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*ADDITIONAL HISPANIC VERSIONS  
OF THE SPANISH RELIGIOUS BALLAD  
“POR EL RASTRO DE LA SANGRE”*

J. MANUEL ESPINOSA\*

THIS PAPER HAS A TWO-FOLD PURPOSE: to furnish further evidence of the vitality and persistence of Spanish tradition in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado and to call the attention of folklorists to the recent documentation, in another part of the Hispanic world, of versions of the Spanish religious ballad, “Por el rastro de la sangre,” which is so well known in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado.

Traditional Spanish folk literature is an important part of Spain’s cultural legacy in America. This folk literature was brought to the New World by the first Spanish conquistadores and settlers in the early sixteenth century. As the Spanish empire expanded in America, Spanish settlers carried with them the folklore of Spain. With the conquest and settlement of New Mexico in 1598, what is now northern New Mexico and southern Colorado became a coheir of the cultural heritage of Old Spain. The region remained relatively isolated as a frontier province of Spain in western North America until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Many of the old Spanish families that reside there to this day trace their roots and culture to the Spanish-speaking world of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Spanish folk literature is preserved in the oral tradition of the region in ballads and a variety of other poetic compositions, folktales, anecdotes, sayings, proverbs, riddles, and folk drama. The extensive collections of these materials from northern New Mexico and southern Colorado that have been published, beginning with the pioneer studies of Aurelio M. Espinosa, represent one of the most interesting and archaic survivals of Spanish folk literature collected from oral tradition anywhere in the Spanish-speaking world.

The most artistic form of folk literature preserved in the Spanish-speaking world is the traditional Spanish ballad (*romance tradicional*). The oldest Spanish ballads were fragments of heroic poems, the favorite parts of epic poems that date from the tenth to the twelfth centuries. These ballads speak of the deeds of heroic knights who contributed to the beginnings of a national Spanish spirit. The creative period of the Spanish ballad tradition extended to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Golden Age of arts and letters in Spain and the era of Spanish conquest and settlement in America. At that time, the secular novelesque ballads and the religious ballads became the most popular, at all levels of society, and this was evident in the transmission of Spanish ballads to the New World. The ballad tradition of Spain is the richest ever known. Traditional Spanish ballads have inspired Spain's greatest dramatists and poets, as well as those of other countries, from the era of Spain's Golden Age to this day.

The religious ballads preserved in oral tradition throughout the Spanish-speaking world express, often in deeply emotional language, the religious spirit of the Spanish people that characterized the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries when religious unity pervaded Spain and its far-flung overseas possessions. In northern New Mexico and southern Colorado these traditional Spanish religious ballads are referred to as *alabados* and *oraciones*. Two major works have been published on the subject: Juan B. Rael's *The New Mexican Alabado* (1951) and Aurelio M. Espinosa's *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico* (1953).<sup>1</sup> Espinosa's study contains 248 versions, and a few fragments, of ninety Spanish ballads of all types from New Mexico and Colorado, including ninety versions of thirty religious ballads. Rael's work, which is devoted exclusively to the religious ballads and hymns (alabados), contains eighty-nine different religious ballads and alabados.

In his study Rael states:

The alabado, or religious hymn, in spite of being a genre of Spanish folklore abundant in New Mexico and southern Colorado, has attracted the attention of the folklorist very little. . . . Studies of the popular poetry of the region occasionally include ballads taken from alabado collections, but these isolated ballads have been studied merely as examples of traditional poetry rather than as a

folk expression of religious sentiment or as a part of the ceremonies of a religious group.<sup>2</sup>

Those primarily responsible for the preservation of traditional Spanish religious ballads and hymns in the region today are the members of the lay Catholic religious brotherhood called "La Sociedad de Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno," known as the *Penitentes*. This religious society (*cofradía*) has chapters that still flourish in the older Spanish settlements of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. The members of the group are a continuation, or more correctly, a survival, of a lay religious brotherhood originating with the Third Order of the Franciscans, and introduced into New Mexico from Spain, via New Spain (Mexico), with the first Spanish Franciscan friars, conquistadores, and settlers in New Mexico in 1598.<sup>3</sup>

Most of the old Spanish religious ballads still known by Spanish-speaking residents of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado are those that have been preserved as a part of their religious ceremonies. They have been preserved in two ways: in the memory of the Penitentes and in their handwritten collections of alabados, recopied and handed down from generation to generation. This Catholic lay brotherhood helped keep alive the Catholic faith in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century New Mexico at a time when the Catholic Church in this isolated frontier area was neglected and harassed, first by the anticlerical government of the Mexican Republic, which left the people without a clergy adequate to minister to their needs, and then during the early decades of the occupation by the United States. The Penitentes kept alive, in their way, the religious faith instilled in them by the Franciscan friars after the conquest and settlement of the region nearly 400 years ago.

