New Mexico Historical Review

Volume 26 | Number 3 Article 6

7-1-1951

Book Reviews

Some Sex Beliefs and Practices in a Navaho Community. Flora L. Bailey. Cambridge: Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Howard University, Vol. XL. No. 2, 1950. Pp. 108, $3.00.

This monograph, the third in a series planned to cover the long-time study of the Ramah Navahos, deals with a specific topic within the large subject in the precise manner which is the major methodological aim of Clyde Kluckhohn, director, and of those who have worked with him. The Ramah project, outlined in the introduction to the present volume, is unique in being planned as a piece of research covering a long time span and involving a large number of investigators—mostly graduate students. The intention is that the number of individuals involved in collecting data should obviate the possible biases of interest or temperament which might minimize the accuracy of a report by a single ethnologist and that the continued observations, as in a biological study, should counteract temporal fads in anthropological theory. This technique may likewise lead to new discoveries in culture dynamics.

Kluckhohn had known members of the Ramah group and had spoken their language for some years before the project was begun in 1940. Since that time it has progressed under his field leadership and that of other trained workers. All notes are copied, recorded, and cross referenced in the Peabody Museum, so that data picked up in the field on any subject by any worker is readily available to all, although publication rights on specific matters are recognized for the collaborating workers. Although the work, and especially publication, were set back by the war period, we already have the life history of *Gregorio, the Hand-Trembler* and its interpretation by Alexander and Dorothea Leighton, psychiatrists whose technique of analysis is even more an addition to the field of methodological anthropology than their data on the single individual. Tschopick's paper on Navaho pottery likewise belongs to the Ramah project, although it was

published in another of the Peabody series before the present Ramah Project Reports were inaugurated. Flora Bailey's present work on Navaho sex beliefs and practices is as specialized a study as these others, set against her background of a number of seasons spent in the Navaho country. Her previous publications are several, ranging from technical reports on ceremonies (in part done with collaboration of Dr. L. Wyman) to a children's book *Between the Four Mountains,* describing Navaho daily life as discovered by the young son and daughter of a fictitious anthropologist working on the reservation.

Miss Bailey did the children's book so that young people might better understand living American Indians; she has done the present esoteric paper to concisely but accurately picture Navaho thought and custom in relation to matters of sex and reproduction, an intimate culture-bound subject on which ethnologic data is scanty. Each chapter covers its subject matter through general discussion and illustration, often enlivened by direct quotations from informants, followed by a summary, and concluded with a page or two of footnotes covering references, additional specific data, and comments. Her material covers practices, beliefs, and related ceremonial affairs pertaining to puberty, conception and contraception, pregnancy, birth, post-natal care, care of the post-parturient mother, and notes on unusual births and aberrant practices. Although work was concentrated on the Ramah area, the author's considerable experience on other parts of the reservation permitted the addition of important comparative material.

The difficulties involved in collecting such data are obvious. Miss Bailey explains that her field technique involved considerable reliance on an intelligent interpreter to make contacts and explain her scientific interest, even though she herself understood quite a bit of the spoken Navaho language. At the advice of her interpreter she wore a flowing Navaho skirt of calico as a conversation piece and an indication of her respect for the customs of these people. Navahos are as Puritanical as whites in discussion of sex, and many women felt they must ask advice of their husbands

before they could answer questions. But the general feeling seemed to be that as the whites came to know more about these customs the medical services offered might be appreciably improved, to the benefit of all.

Flora Bailey's present publication may be of limited rather than wide interest, but as an objectively recorded and carefully prepared contribution in this field it has no parallel, either for Navaho studies or for those covering any other Southwestern tribes.

FLORENCE HAWLEY ELLIS

University of New Mexico

The New Mexican Alabado. Juan B. Rael. With transcription of Music by Eleanor Hague. Standford University Publications. University Series. Language and Literature. Vol. 9, no. 3. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1951. Pp. 154. $2.50. Published also by Oxford University Press.

This volume contains the texts of 89 alabados (as the religious folksongs of the Spanish-speaking folk of New Mexico are known) together with a map of the district in which the songs were collected, a number of interesting photographs, an introductory discussion of the alabado, a tabular analysis of the verse forms of the alabados included in the collection and at the end musical transcriptions of 57 of the melodies and a very brief discussion of the same by Miss Eleanor Hague. In addition, there are included metrical translations by Mrs. Elsie Stebbins of four of the alabados and a glossary of terms. The songs were collected by the author in the form of phonographic recordings (supplemented insofar as the texts are concerned by twenty-one notebooks in longhand furnished by the singers) during the summer of 1940 in the Rio Grande Valley from Santa Fe, New Mexico, northward to Alamosa, Colorado.

Actually, the collection appears to be limited largely to the vocal music of the sect known as the Penitentes to the exclusion of other types of religious music.

