in words than by example and deeds. The Agüelo in the Matachina morality mime performs a totally stylized bullfight against El Toro, the polar symbol of undisciplined natural Libido, and vanquishes it.

Though the Tsave Yoh or Chaveyo figure also arrives during some sacred period of the Pueblo year, it fits into the psychic universe of the Pueblo Indians in a different way than

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dissociate it from the phallic Earth-Father (as well as from the terrifying Spirit-Father). If I may for a moment mix Freud and Jung, the Agüelo archetype is not a father, not an Oedipal rival for the mother, not a force that stands in tandem with the Id; it rather resembles a maternal uncle (Creon?) who stands in tandem with the Superego.

<sup>17</sup> Augusto Vitale, "Saturn: The Transformation of the Father," in Patricia Berry, ed., Fathers and Mothers (Zurich: Spring Publications, 1973), pp. 10-21, 26, 35.

the Agüelo fits into the psychic universe of the Hispanics. As Joann Kealiinohomoku interprets "the drama of the Hopi ogres," all of the different monsters that appear during the period of Powamu in February are symbolic embodiments of the "'dis-ease' of childishness," which is as normal a childhood disease as measles, chicken-pox, or mumps but like them definitely a disease that the child must get over if he or she is to live a normal life in society. Indeed, a grown man or woman who acts in an abnormal and childish manner is in need of an ogre visitation and is extremely likely to receive one. The Hopi ogres -- Sóyoko, Natacka, Chaveyo, and Heheya -- are narratized as irresponsible beings, epitomes of childishness, who do not plant or tend crops, do not hunt, do not in any manner work for a livelihood; therefore they must prey upon the weak and tasty to feed themselves. Their visitations are consequently best understood as homeopathic medicine resembling vaccination -- "Like cures like" -- administered on a community basis to all the children of the pueblo, whatever their chronological ages.<sup>18</sup>

Whether in a Pueblo or a Spanish village, the Agüelo, Tsave Yoh, or Chaveyo episode takes place in the context of

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<sup>18</sup> Kealiinohomoku, pp. 57-61. Not being sentimental romantics of the nineteenth-century sort, Hopi do not idealize childhood as a perfect condition because natural and pre-cultural. For the Hopi as for any non-Romantic people, only the cultural (and especially the religious) can transform the natural into anything worth knowing, having, doing, or being.

some sacred period, Christmastide or a native ceremonial like Powamu. We may see in the episode the Jungian archetypes puer (child) and senex (old man). The puer is a growing child who too often behaves in a childish way; the senex is the adult who shows by turns a dark and threatening side and a cheery and nourishing one. In his Pueblo case-mask as Chaveyo or his Spanish tortilla mask as Agüelo, some respected adult male of the community has become temporarily a Greater Other Self, and thus he can effectively confront the child with his or her limitation and mortality (metaphysical sin, if you will) and with his bad behavior (moral sin); but the ogre does so only as a way of pointing to the child's potential for growth so as to elicit his drive to fulfil his destiny -- to become a respected adult with a spiritual biography and hence a capacity for self-transcendence. It is quite harrowing for a child to meet his or her potential destruction, but because the meeting always occurs in the context of sacred time, the entire experience becomes a little morality play of a very allegorical cast where the set text is quite minimal and the context determines how the particular child is dealt with.<sup>19</sup>

All in all, the Agüelo is a great figure of the total New Mexican religious world, offering precious insight into the deep dynamics of communal life in village and pueblo alike.

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<sup>19</sup> See the model provided by Briggs, Competence in Performance. --I would especially like to thank Eddie Tafoya for explaining some of the Jungian aspects of the Agüelo to me and pointing me toward some very helpful passages by Jung and the Jungians.



## Appendix A:

Lou Sage Batchen<sup>20</sup>

## AN OLD NATIVE CUSTOM: EL ABUELO

Señora Santa Ana  
 Señor San Joaquin  
 Arrula esto Niño  
 Se quiere dormir

Lady Saint Ann  
 Mr. Saint Joaquin  
 Rock this baby  
 To sleep.

Duermete Niñito<sup>21</sup>  
 Duermeti nomás  
 Que hay viene el Coco  
 Y te comerá.

Go to sleep, baby,  
 Go to sleep, or  
 The bogie-man will come  
 And eat you.