In 1893, Charles F. Lummis, who helped to popularize the romance of the Spanish Southwest among readers "back east," wrote that the old Spanish ballads as a genre of Spanish folk literature were not to be found in New Mexico. What a treasure of old Spanish folk literature he missed completely! He also wrote at that time, as an awe-struck New Englander, that the Penitentes were practically extinct!<sup>4</sup>

In many of the small Spanish-speaking towns and settlements of this region, the Penitentes have also contributed to the preservation of religious music, the melodies in which the alabados are sung, and to the local religious art of the region through the religious images and paintings kept in their *moradas* (ceremonial chapels), which adjoin or are located nearby the old Catholic parish churches.<sup>5</sup>

Some of the most beautiful Spanish religious ballads preserved in the oral tradition of the region are those relating to the Passion of Christ. This paper deals with perhaps the oldest and most beautiful ballad about the Passion preserved in the Spanish folk tradition of America, the one that begins with the verse "Por el rastro de la sangre." This ballad presents in verse a vivid account of the Gospel story of the Virgin Mary following the Way of the Cross to Calvary. The oldest known version of the ballad is published in Juan López de Ubeda's *Vergel de flores divinas*, printed in Alcalá de Henares in 1582. The ballad, as published by Ubeda, is reproduced in Justo de Sancha's *Romancero y cancionero sagrados*, printed in Madrid in 1855.<sup>6</sup> This ballad, first transmitted to America from Spain in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, is a favorite one among the ballads on the Passion preserved in the memory of the Penitentes and in their handwritten collections. Versions of the ballad may be found in many of the manuscripts that contain the alabados of the Penitentes. The ballads are usually collected in ordinary notebooks (*cuadernos*). The handwritten versions are copied in short lines, or ballad half-lines, if the sixteen-syllable verse is to be considered as the real ballad verse. These manuscripts, copied by hand from generation to generation by the Penitentes, represent a popular form of written record that has given the alabados a truly personal form of literary and spiritual expression. Thus the New Mexico and Colorado versions have attained a special form and development—the result of local expression over the years—and they differ in some respects from the versions that have been collected in other parts of the Spanish-speaking world.

The ballad "Por el rastro de la sangre" is sung by the Penitentes during the Lenten season, especially during Holy Week, in their

religious exercises in their moradas, and when they go in procession or in small groups from the moradas to commemorate the Way to Calvary. It is sung, along with other alabados relating to the Passion, during the exercise or ceremony of *Las Tinieblas*, on the evening of Holy Thursday, both in the moradas of the Penitentes, and until recently in the parish churches of some of the Spanish communities in the region. The ballad is also among those sung by the Penitentes at *velorios* for deceased members of the brotherhood.<sup>7</sup>

The first New Mexican version to be published was collected by Barbara Freire-Marreco in 1913 and published with comparative notes by Aurelio M. Espinosa in 1916. Freire-Marreco had copied the ballad from a handwritten cuaderno containing alabados that was in the possession of a New Mexican woman of the village of Guchupange, near the Indian pueblo of Santa Clara.<sup>8</sup> In 1917, A. Espinosa compared this version with one he collected in Taos in 1916.<sup>9</sup> In 1926, 1929, and 1931, A. Espinosa again cited the Taos version in separate studies.<sup>10</sup> In 1932, A. Espinosa published another version along with other ballads recited to him by Pueblo Indians at Isleta, Santa Clara, and San Juan.<sup>11</sup> In 1952, he reproduced and analyzed this version, recited to him by José Benito Abeyta of San Juan pueblo in 1931, in a separate article.<sup>12</sup> All of these versions were subsequently included in *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, which contains eleven versions and three short fragments of "Por el rastro de la sangre," thirteen from northern New Mexico and one from southern Colorado.<sup>13</sup> In 1933 and 1946, Arthur L. Campa published two versions, one from Ranchos de Taos, the other from Los Tres Ojitos, New Mexico.<sup>14</sup> Rael's book contains two versions of "Por el rastro de la sangre" he collected in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico; in the same work he refers to four other versions, two he collected in southern Colorado, and two from northern New Mexico.<sup>15</sup> In 1953, Aurora Lucero-White Lea published a version of the ballad that she had copied from a Penitente manuscript in 1927.<sup>16</sup> In 1980, John Donald Robb published a version he collected in Tierra Azul, New Mexico, in 1948.<sup>17</sup>

The typical versions of the ballad under discussion begin with

the verse "Por el rastro de la sangre." Other versions begin with in the region commences, "Viernes, viernes de la luz." A. Espinosa and Rael published four almost identical versions of this variant from northern New Mexico and southern Colorado.<sup>18</sup>

Two versions of the ballad "Por el rastro de la sangre" and two versions of "Viernes, viernes de la luz" from the collections of A. Espinosa and Rael are cited here as outstanding examples of the ballad that have been collected in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado.

1. Por el rastro de la sangre  
que Jesucristo *redama*,  
camina la Virgen pura  
en una fresca mañana.

2. De tan de mañana que era  
a la hora que caminaba,  
las campanas de Belén  
solas tocaban el alba.

3. Encuentra a San Juan Bautista  
y de esta manera le habla:  
"¿No me has visto por aquí  
al Hijo de mis entrañas?"

4. "Por aquí pasó, señora,  
antes que el gallo cantara;  
cinco mil azotes lleva  
en sus sagradas espaldas.

5. "Con una cruz en sus hombros  
de madera muy pesada;  
como el madero era verde,  
cada paso arrodillaba.

6. "Una soga a la garganta  
que más que cien *nudos* daba;  
allí estaba una mujer,  
Verónica se llamaba.