This study is a valuable contribution to our knowledge

of these absorbing songs. Professor Rael has approached the subject with a scientific skepticism which is welcome in any serious examination of a subject so closely related to that most unscientific, though utterly charming, region known as folklore, for folklore thrives on colorful, though inaccurate, statements. His introduction and his comments on the individual songs are well documented and seek truth rather than color. There is plenty of the latter in the words and melodies of the songs.

I had the opportunity to check two of Miss Hague's musical transcriptions against copies of the original recordings and found them to be well and carefully done. The problem of transcription presents great difficulties since the melodies and ornamentation change from verse to verse and there are rhythmic variations from verse to verse, syllabic alternating with florid articulation. Furthermore, it is impossible to reproduce the mournful effect of the tone production of the singers.

Professor Rael modestly fails to mention the fact that he has placed his recordings (or at least a large part of them) at the disposal of the public by depositing copies with the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C. This is a precedent which should be followed. No musical transcription can take the place of such recordings and other scholars in this field should be encouraged to place copies of their recordings, and other source materials, in depositaries such as those at the Library of the University of New Mexico and the Library of Congress where other scholars may have access to them.

The work would have been benefited by the inclusion of metric translations of more than four of the alabados. A work published in English should attempt to carry over to the English reader the dignity and beauty of the texts which throw a flood of light upon the character and thought and passion of those who employ them.

It was a disappointment to find that the comments on the music were limited to three paragraphs occupying about one-half of one page in a work of 322 pages. A study of folksong, in order to avoid errors of emphasis and even out-

right errors of fact, must be a collaborative effort of persons competent in the fields of language, literature, music, and possibly in other fields such as ethnology, or at least should be read critically from these points of view. Admittedly this is a publication of Stanford's Language and Literature series and as such stresses the textual aspect of the songs. Yet it would have been a better rounded study if more attention had been given to the musical elements of the alabados. I hasten to add that I have been guilty of this sin of omission, if sin it be.

I am inclined to take issue with Professor Rael when he says that "The alabado is a hymn." Only in the most general definition of a hymn as a religious song can this be said to be true. The alabados bear virtually no resemblance to the hymns of the ancient church, nor to the German version, the chorale, nor to the English hymn. The hymn had its origin as a part of the plainsong of the early Christian church and as such was distinguished from the great body of plainsong by one characteristic, its metrical and symmetrical form. The alabados resemble far more closely other parts of the great body of plainsong than the Ambrosian hymn. Miss Hague has recognized that many of them fall into the class of unmeasured music by omitting time signatures and even in some examples with time signature the number of beats to the measure does not always follow the signature. My acquaintance with many alabados has convinced me that with exceptions they are unmeasured and thus lack the most characteristic feature of the hymn. Furthermore the florid ornamentation, so characteristic of the alabados, is more often found in other parts of the plainsong than in the hymns in which syllabic settings seem to be characteristic.

Professor Rael mentions the use of the reed flute, or pito; there are no transcriptions of the beautiful fioritures which give such a powerful polytonal effect to the music which they accompany. It may be captious to differ again with Professor Rael who says, "The only musical instrument ever used is the reed flute." Nevertheless, at least two other instruments are used to accompany the alabados: the matracas (or rattle) and the palma, a wooden paddle like a ping pong paddle to

which are attached 12 small pieces of wood by means of leather thongs. The eerie pito, the raucous matracas, and the rain-like patter of the palma give no small part of the coloring to this marvelous music. These are of course percussion instruments which would be classified by musicians as musical instruments. In addition, Professor Rael includes a photograph of a member of the brotherhood of the Penitentes holding a drum. I have never heard a drum used in connection with Penitente ceremonies but this photograph indicates that possibly this additional percussion instrument is employed in certain places.

The local New Mexican terminology which characterizes all religious folksongs as alabados is unsatisfactory, as it ignores the great differences which exist between different types of religious folk music. In Mexico, according to Prof. Vicente T. Mendoza, the term alabado is used only to describe those songs which have to do with the life and passion of Jesus Christ. All other religious folksongs are known as alabanzas and these are in turn subdivided into many different types. Since many of these types are recognizable in New Mexico, it would lead to clearer understanding if the appropriate Mexican terminology were adopted or other terms were adopted to describe and differentiate the types. There are, for instance, true hymns (in the sense of the historical definition) in use in New Mexico. But they are very different from, let us say, the religious decima or from the unmeasured alabados of the Penitentes or from the Penitente chants (apparently derived musically from the Hebrew Psalm Tone) used in the churches during the Tenievolas ceremony and others. To lump all of these together under the term alabados is to ignore their differences.