This was the lullaby which the mothers of the old days hummed or sang to their infants to put them to sleep. They sang the words impressively to the toddlers to quiet them or to get them to go to sleep. They sang them to those yet a little older to frighten them into obedience. The very mention of "Coco" filled the minds of the children with fear, and with good reason. They had seen him in the masked flesh, and the sight of him terrorized them.

When he waved his cuarta (quirt) about, even the older obstreperous ones became models of good behavior, and many of their elders considered the evil of their own ways and shivered in their teguas. They often went to the extreme of reforming because of their fear of El Coco.

That Coco of the old days (bugbear for frightening children, literally speaking) was an institution in his own

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<sup>20</sup> Mrs. Batchen submitted various thoughtful folklore items to the W.P.A. Writers' Project during the late 1930s. Many of them have to do with Placitas, a small village about eight miles east of Bernalillo on Highway 44; it was founded in the mid eighteenth century on the San Antonio de las Huertas Land Grant. See Lou Sage Batchen, Historical Facts and Legends (Placitas: Tumbleweed Press, 1972).

Mrs. Batchen's main informants for "An Old Native Custom: El Abuelo" were José Librado Arón Gurule, born August 1851, and his brother Pedro, born June 1868; their father Nicolás was a close friend of Ramón Alirez el Coco, and the two sons remembered him as well.

All the footnotes in Appendix A are mine, and I have lightly edited the text for style.

<sup>21</sup> Aurelio M. and J. Manuel Espinosa, The Folklore of Spain in the American Southwest, p. 247, has a variant of this second stanza.

time. In communities where there were no peace officers each man was, in a way, a law unto himself. Such conditions rarely promote peace. All children had been brought up to reverence their elders. The conditions of the times -- the dangers, the hardships, and the privations -- worked together to discourage the development of individual courage. So all in all, the Coco or Grandfather flourished because of the fear he instilled in the hearts of the weak, grown-ups and children alike. Naturally there were a few who would have none of him in their private lives, but they tolerated his activities because he kept the petty thieves, the toppers, the disturbers of the peace, the lazy, the troublemakers, and other community nuisances within bounds.

The Abuelo or Coco came into power in the communities by virtue of his audacity.<sup>22</sup> In order to benefit by the old custom of enforced respect and reverence for the older people, he must have attained that age. He must be able to compel others to carry out his will and enjoy doing it. That was the secret of the success of the Coco: his love of exercising authority over others. The power to make others live as he dictated must be maintained through their respect and fear of him. He must maintain that at all hazards. And thus he held sway in the community until his passion for keeping others in his power developed into tyranny and led to his downfall.

The earliest remembered Abuelo in Las Placitas was Ramón Alirez, a brother-in-law of Juan [Salazar] of Tecolote.<sup>23</sup> In the manner of dictators he bided his time, and when the moment arrived he was ready to take over and dominate the event. At the moment of the conquest the Abuelo was not recognized, for he was always masked, with every physical characteristic changed or regulated to meet the circumstances.

It happened sometime in the late 1850s. It was June the thirteenth, San Antonio Day. A fiesta was at its height. Wine had flowed too freely, and the dancers had fled from the baile to make room for the too-merry revelers who had resorted to fistic and club combats. Into this scene came a weird and fearful presence. So suddenly he appeared that he just seemed to have materialized there. The head of some fantastic animal on a human body was the first impression the stranger made

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<sup>22</sup> In a companion piece, "An Old Native Custom: Señor Flores Comes to Las Placitas," Batchen denies that the penitential Brothers of Our Father Jesus the Nazarene were present in Placitas, but in fact their old morada (chapter house) was about a hundred feet southwest of the present Catholic chapel. The successive Agüelos were probably appointees of the Brotherhood chapter.

<sup>23</sup> Juan Salazar in the main character of another of Lou Sage Batchen's Placitas stories; Tecolote was a tiny hamlet about a mile and a half to the northeast.

upon the crowd. The effect was sobering, overpowering. At once the newly self-appointed Coco was in control of the situation. Victory was his. His quirt established the fact.