7. "Lleva un clarín por delante  
publicando el padecer,  
una corona de espinas  
de juncos marinos es.

Along the trail of blood  
By Jesus shed, our Christ and Sire,  
Went Mary, Mother of Our Lord,  
Upon a morning dire.

So early was that morning hour  
When Mary walked forlorn,  
Only the bells of Bethlehem  
Were heralding the dawn.

St. John the Baptist there she met  
And thus to him did say:  
"Oh! Have you seen my precious Son  
Pass by this grievous way?"

"Aye, that I have, oh, Mary mild,  
Ere cock had roused the day,  
And on His sacred shoulders  
Five thousand lashes lay.

"A cross was on His shoulders  
Of heavy, heavy wood;  
The wood was green, at every step  
He stumbled where He stood.

"A rope about His neck there was  
A hundred knots and more;  
A woman there was with Him,  
Her name, Veronica.

"A trumpet went before  
Announcing the Passion,  
There is a crown of thorns  
Of sea rushes.

8. "Tres clavos lleva en sus manos,  
con los que ha de ser clavado;  
corona de espinas lleva,  
con que ha de ser coronado."

"Three nails to crucify Our Lord  
Within His Hands are found,  
He carries too a crown of thorns  
With which He will be crowned."

9. Cuando la Virgen oyó esto,  
cayó en tierra desmayada;  
San Juan, como buen sobrino,  
procuraba levantarla.

When this the Holy Virgin heard  
She fell down in dismay;  
The good St. John then tenderly  
Raised her from where she lay.

10. "Levántate, tía mía,  
ya no es tiempo de tardanza,  
que allí en el Monte Calvario,  
tristes trompetas sonaban."

"Arise, sweet Mary, do not wait,  
Arise now from the ground,  
For yonder on Mount Calvary  
The mournful trumpets sound."

11. ¡Ay, Jesús, mi Padre amado,  
que por mí estás de esta suerte,  
haz que nos valga la muerte  
para redimir el pecado!

Oh, Jesus, Father dearly beloved  
Suffering thus for me,  
Oh, may thy death redeem our sins  
For all Eternity.

12. Quien esta oración cantare,  
todos los viernes del año,  
saca una ánima de penas  
y la suya del pecado.

He who recites this prayer  
Each Friday through the year,  
From purgatory saves a soul  
And his own soul from sin.

13. El que sabe y no la enseña,  
el que la oiga y no la aprende,  
el día del juicio sabrá  
lo que esta oración contiene.

He who knows it and does not teach it,  
He who hears it and does not learn it,  
Will on the great Judgment Day  
Know the meaning of this prayer.

14. Madre mía de Guadalupe,  
Madre de consolación,  
Señora de los Dolores,  
yo te ofrezco esta oración.

To thee, Oh, Mother of Guadalupe,  
To thee, Oh, Mother of Consolation,  
To thee, Our Lady of Sorrow,  
This prayer I offer.

(Manassa, Colorado. Collected by Juan B. Rael.)<sup>10</sup>

Por el rastro de la sangre—que Jesucristo derrama  
camina la Virgen Pura—en una fresca mañana.  
Como era tan de mañana—la hora en que caminaba,  
las campanas de Belén—todas tocaban el alba.  
Se ha encontrado con San Juan—y de esta manera le habla:  
—No me has visto por aquí—al Hijo de mis entrañas?  
—Por aquí pasó, Señora,—antes que el gallo cantara;  
cinco mil azotes lleva—en sus sagradas espaldas;  
con disciplina de alambre—sus verdugos le azotaban.  
Lleva una soga arrastrando—de los pies a la garganta;  
cada estirón que le daban,—mi Jesús se arrodillaba.

Una cruz lleva en sus hombros—de madera muy pesada;  
 una corona de espinas—que sus sienes traspasaban.  
 Tres clavos lleva en sus manos—con que ha de ser enclavado;  
 un martillo, unas tenazas,—con que ha de ser remachado.

Luego que oyó esto la Virgen,—cayó al suelo desmayada;  
 San Juan, como buen sobrino,—luego acude a levantarla.

—Levántate, tía mía,—que no es tiempo de tardanza;  
 vamos al Monte Calvario,—donde está la cruz de estancia.  
 Caminemos, caminemos,—para llegar al Calvario:  
 por mucho que caminemos,—ya le habrán crucificado.

San Juan y la Madalena—se la llevan de la mano.

(Cochití, New Mexico. Collected by Aurelio M. Espinosa.)<sup>20</sup>

1. Viernes, viernes de la luz  
 cuando Cristo caminaba  
 por la calle de la Amargura,  
 tres Marías lo lloraban.

2. Una era Magdalena,  
 y la otra, Marta, su hermana,  
 y la otra, La Virgen pura,  
 la que más dolor pasaba.

3. Lleva un clarín por delante,  
 publicando el padecer,  
 y una muy ronca trompeta  
 para su afrenta también.

4. Camina la Virgen pura  
 en una fresca mañana;  
 topó con San Juan Bautista,  
 y de esta manera le habla:

5. “¿No me has visto por aquí  
 al Hijo de mis entrañas?”  
 “Por aquí pasó, señora,  
 antes que el gallo cantara.

6. “Lleva una cruz en sus hombros,  
 de madera muy pesada,  
 tres clavos lleva en sus manos  
 con los que ha de ser clavado.