The texts used by Professor Rael are composite versions based in some cases on several different versions. This process of synthesis is entirely appropriate particularly when accompanied by adequate notes such as that at pages 22 and 23 describing the process by which he arrived at his composite text.

The music which accompanies various texts in folk music differs widely and there are several musical recordings in

the Rael collection at the Library of Congress which bear no resemblance to these transcribed by Miss Hague, although bearing the same title. It would eliminate confusion, therefore, if the particular melody transcribed were identified or, where practical, the various melodies were all set forth in the study. In some of the transcriptions the text of the first verse is set forth beneath the musical notes. In others no words are included. I realize that it is impractical and prohibitively expensive to set forth musical transcriptions of all verses with the words of each verse but, particularly when dealing with unmeasured music, the method by which the words are adapted to the music is important from a musicological standpoint at least, and the generally adopted compromise has been to include the words of the first verse. However, there may have been a good reason for this omission.

As for the comments on the music, some tabulation of ranges, scales employed, and of the rhythms, musical forms, and other musical characteristics, as well as some attempt to document or at least argue the opinion (with which, incidentally, I agree in part) that "the roots of this music lie in the Catholic Church ritual," would have been in order.

I cannot agree with the conclusion that they do not lie so far back as to be making use of the ancient modes of the Church. I have collected some examples which I should classify as modal. I think that there is evidence that some of the examples in this volume are really modal. For instance, the second transcription, *Al Pie de Este Santo Altar,* appears to me to be in the Hypo-aeolian mode (incomplete). If it were truly a minor melody, a G sharp would have been called for in the second and fourth measures from the end. Miss Hague would no doubt classify this melody as in the natural minor scale, which is identical with the Aeolian mode. It seems more logical, in view of the probability that these melodies are derived from plainsong, to classify it as a modal melody. III, *Por el Rastro de la Cruz,* appears from the transcription to be in the Aeolian mode, otherwise an E natural would again have been called for. In example number seven, *En Una Corporacion,* the alteration of a natural to a sharp follows one of the rules of the mediaeval practice of

musica ficta which results in true modulation in the modal sense between the Ionian and Aeolian modes. It must be remembered that our major scale was known in the sixteenth century as the Ionian mode. Example number eight appears to be another case of modulation between Ionian and Aeolian modes.

Notwithstanding these comments (which I hope will be taken in the friendly spirit in which they are offered), I commend this work to all students who wish to know more of the New Mexican Alabado.

J. D. ROBB

University of New Mexico

Lieutenant Emory Reports. A Reprint of Lieutenant W. H. Emory's Notes of a Military Reconnoissance. Introduction by Ross Calvin, Ph.D. Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1951. Pp. iii, 208. $4.50.

It is nearly always a satisfaction to have an old document of historical significance reissued, even though circumstances may require its presentation in shortened form. Whoever is interested in southwestern history will probably welcome this condensed version of Emory's famous journal, one of the first reliable descriptions of at least a portion of the country between Santa Fe and southern California. Minus most of the precise scientific data found in the appendix of the original edition of a century ago, the present reprint still has considerable value for quick, easy reference purposes as well as for its intrinsic interest.

Not much need be said of Emory's literary style or of the validity of his judgments. He was, after all, making a "quickie" tour through the Southwest for military purposes in 1846-1847. Such errors as he made are quite excusable, if we consider that he was, along with Captain Abraham R. Johnston, a first observer of the region thru Anglo-American eyes, and largely dependent upon hearsay for information about any part of it off General Kearny's route. As such his journal still seems full of a freshness of style and an almost boyish curiosity about the strange new land. His account of

the campaigns in southern California is also pleasantly free from rancor and prejudice against Mexicans.

On the whole, the editing, notes and introduction by Dr. Calvin are well done. There are few typographical errors and those of no importance. One is tempted to ask the editor, however, why an old and nearly self-sufficient, isolated frontier community like New Mexico should have any other kind of agriculture than "only subsistence farming," or why the New Mexicans should be expected to practice any industry beyond that necessary for purely domestic uses (Introduction, p. 14). Subsistence farming and domestic industry have for centuries been adequate for Mexico and are still to be found in parts of the country. It might also be pointed out (note 95, p. 203), that the famous Casa Grande is not near the town of that name in Arizona, but is rather in the outskirts of the town of Coolidge.

One of the more commendable features of the book and one which could hardly have been omitted, is the reproduction of pertinent portions of Emory's well known map. It is regrettable, to this reviewer at least, that one or two of the inimitable old-time sketches could not also have been included, just for the sake of flavor—perhaps that of the Casa Grande, or the Gila-Colorado junction, or an Indian portrait. Possibly a short index might likewise have added to the convenience value of the work. But it is still a very desirable volume, and both editor and publishers are to be congratulated upon it. A hope might also be expressed for future reprints of other Emory writings, or those of later boundary surveyors. Some of their accounts are fully as interesting as Emory's.