His mask was made of an animal's skin, hairy side out. It had been soaked and molded to fit Ramón's large head. Little slits of eyes were made in it, a huge beaked nose and a thin little mouth and large flapping ears. His trousers of deerskins were slit into ribbons so look like so many tails. He wore a cotón,<sup>24</sup> a top coat of cotton cloth made by weaving strings of cloth into material. The garment was short-waisted in front, had two tails in the back, and almost reached the knees, and it was out at the elbows. His quirt was suspended from one wrist by a loop of leather string. Ramón Alírez was a huge man, but he carried himself in a bent and jerky manner, completely deceiving those who knew him.

As soon as the troublemakers were sent fleeing before his whip and order seemed restored, Ramón made his escape. Such was the beginning of his career as supreme whipper and superior censor of Las Placitas.

Now he set about to raise the moral tone of the community. He heartily disapproved of excessive drinking, laziness, and family quarrels. And so it happened that young Juan and Clarita come in for a large share of his grandfatherly attention. One night he was snooping. The sound of angry cries and voices rent the still night air. He made a dash for the little house of Juan and Clarita. Before they realized he was coming they felt their heads being clashed together. The Coco made his silent departure while the young couple blinked away the stars and collected their bearings.

One of Ramón's brothers was afflicted with a lazy wife. Their family was large and dirty. She hated to wash clothes. He house was dirty and untidy. Always she was neglecting to grind her meal, render her fat, make her candles, bake her bread. Always she was borrowing these things from thrifty housewives and making herself a burden to the community. Not that she was the only lazy wife in the village, but she was by far the laziest one. The Coco decided he would make an example of her. He knew there would be no objections from his long-suffering brother, and the other husbands of lazy wives would profit by the experiences of this particular lazy wife.

So one night at bedtime the Abuelo suddenly appeared in the house of his brother, who was on the point of stretching himself upon his pallet for the night. The children were already asleep. El Abuelo asked the lazy wife to show him the meal she had ground for mañana. She could produce none.

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<sup>24</sup> In New Mexican Spanish, cotón is most usually a jacket. Cotonía is a kind of cotton cloth, and cotona can be a jacket of home-tanned leather (gamuza).

Without further ado, the Coco commanded her to bring her metate, to get to work, and to keep at it until her needed supply of meal was ground and ready for the morrow. And to show her that his word was law, he squatted upon the dirty adobe floor and watched her through the slits of eyes in his mask until her work was done. He kept her at it throughout the long hours of the night. That all-night session with the fantastic and dreaded Coco made an industrious woman of her and was a good lesson generally to the lazy of the village. All of this was accomplished because of their fear of him.

Whenever he came upon a group of arguing, fighting drunks, he gave a few flourishes of his cuarta, some well aimed, and they all staggered for private quarters. He soon taught them that the village plaza was no place to settle their quarrels.

When the children were caught in their mischief he made them "dance the dove," as they called it, with a lash or two around the legs. He was invited to take a hand in the discipline of unruly children and went into their homes and dragged them out. "Dance the dove" was the command, and the cuarta never failed to bring obedience to the order. He occasionally rounded up these unruly youngsters, picked one to hang on to his coat tail, and ordered the others he came to to march along, each one hanging on to the one in front of him. Thus they marched through the village, pausing now and then to "dance the dove," while El Coco reviewed the line to make certain that all feet were dancing out a promise to be good.

El Coco had his own particular brand of punishment for the various kinds of offenses committed by his fellow citizens. But he always saw to it that he made no mistakes. He was wise. He made it a point to be an eyewitness of the wrong deeds and petty crimes he punished; he was himself at their elbows when these things were done, so there were no injustices charged up to him. Even after they discovered his identity, he walked fearlessly abroad at will and continued to put the fear of himself in their hearts. He made capital of the fact that they had been trained to respect their elders and those in authority.

As so El Abuelo went his self-appointed way, imposing his will here, forcing it there; and because he was human and possessed the power, he became intolerant of any opinions save his own. And in his heart he believed that he was helping his people.

But those who would be shiftless became resentful at too much labor being imposed on them, those whose resentment smoldered within their breasts at not being allowed to imbibe wine too freely in public places and fight it out in the plaza, plotted against the source of repression; those whose fingers itched to snatch the little or big things they coveted with the opportunities were ripe grew rebellious under the restraint exercised over them. When El Abuelo saw signs of open defiance of his word, he redoubled the activities of his

cuarta, believing it his duty to maintain peace and order.