7. “Cinco mil azotes lleva  
 en sus sagradas espaldas,  
 lleva una cruz en el hombro  
 y una soga en su garganta.”

8. La Virgen de que esto oyó  
 cayó en tierra desmayada;  
 San Juan como buen sobrino  
 luego acudió a levantarla.

9. “Levántese, tía mía,  
 que no es tiempo de tardanza,  
 que en el Calvario sangriento,  
 roncas trompetas sonaban.”

10. Pero dichosos de aquéllos  
 que muy bien se confesaran  
 y que en la hostia consagrada  
 al mismo Cristo tomaran.

(Cerro, New Mexico. Collected by Juan B. Rael.)<sup>21</sup>

Viernes, Viernes de la Luz,—cuando Cristo caminaba  
 por la Calle de la Amargura;—tres Marías lo lloraban;  
 una era la Madalena—y la otra Marta, su hermana;  
 la otra era la Virgen Pura,—la que mas dolor pasaba.

Lleva un clarín por delante,—publicando el padecer,  
 y una ronca trompeta,—para su afrenta también.

Camina la Virgen Pura,—en una fresca mañana;  
 se ha topado con San Juan—y de esta manera le habla;  
 —¿No me has visto por aquí—al Hijo de mis entrañas?  
 —Por aquí pasó, Señora,—antes que el gallo cantara;  
 lleva una cruz en sus hombros—de madera muy pesada;  
 tres clavos lleva en sus manos—con los que ha de ser clavado.  
 Cinco mil azotes lleva—en sus sagradas espaldas;  
 lleva una cruz en el hombro—y una soga en su garganta.

La Virgen, de que esto oyó,—cayó en tierra desmayada;  
 San Juan, como buen sobrino,—luego acudió a levantarla.  
 —Levántese, tía mía,—que no es tiempo de tardanza,  
 que en el Calvario sangriento—roncas trompetas sonaban.

Pero dichosos de aquellos  
 que muy bien se confesaron,  
 y que en la hostia consagrada  
 al mismo Cristo tomaron.

(Manassa, Colorado. Collected by Aurelio M. Espinosa.)<sup>22</sup>

On 3 July 1979, on a visit to Peña Blanca, New Mexico, I found another version of the ballad “Por el rastro de la sangre,” in this case beginning with the verse “Por el rastro de la cruz.” It is included in one of the Penitente manuscripts in the morada at Peña Blanca, which an old friend, who is a member of the Brotherhood, showed to me. The well-thumbed, black-covered notebook that contains this version includes ninety-one alabados. I was shown three other handwritten collections, each containing fifty to sixty alabados, but none of these included the ballad “Por el rastro de la sangre.” The version presented below is exactly as it is written in the notebook, including its imperfections in punctuation, spelling, and versification. To my knowledge, the version I found is the first one brought to light from Peña Blanca. It illustrates the ballads that may be found to this day in Penitente manuscripts—some more correctly copied from older manuscripts or from narrators than others. The second stanza in this version, for example, is from a different ballad about the lost Christ Child who was found in the temple.

1. Por El Rastro De la Cruz  
 que Jesucristo llevaba  
 Camina la Bigen Pura  
 En una fresca mañana

2. Jesucristo se a Perdido  
 Maria lo anda Buscando  
 No a Pasado Por aqui  
 Una Estrella Relumando



An oil painting on tin of the Virgin Mary mourning over the dead body of Christ.  
Courtesy of author.

3. Como Era tan De mañana  
En la Hora que caminaba  
las campanas De Belen  
Solas se tocan El alba
4. Por aqui Paso Señora  
Dos horas antes Del alba  
lleba una tunica Blanca  
que De Sangre coloriaba
5. Hincuetra a San Juan Bautista  
De Esta manera la abla  
no me a Visto Pasar aqui  
al hijo de mis Entrañas
6. Por aqui Paso Señora  
antes que El Gallo cantara  
Sincio mil asotez lleba  
En Sus Sagradas Espaldas
7. lleba una soga arrastrando  
De los Pies a la garganta  
lleba una Cruz muy Pesada  
De Rodillas le levanta
8. Luego que oyo Esto la Virgen  
callo en tierra desmayada  
San Juan como buen Sobrino  
luego acudio alebantarla
9. Lebantate tia mia que  
no Es tiempo de tardanza  
Bamos al monte calbario  
Donde Esta la Estancia
10. Caminemos caminemos  
Para llegar al calbario  
De tanto que caminamos  
lla lo Van crucificando
11. una Corona De Espinas  
con que a De Ser Coronado  
Pues ya Viene traspasando  
De Veas cienes Dibinas
12. San Juan y la Magdalena  
lo agarran de la mano  
San Juan le Para la sangre  
Del Santisimo Costado
13. Una Cruz tray en sus hombros  
De Madera muy Pesada  
Sestro En las manos  
con que a de ser asotado
14. una Soga en la garganta  
que lleba umilde amargura  
Cada estiron que le daban  
mi Jesus la Rodilla incaba
15. tres Clabos traia En sus manos  
con que el a de ser Clabado  
un martillo y unas tenazas  
Con que a de ser Remachado
16. toquen la Ronca tropetas  
y El destemplado tambor  
Pongase luto la Virgen  
que a muerto mi Redentor
17. Esta la madre de Dios  
al Pie de la cruz Parada  
lipiandole El Rostro a Cristo  
En Su Pena quedo estampada
18. Una Era Magdalena  
otra Era Marta su Ermana  
otra Era la Virgen Pura  
la que mas dolor llevaba
19. Satisima trenidad  
Dios trino fiel Berdadero  
yo adoro y te Venero con  
tran Profunda umildad
20. al hombre de dias licencia  
que alaben en Su memoria  
Son cuareta indolujencia  
que mi dios tiene en su gloria
21. El que este alabado Rese  
todas los Viernes del año  
Saca una anima de Penas  
y la suya de Pecado
22. Alabado Sean las horas  
la que Cristo Padesio  
Por libranos de las culpas  
Bendita Sea Su Pasion