RUFUS KAY WYLLYS

Arizona State College

Report of Miguel Ramos Arizpe to the Spanish Cortes, November 7, 1811. By Miguel Ramos Arizpe. Translation, Annotations and Introduction by Nettie Lee Benson and published by the Institute of Latin-American Studies,

University of Texas, No. XI. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1950. Pp. 61.

Miguel Ramos Arizpe, a priest and deputy for the Province of Coahuila to the Spanish Cortes, was one of Mexico's great liberal leaders, deserving to rank with such men as Dr. José María Luis Mora, Gómez Farías, and Benito Juárez. Since he was the person chiefly responsible for the formulation of the federal Constitution of 1824 under which Mexico lived for ten years and which served as the model for the later liberal Constitutions of 1857 and 1917, it is of value to study this report, made in the last years of the colonial era, to the Spanish Cortes on the natural, economic and civil condition of the four Eastern Interior Provinces of the Kingdom of Mexico: Coahuila, Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander and Texas. The first twenty-two sections of the report summarize economic, social, educational, military and governmental conditions and defects in the Spanish administrative system in these four Provinces. Sections twenty-two through thirty-one contain the deputy's forthright but respectful recommendations for reform.

For his expressed liberalism, Miguel Ramos Arizpe was imprisoned for six years. To give some idea of his liberal views, the following statements from his report are worthy of note. Ramos Arizpe, born in San Nicolás on the northern frontier in 1775, had come to love the land and in speaking of agriculture he said, "it is the source of the true wealth of nations, the worthy occupation of man, the principal foundation of the most solid happiness of the citizen and the most secure wealth of the state." In describing the people in the provinces, he reported: "Agriculture has in general formed their character, and as they have been employed day and night in the harvest and systematic cultivation of the soil, from which alone they derive their sustenance, they are truly inflexible to intrigue, virtuously steadfast, haters of tyranny and disorder, justly devoted to true liberty and naturally the most inclined toward all the moral and political virtues." In his report, Ramos Arizpe denounced all forms of tyranny, and he favored local and provincial autonomy

as one of the safeguards against it. His ideas on government sowed the seeds of federalism, and he later penned the first federal constitution for Mexico.

Ramos Arizpe was a man of vision, and in his report he pointed out the latent economic possibilities of the area. He encouraged immigration into the northern provinces to offset the retarding influence of underpopulation. At the same time and as another reason for populating this region, he recognized the growing power of the United States to the north and her growing interest in the great Southwest. He observed that taxation and transportation costs had made it almost impossible for the peon to live. For example, "of what advantage can it be to the hungry to have flour if it costs more than the whole is worth to make it into bread?" To encourage commerce and industry, Ramos Arizpe suggested that special organizations be established for that specific purpose.

Ramos Arizpe decried the lack of educational facilities in the provinces of Coahuila, Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander, and Texas. Students of Texas history will recall that this continued to be reason for discontent and was one of the causes for the Texas Revolution. He pointed out that "public" education is one of the first duties of every wise government" and that "only despots and tyrants keep the populace in ignorance in order the more easily to violate their rights." Education, he believed, was the fundamental "basis of general happiness and prosperity" of all people.

Referring to the colonial administrative system and existing governmental conditions, Ramos Arizpe observed: "And as might has prevailed, the most sacred rights of man have been trodden under foot and measures adopted to insure on the throne and in its surroundings stupidity, arbitrary power, despotism, and a thousand times vice itself. To this end, the other aggregates of ignorance were utilized. The study of natural law and the rights of man was prohibited." No wonder, then, when Ferdinand VII returned to his throne in 1814 and autocratic government was reinstated, Ramos Arizpe was imprisoned for these statements. While he was in prison for his liberal views, his influence was felt through-

out Latin America through his *Report.* It was translated into English and was widely circulated in both English and Spanish.

Possibly the greatest importance of Ramos Arizpe's *Report,* says Miss Benson, who has done a splendid piece of work in translating and annotating it, "is the insight it gives into the character and ideas of the father of the Mexican Constitution of 1824, which served as the framework of the present Mexican Constitution." On the whole it would also seem that his *Report* was a "conservative rather than an exaggerated picture of the natural condition of the four Eastern Interior Provinces of North America" at that time and hence its importance and interest today to students of Mexican-United States relations, particularly to students of the history and development of the Southwestern United States. Teachers, as well as students, of the history of the States of our Southwest will certainly profit from reading this interesting *Report to the Spanish Cortes.*

The Institute of Latin-American Studies of the University of Texas is to be congratulated on the selection and publication of this essential document as Volume XI in its Latin-American Studies series.

THOMAS E. COTNER

U. S. Office of Education
and George Washington University

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