One evening at dusk, scattered disturbances were heard about the village. El Coco, as was the custom, appeared suddenly and silently as from nowhere, and the disorderly bands fled before the swish of his quirt. They all headed in one general direction, the Arroyo del Horno.<sup>25</sup> El Coco pursued them. The youths and some of the men of the village had been drinking, but mildly. They knew what they were doing and did it effectively. Some of them fell back, then followed El Coco, others led him on to the very brink of the arroyo, and with the intention of forcing him to leap down the steep bank to protect himself from them, they took the blows from his whip in order to accomplish their plans. Now all closed in on him.

But El Abuelo was not to be deposed this way, perhaps with a broken leg or a broken neck. Fiercely he whipped those nearest-- he aimed for their arms and backs, but they took the blows unflinchingly and stood their ground. El Coco's plight was desperate. Furiously he lashed at those nearest him. He would whip his way out -- but some of them seized his quirt.

Then from the darkness came his rescuer, the supplanting Abuelo. His face was white and expressionless; it was plastered with thin moist dough. His clothes were white (of manta)<sup>26</sup> and could not be distinguished from the clothes worn by the other men of the community, but his cuarta was longer and keener than that carried by Ramón Alirez, the deposed Coco; for such he was, escaping during the confusion which accompanied the sudden ghost-like appearance of the new El Coco.

Nothing is recalled of this supplanter but the grand manner of his entrance. No stories have come down through the years concerning him. Ramón Alirez seems to be the only one of those of the long-ago days to be remembered.

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<sup>25</sup> More fully known as Arroyo del Ojo del Horno -- Gully of the Spring of the Bread Oven, this intermittent stream runs about three-quarters of a mile west of the chapel and plaza of the village.

<sup>26</sup> Coarse woolen or cotton cloth, like cotón above; or like the "wool cape called a serape" of Espinosa's article.

## Appendix B: INDIAN VERSIONS OF THE WORD "Agüelo"

	<u>Te</u>	<u>NTi</u>	TeAZ	Hop	Zun	<u>STi</u>	Ker	Trhm	Yqui
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1897:278, 290 Fewkes						***--***			Tcavaiyo ("Giant Elk")
1901:117-18 Voth						***			Chaveyo, dancer & doll photos
1903:89, 188 Fewkes						***--***			Tcabaiyo, drawing of dancer
1906:295 Harrington						***			Tsabiyo, mythic giant, S.Ild
1918:183 Parsons								***	Chapio
1923:190 Goldfrank								***	Tc'apiyu
1924:150 Parsons						***			Tsabiyo
1925:55, 66 Crow-wing/Parsons						***			Tsábeyo
1926a:227 Parsons						***			Cha'bio
1926b:49-50, 98 Parsons						***			Tsabiyo(S.Juan), Tsabaiyó(Tesuque)
1928:586 Parsons						***	***	***	Tsabiyo/Tsabaiyuna/Tsabaiyo-Cháveyo/Chapio
1929:270-72, 281-82 Parsons						***	***	***	Tsabiyo(S.Juan&S.Ild)/Tsabaiyuna/Tsábaiyo (Tsabaiyó at Tesuque)
1929:14, 18-21 Stephen						***--***			Cha'veyo, with "etymology"
1931:75 Steward						***			Cháhavio, Walpi
1932:263, 333-35 Parsons								***	Chapió/K'apyo
-----									
	<u>Te</u>	<u>NTi</u>	TeAZ	Hop	Zun	<u>STi</u>	Ker	Trhm	Yqui