23. Amen Jesus Por que acabo  
Amen su Santa Pasion  
Amen Corona de Espinas  
Amen su Santa Pacion

(Peña Blanca, New Mexico. Collected by J. Manuel Espinosa.)

As the above examples show, the numerous versions of this old Spanish ballad still recited in the region vary in language, contain identical or nearly identical verses in different sequence, and the ballad assonance is sometimes lost or changed. For the most part, however, all faithfully follow the traditional Spanish ballad metre and assonance—in itself a remarkable phenomenon after so many centuries of transmission, largely by word of mouth, from one generation to another.<sup>23</sup>

In their comparative studies of this Spanish religious ballad, Aurelio M. Espinosa and Juan B. Rael studied documented oral versions from Spain and Portugal, as well as from such widely separated parts of Hispanic America as Mexico, Chile, Argentina, and Cuba.<sup>24</sup> Subsequently, additional versions of the ballad were collected in Nicaragua and Venezuela.<sup>25</sup>

The most recent contribution to the comparative study of this religious ballad, as well as to traditional Spanish ballads of America in general, is Gisela Beutler's fascinating work on traditional Spanish ballads in Colombia.<sup>26</sup> Beutler's study contains fourteen versions of the religious ballad under discussion, which she collected from oral tradition in several localities in Colombia. One begins with the verse "Por el rostro de la sangre," another with the line "Por el rostro y por la sangre." Others begin with the verses "Viernes santo, viernes santo," "Jueves santo, jueves santo," "Por la calle de amargura," "Adónde va, Dolorosa," and "La virgen cuando camina." Beutler's study includes several other ballads on the theme of the Passion that contain verses, in a variety of sequences, similar or identical to those in the New Mexico and Colorado versions of "Por el rastro de la sangre" and "Viernes, viernes de la luz."<sup>27</sup>

Five of the interesting versions from Colombia, published by Beutler, are presented below.

Por el “rostro” y por la sangre que el Verbo Eterno derrama  
 camina la Virgen pura y San Juan que la acompaña.  
 A la hora en que camina de la madrugada,  
 las campanas de Belén tocan las horas del alma [sic].  
 En la calle de amargura vide una mujer que andaba.  
 Y le pregunta la Virgen: —¿Cuya dueña sos, amada?  
 —No han visto pasar por aquí el hijo de mis entrañas?  
 —Por aquí pasó, señora, antes que el gallo cantara.  
 Cinco puñaladas lleva, la menor le parte el alma;  
 las tres por los pecadores, las tres por salvar el alma.  
 Una cruz lleva en los hombros y el madero muy pesado.  
 Y el madero como verde, cada paso arrodillado.  
 La Virgen al oír esa nueva, cayó en tierra desmayada.  
 San Juan, como buen sobrino, del suelo la levantaba.  
 —Levántese, tía mía, levántese, tía de mi alma,  
 que en el calvario sangriento está mi primo enclavado.

(Chocó, Istmina, Colombia)<sup>28</sup>

Por el “rostro” de la sangre que el Verbo Eterno derrama  
 camina la Virgen pura, en busca de su hijo amado.  
 A las tres cuadras que anduvo una mujer se encontró.  
 —Dime, piadosa mujer, ¿si a Jesús ha incontrado? [sic],  
 —Sí, lo he incontrado, señora muy rendido y maltratado.  
 Una cruz lleva en los hombros y un madero muy pesado,  
 una soga en la garganta, que de ella iban tirando.  
 De judíos y judías le iban acompañando.  
 La Virgen, al oír estas nuevas, cayó en tierra desmayada.  
 San Juan, como buen sobrino, del suelo la ha levantado.  
 —Levántese, señora tía, levántese, tía de mi alma,  
 que en el madero sangriento está mi primo enclavado.  
 Ya le quitan la corona, ya le remachan los clavos,  
 ya le pegan la lanzada por su divino costado.  
 La sangre que derramase cayó en un cáliz sagrado.  
 El hombre que la tomase será bien aventurado.  
 Será rey en esta vida y en la otra coronado.