	<u>Te</u>	<u>NTi</u>	TeAZ	Hop	Zun	<u>STi</u>	Ker	Trhm	Yqui
1933:82 Spinden	***								
	Saveyo								
1934:chart, 491- Parsons-Beals	***	***	***--***						
	Tsabiyo/Chapaiuna-		Tsabaiyuna/Cha'vaiyo						
			***	***					
			Chapiude-K'apyo/Chapio-Ch'api'u						
						***	***		
						Chapeón/Chapaiyeka			
1935:242, 249, 300-01, 311-13 Bennett & Zingg								***	
								chapeón	
1936:41, 110 Parsons	***								
	Pientsabaiyuna, Chapaiuna								
1936:175, 340-41, 1028 Stephen					***				
					Chávaiyo, Cháveyo				
1938:15 Earle-Kennard			***-***						
			Chaveyo						
1939:50-51, 802 Parsons	***		***		***				
	Saveyo-Tsabiyo/Cha'vaiyo/Chapiude-K'apio								
			***	***					
	Chapio-K'apio/Chapeó-Chapeón								
1940:67 Dennis					***				
					Chavayo				
1942:124 Espinosa	***								
	Tsabio								
1942:251, 259-63 White								***	
								Tcapiyo	
1944:66 Titiev					***				
					Tcaveyo				
<u>1945:12-14</u> <u>Espinosa</u>	***	***						***	
	Tsábiyo/Tsabaiyuna		/					Chapiyú	
1947:45 Colton					***				
					Tca-veyo				
1948:60-62 Nequatewa					***				
					Chaveyo				
	<u>Te</u>	<u>NTi</u>	<u>TeAZ</u>	<u>Hop</u>	<u>Zun</u>	<u>STi</u>	<u>Ker</u>	<u>Trhm</u>	<u>Yqui</u>

	<u>Te</u>	<u>NTi</u>	TeAZ	Hop	Zun	<u>STi</u>	Ker	Trhm	Yqui
1949:92, 100 Kurath		*** Kápio					***	***	Tsapió/Chapayeka
1952:137 Espinosa		*** Tsabio							
1957:259-62 Barker								*** Chapayeka	
1958:21 Laski		*** Caveyó							
1959:29-30 Colton					***--*** Chaveyo				
1962:6, 84-87, 98-99, 123-29, 134 Parsons						*** Kapyo			
1962:271, 279 White							*** Tcapio, Tcapiyo		
1966:68 Dozier					*** Saveyoh				
1969:74-77, 157-62 Ortiz		*** Tsave Yoh							
1970:8-9 Holien					*** Chaveyo				
1970:8, 32, 43-45 Kurath		*** Tsaviyo (cávìyò)							
1972:147 Ortiz		*** Tsaveyoh							
1972:252, 268 Titiev					*** Tcaveyo				
1976:77, 80 Koenig					***--*** Chaveyo				
1977:37, 57 Erickson					***--*** Chaveyo				
1981:31-33 Sweet		*** Tsave Yoh							
	<u>Te</u>	<u>NTi</u>	TeAZ	Hop	Zun	<u>STi</u>	Ker	Trhm	Yqui



	<u>Te</u>	<u>NTi</u>	<u>TeAZ</u>	<u>Hop</u>	<u>Zun</u>	<u>STi</u>	<u>Ker</u>	<u>Trhm</u>	<u>Yqui</u>
1982:10-11 Brown			***--***						
			Chaveyo						
1982:16-18, 251 Courlander			***						
			Tsaveyo, "Tchéveyo"						
1982:146, 306-07 Hill	***								
	Savadjo								
1983:272 Crumrine								***	
								Ĉapayéka, Ĉapakoba	
1983:255-56, 261 Spicer								***	
								Ĉapayeka	
1983:298-300 Merrill								***	
								Ĉapío	
1983:772-73 Griffith								***	
								Ĉapayeka	
1985:119 Dockstader			***--***						
			Cháveyo						
1985:247 Espinosa	***								
	Tsabio								
1985:136 Seaman			***						
			Tseeveyu						
1985:42-43 Sweet	***								
	Tsave yoh								
1986:71 { <u>S.Fean</u> }			***--***						
			Chaveyo						
1988:-- Steele/Laguna informant:							***		
							Shápeyo		
1991:-- Steele/Jémez informant:	***								
	Máágula.								

<u>To</u>	<u>Te</u>	<u>NTi</u>	<u>TeAZ</u>	<u>Hop</u>	<u>Zun</u>	<u>STi</u>	<u>Ker</u>	<u>Trhm</u>	<u>Yqui</u>
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Te NTi TeAZ Hop Zun STi Ker Trhm Yqui

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1988-91								***		
	informant	-- Laguna:					Shápeyo/Cha-bee-youh			
1991										
	informant	-- Jémez: Máágula								
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		<u>Towa</u>	<u>Te</u>	<u>NTi</u>	TeAZ	Hop	Zun	<u>STi</u>	Ker	Trhm Yqui