(Chocó, Condoto, Colombia)<sup>29</sup>

Viernes Santo, Viernes Santo, Viernes Santo, en aquel día  
 andaba la Virgen María buscando su hijo amado.  
 En la calle de amargura estaba una niña sentada.  
 Buena niña, bien criada, ¿por aquí no pasó  
 el hijo de mis entrañas, el hijo de mi corazón?  
 Por aquí pasó, antes qu'el gallo cantara.  
 con una cruz muy pesada, cuarta, cuarta arrodillaba.

con una corona de espinas en su cabeza.  
 La Virgen, al oír estas palabras, ha caído desmayada.  
 San Juan, como buen sobrino:  
 Levántete, tía mía, levántete, tía mía.  
 que en el calvario sangriento está mi primo amado  
 Ya le aprietan la clavija, ya lo habrán crucificado.

(Bolívar, Malagana, Colombia)<sup>30</sup>

Jueves Santo, Jueves Santo, Jueves Santo, aquel día  
 estaba la Virgen María buscando a su hijo amado.  
 En la calle de amargura esta una niña sentada.  
 La Virgen le preguntó:  
 —Buena y bien criada. ¿por aquí no ha pasado  
 mi hijo de mi corazón, el hijo de mis entrañas?  
 —Por aquí pasó, Señora, antes qu'el gallo cantara,  
 con un madero de cruz en su hombro atravesado.  
 Como el madero era verde, a cada paso arrodillaba.  
 Una soga en su garganta, que por ella "tropicaba"  
 una corona de espina en su cabeza traspasada.  
 La Virgen "oí" eso, cayó en el suelo desmayada.  
 San Juan, como buen sobrino, en brazo la levantó  
 diciéndole:  
 —Alevántate, tía mía, alevántate, tía amada,  
 que en el calvario "sangrino" está mi primo clavado.  
 Ya aprietan las clavijas, ya lo habrán crucificado.

(Bolívar, Malagana, Colombia)<sup>31</sup>

Jueves Santo, Jueves Santo. Jueves Santo, en aquel día.  
 en su sede está metí'a. rezando como solía:  
 —Nuevas te traigo, señora, nuevas con tan gran pesar,  
 que vuestro hijo precioso lo llevan a crucificar.  
 —¡Oh, que nueva tan amarga. [!] las que me han venido a mis oídos  
 que me traspasen en el alma y también a los sentidos!  
 ¡Vengan, madres y doncellas, las que sepan de dolor.  
 ayúdenmelo a buscar este divino señor!  
 En la calle de amargura está una niña sentada.  
 La Virgen le preguntó:  
 —¿Cuya prenda, bien hallada? ¿Por aquí no pasó, señora,  
 el hijo de mi corazón, el hijo de mis entrañas?  
 —Por aquí pasó, señora, antes qu'el gallo cantara,  
 con un madero en el hombro, que cada paso arrodillaba.  
 San Juan, como buen sobrino, metió el hombro y lo ayudaba  
 La Virgen, que tanto escucha, cayó en el suelo desmayada.

San Juan, como buen sobrino  
—Levántese, tía mía levántese, tía amada,  
que en el calvario sangriento esta mi primo enclavado.  
Cinco heridas es la [sic] que tiene, la menor le viene al alma.  
Las dos por los pecadores, las tres por salvar las almas.  
San Cristobal está en su puerta, con su capilla cubierta,  
suplicando y adorando por las monjas del perdón,  
que le rezen la oración de pelegrino.  
Cuando Jesucristo vino, que se puso en el altar,  
con los pies chorriando sangre y los manos mucho más.  
Allí viene la Magdalena con sus paños a limpiar.  
—Tate, tate, Magdalena, no te canses de limpiar,  
que esas son las cinco llagas, que debemos de pasar  
por los chicos y los grandes y toda la Cristiandad.  
Esta oración.

(Bolívar, Palenque, Colombia)<sup>32</sup>

In conclusion, it seems fair to state that the versions of the ballad "Por el rastro de la sangre," collected in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, may be considered among the finest examples of this ballad extant in the Spanish-speaking world. Moreover, the cultural tradition that has produced such examples is alive today, although the form and content may have been impoverished in certain cases. It is obvious that northern New Mexico and southern Colorado are still a treasure-trove for the collection and study of all types of traditional Spanish folk literature, including the many religious ballads preserved in the memory and manuscripts of the Penitentes.

Beutler's versions of the ballad under discussion give further evidence of its wide diffusion throughout Hispanic America. The Spanish ballad scholar Ramón Menéndez Pidal stated over seventy years ago that as a result of his research he could conclude that traditional ballads may be found in every corner of the world where Spanish is the spoken language.<sup>33</sup> This principle has been amply confirmed over the years. Additional popular versions of the ballad "Por el rastro de la sangre" may be found to this day in the oral tradition of Hispanic American countries from which versions have not yet been documented.<sup>34</sup>

In the future, however, because of the mobility of the population from rural to urban centers, the commingling of peoples of diverse cultural origin, and the many other influences of modern society that are bringing changes in patterns of life and thought, it will be increasingly difficult for folklorists to locate elsewhere in America old Spanish ballads of the antiquity and beauty of some of those found and recorded in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, where Spanish-speaking people were isolated from outside influences until the nineteenth century, and where the immensely rich folk literature of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain has endured as a part of the memory of the people.

#### NOTES

\*A shorter version of this paper was read at the Thirty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the New Mexico Folklore Society, Albuquerque, 25 April 1981.

1. Juan B. Rael, *The New Mexican Alabado*, with transcription of music by Eleanor Hague, Stanford University Publications, University Series, Language and Literature 9, no. 3 (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1951); Aurelio M. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico* (Madrid: Revista de Filología Española-Añejo 58, 1953).

2. Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, p. 9.

3. See Aurelio M. Espinosa, "The Penitent Brothers (Los Hermanos Penitentes)," *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. (New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1911), 11: 635-36; Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, pp. 10-11; Marta Weigle, *Brothers of Light, Brothers of Blood, The Penitentes of the Southwest* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico [UNM] Press, 1976), pp. 37, and *passim*.

4. Charles F. Lummis, *The Land of Poco Tiempo* (1893; reprint ed., Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1952), pp. 61, 186.

5. Richard E. Ahlborn, *The Penitente Moradas of Abiquíú*, Contributions from the Museum of History and Technology, Paper 63 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1968); Warren A. Beck, "The Cultural Contributions of the Penitentes," in *New Mexico Past and Present, A Historical Reader*, ed. Richard N. Ellis (Albuquerque: UNM Press, 1971), pp. 171-83; E. Boyd, *Popular Arts of Spanish New Mexico* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1974), pp. 459-65, 472-83; A. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, pp. 159-245, 299-301; J. Manuel Espinosa, "Spanish Folklore in the Southwest: The Pioneer Studies of Aurelio M. Espinosa," *The Americas* 35 (October 1978): 219-37; Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, pp. 9-20, 138-52, and *passim*.

6. *Vergel de flores divinas, Compuesto y recopilado por el licenciado Juan López de Úbeda . . . En el qual se hallarán todas y qualesquier composturas*

*apropiadas para todas las fiestas del año, así de nuestro Señor como de nuestra Señora, y de otros muchos Santos* (Alcalá de Henares: Casa de Juan Iñiguez de Lequerica, 1582). A facsimile of the title page, and a list of contents, including "Por el rastro de la sangre," may be found in Antonio R. Rodríguez-Moñino, *Juan López de Úbeda, Poeta del siglo XVI* (Madrid: Imprenta y Editorial Maestre, 1962), frontispiece, p. 34. I have in my possession a film of an original copy of Úbeda's book in the Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid. The ballad presented below is from Justo de Sancha, *Romancero y cancionero sagrados. Colección de poesías cristianas, morales y divinas, sacadas de las obras de los mejores ingenios españoles* (Madrid: Biblioteca de autores españoles, M. Rivadeneyra, 1855) p. 91. Sancha's rendition only changes the sixteenth-century orthography to modern usage.

"Por el rastro de la sangre  
Que Jesucristo dejaba  
Va caminando su Madre:  
Quiebra el corazon miralla.  
Las palabras que decia  
Son de mujer lastimada.  
¡Ay, Hijo, redemptor dulce!  
¿Dónde está tu linda cara?  
Dónde está tu perfección?  
¿Y tu virtud extremada?  
Y cuando mira la sangre  
Por el suelo derramada,  
Acrecienta los sospiros  
Con dolor y ansia extraña.  
Dicen que va con prisiones  
Y con soga a la garganta,  
Y como ciervo herido  
Que con sed va a buscar agua.  
Va la Virgen presurosa  
Allá al Calvario, do estaba;  
Mas no pudo caminar,  
Que el llorar la desmayaba.  
¡Oh, quién pudiera, Señora,  
Poner su vida y su alma  
Para darte algún consuelo,  
Aunque de si lo quitará!  
Y cuando hubo llegado  
Oyó las voces que daban

Los pregoneros delante.  
Que decían y publicaban  
Haber sido malhechor,  
Y por tal lo sentenciaban  
A que muera en una cruz  
Y que la tenga por cama.  
Con sus ojos hechos fuentes  
Sollozando lamentaba,  
Diciéndole: ¡Ay, Hijo mio,  
Bien del bien de quien te amaba!  
Y tirándola del manto  
La gente desatinada,  
Está mirando a su Hijo,  
Que el alma se le arrancaba,  
Que casi no le conoce  
La cara desfigurada.  
Dicele desta manera  
Con la voz llorosa y mansa:  
¡Oh Cordero sin manilla!  
Oh luz, que das vida al alma!  
Oh sumo Señor inmenso,  
Oh cordero que quitabas  
Los pecados con tu muerte  
Del mundo que tanto amabas!  
Y estando en la cruz clavado,  
Vió su Madre fatigada,  
Y no la pudo hablar  
Sino sola una palabra."

7. A. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, p. 180; Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, pp. 11-18.

8. Barbara Freire-Marreco and Aurelio M. Espinosa, "New Mexican Spanish Folklore," *Journal of American Folk-Lore* 29 (October-December 1916): 536-46.

9. A. Espinosa, "Romancero nuevomejicano, Addenda," *Revue Hispanique* 40 (June 1917): 218-19.

10. A. Espinosa, "Spanish Folk-Lore in New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical*

*Review* (NMHR) 1 (April 1926): 141; A. Espinosa, "El Romancero," *Hispania* 12 (February 1929): 30-31; A. Espinosa, *El Romancero Español*, Biblioteca Español de Divulgación Científica, vol. 9 (Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suárez, 1931), pp. 128-30.

11. A. Espinosa, "Romances españoles tradicionales que cantan y relatan los indios de los pueblos de Nuevo Méjico," *Boletín de la Biblioteca Menéndez y Pelayo* 14 (1932): 98-109.

12. A. Espinosa, "Spanish Tradition among the Pueblo Indians," in *Estudios Hispánicos: Homenaje a Archer M. Huntington* (Wellesley, Mass.: Spanish Department, Wellesley College, 1952), pp. 138-39.

13. A. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, pp. 170-81, 193. The thirteen versions from northern New Mexico are from Cerro (two), Taos (two), Española, Santa Cruz, Santa Fe, San Juan, Santa Clara, Cochiti, Guchupange, and Isleta (two). The version from Colorado is from Manassa.

14. Arthur L. Campa, *Spanish Folk-Poetry in New Mexico* (Albuquerque: UNM Press, 1946), pp. 58, no. 104, and 59-60.

15. Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, pp. 24-26. The version from Colorado is from Manassa, pp. 24-25; the one from New Mexico is from Santa Cruz, p. 26. Rael collected four other versions, from Alamosa and Conejos, Colorado, and from Cerro and Española, New Mexico. Boyd, *Popular Arts of Spanish New Mexico*, p. 473, indicates that she copied a version in Chama, New Mexico, similar to Rael's published version from Santa Cruz.

16. Aurora Lucero-White Lea, *Literary Folklore of the Hispanic Southwest* (San Antonio, Tex.: Naylor Company, 1953), pp. 122, 129. Version is from San Miguel County.

17. John Donald Robb, *Hispanic Folk Music of New Mexico and the Southwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), pp. 613-14. Robb refers to four other partial versions in the J. D. Robb Collection, Fine Arts Library, University of New Mexico: one he collected in Chimayó in 1946 and three Reginald and William R. Fisher collected in Santa Fe, Pecos, and Cordova, New Mexico, in 1952. Musical scores for the ballad melody may be found in A. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, Lucero-White Lea, *Literary Folklore*, Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, and Robb, *Hispanic Folk Music*.

18. Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, p. 29; A. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, pp. 177-79. A. Espinosa's published versions were collected in Manassa, Colorado (two), and Magdalena, New Mexico. Rael's published version is from Cerro, New Mexico. He indicates that he collected two other versions, one from Cerrito and the other from Manassa, Colorado.

19. Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, pp. 24-25. Translation by Mrs. Elsie T. Stebbins.

20. A. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, p. 170.

21. Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, p. 29.

22. A. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, pp. 177-78.

23. The assonance usually remains a-a, changing to a-o in some verses. The ballads often end with a short devotional prayer in verse.

24. See Freire-Marreco and A. Espinosa, pp. 544-45; A. Espinosa, "Romancero nuevomejicano, Addenda," pp. 220-24; A. Espinosa, "Nota adicional al romancero nuevomejicano," *Revue Hispanique* 41 (December 1917): 678-80; Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, pp. 27-29. For a bibliography of the documented versions of the ballad from Spain, Portugal, and Hispanic America as of 1953, see A. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, bibliographical note, p. 181. A. Espinosa also published two versions from California in "Los romances tradicionales en California," *Homenaje a Menéndez Pidal*, 3 vols. (Madrid: Imprenta de los Sucesores de Hernando, 1924-25), 1: 311-12.

25. Luis Santulliano, *La poesía del pueblo; romances y canciones de España y América* (Buenos Aires: Librería Hachette, S.A., 1955), pp. 335-36, 338.

26. Gisela Beutler, *Studien zum spanischen Romancero in Kolumbien in seiner schriftlichen und mündlichen Überlieferung von der Zeit der Eroberung bis zur Gegenwart* (Heidelberg: E. Winter, 1969); reprinted as *Estudios sobre el Romancero Español en Colombia*, Publicaciones del Instituto Caro y Cuervo, no. 43 (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, 1977).

27. Beutler, *Studien zum spanischen Romancero*, pp. 216-25.

28. Beutler, *Studien zum spanischen Romancero*, p. 222.

29. Beutler, *Studien zum spanischen Romancero*, p. 222.

30. Beutler, *Studien zum spanischen Romancero*, p. 219.

31. Beutler, *Studien zum spanischen Romancero*, p. 220.

32. Beutler, *Studien zum spanischen Romancero*, p. 220. Two other versions of the ballad in Beutler's study, p. 221, end with a devotional prayer that is almost identical to the one at the close of a number of the versions of the ballad from northern New Mexico and southern Colorado included in the A. Espinosa and Rael collections, and in the published version from Chile: A. Espinosa, *Romancero de Nuevo Méjico*, pp. 171-73, 175-77, and Rael, *New Mexican Alabado*, pp. 25 (version quoted above), 26. The Colombian versions of this prayer are:

Quien rezare esta oración—todos los viernes del año,  
sacará un alma de pena—y la suya del pecado.

Quien la sabe y no la reza,—quien la oye y no la aprende,  
el día del juicio final—sabrá lo que esta oración contiene.

El que reza esta oración—todos los viernes del año,  
sacará un alma de pena—y la suya del pecado.

Quien la sabe y no la reza—quien la oye y no la aprende,  
el día del juicio final—saberá lo que contiene.

33. See Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *Romancero hispánico (hispano-portugués, americano, y sefardí); Teoría e historia*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1953), 2: 358.

34. Beutler, *Studien zum spanischen Romancero*, pp. 174-75.