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Vander: *Ghost Dance Songs and Religion of a Wind River Shoshone Woman*

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several ways to strengthen this kind of study. It is an approach well worth considering in addressing the interpretation of other ceramic assemblages in the Great Basin.

Griset's concluding paper is primarily methodological. She notes that the analysis of ceramics includes two distinct, but related processes--description analysis and interpretive analysis. The former is concerned with the description of artifacts, in this case pottery, through the use of typologies. She rightly points out that a typology is a tool to achieve some research objective, not an end in itself. Different typologies will answer different kinds of problems. Griset argues that different kinds of approaches to Great Basin ceramics are appropriate, and this volume demonstrates that such is indeed beginning to take place. She also emphasizes the need for standardization of terminology and measurement so as to facilitate intersite and interregional comparison. Interpretive analysis, on the other hand is concerned with the explanation of how the descriptive data relate to the cultural whole. Ceramic data can and should be used to examine particular research problems.

Perhaps one of the most useful aspects of this volume is an annotated and indexed bibliography on Great Basin ceramics and those of adjacent regions. Although not comprehensive, it is far superior to anything available on this topic to date, and should serve those interested in the study of ceramics in the Great Basin well.

On the whole, this volume is an important addition to the study of ceramics in the Great Basin. It reflects an intensified interest in pottery studies which usually have had a very low priority, and presents a number of new approaches to pottery analysis (for the Great Basin anyway), and the implications of such analysis for the under-

standing of past cultural systems. It certainly indicates a trend toward new directions in ceramic studies--something that is greatly needed in the Basin.



*Ghost Dance Songs and Religion of a Wind River Shoshone Woman*, Judith Vander. Los Angeles: Program in Ethnomusicology, Department of Music, University of California, Los Angeles, *Monograph Series in Ethnomusicology* No. 4, 1986, 76 pp., \$9.95.

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The songs and beliefs of Emily Hill are a principal focus for this examination of the Wind River Shoshone interpretation and development of the Ghost Dance religious movement. Emily Hill may be the only contemporary practitioner of the Naraya, or Wind River Shoshone Ghost Dance religion, and this study is unique in the literature in considering the largest number of songs from one singer. An examination of idiosyncratic features of individual songs, rather than a sole focus on shared common traits, yields a rare depth of analysis in which many dimensions of general cultural and historical significance are brought to bear. Vander goes beyond a technical interpretation of musical and poetic style to identify roots of artistic form in a general Shoshone ideology and world view.

From interviews with Emily Hill, as well as an examination of song texts, Vander identifies primary foci of the *Naraya* as the prevention and remedy of illness and disaster, and the maintenance and revitalization of good health and the fruitful cycles of

nature. She identifies an erosion of Plains influence as she traces the beliefs and purposes of the *Naraya* to the cultural concerns which shaped them. These concerns reflect an older Great Basin culture and belief complex, as well as contemporary issues. She points out that Shoshone adaptation of Plains culture elements occurred between the relatively brief period extending from the early eighteenth century acquisition of the horse to the mid-nineteenth century onset of the reservation period. No longer able to hunt and forced to undertake farming as a way of life, the Shoshone were beset by illness and community misery, which became primary concerns of all modern Shoshone religious institutions (Shimkin 1942). Vander states that the *Naraya* is no exception, and she observes key differences between the Plains and Wind River Shoshone interpretations of the Ghost Dance. Unlike the Plains Ghost Dance songs, the *Naraya* songs express no open hostility to whites or belief that whites will perish, and there is no description of the return of the buffalo and recreation of the Plains way of life. Citing probable Great Basin origins for Shoshone culture, with foraging for food a central concern, Vander notes that the Shoshone song texts refer to a past of hunting and gathering, expressed in a dependence on nature. Nature images predominate, and the concern with the renewal of nature is congruent with contemporary farming and gardening as well as older patterns of foraging. Vander shows that the Shoshone *Naraya*, as expressed in Emily Hill's songs, adheres strongly to Wovoka's Great Basin Paiute version of the Ghost Dance religion, including the concern for relief from illness and the belief that Indians and whites would live together in harmony. She illustrates a great similarity between Emily Hill's songs and Paiute Ghost Dance songs, seen for instance in texts

concerning spirit life after death. She relates these similarities to elements reported in earlier Wind River Shoshone beliefs, although the extent to which these beliefs have been maintained by the Shoshone, as opposed to being re-introduced through Great Basin, Paiute forms is not established here.

Vander begins her musical analysis by confirming the results of Herzog's (1935) study of the Plains Ghost Dance songs, which he traces to Great Basin Paiute origins. Herzog's overview of musical style, based on an examination of selected parameters of shared traits, emphasizes an essential simplicity and symmetry of form; narrow melodic range, phrases ending on the tonic, and symmetrical sections in which every phrase is repeated. Vander finds these features in Emily Hill's songs, but proceeds further to focus on a detailed study of unique features in each song. With this major methodological shift, she uncovers patterns of complexity and asymmetry in the songs, revealing "another truth to their nature and essence, one that balanced this first truth in an opposing and yet complementary manner" (p. 17). Complexity and asymmetry, accomplished through slight variations from a symmetrical framework of paired repeated patterns, are not presented as merely logical variants of simplicity and symmetry, but as artistic principles in their own right. Vander identifies these properties with Witherspoon's (1977) concept of "dynamic symmetry," in which asymmetrical and symmetrical elements are integrated through inexact and unequal pairing and balancing. These properties are present in the textual as well as musical structures, but are manifested differently in the various songs: in one song rhythms may be slightly varied, while in another song there may be incomplete repetition of texts in a repeated

phrase. The shift in focus from a more dogmatic coding of shared traits (such as, "phrases ending on the tonic") to unique features in each song to arrive at a more subtle and more complete explication of underlying artistic properties illustrates the value of intensified fieldwork in producing a deep and sensitively articulated analysis. In an examination of any art form, it is reasonable to presume that on many levels aesthetic principles will be accomplished through an unending variety of devices, with the principles rather than the specific means of their production being carried over.

Vander notes Witherspoon's use of the flow and flux found in nature as a paradigm for dynamic symmetry, and she proposes nature as a model for the dynamic integration and interrelation of elements which she identifies in all of the songs. Beyond the predominance of nature themes in the texts, Vander cites the interrelatedness seen in aspects of nature as a major binding force in artistic form. For instance, gradual shifts of tonal centers occur between song sections, and elements of music and text are carried over between sections. That Indians themselves hold the interrelatedness of all parts of nature as a critical part of their cultural world view is expressed by Deloria, Jr. (1979:299) whom she quotes in another context, "All things are related. This fundamental Premise undergirds all Indian tribal religions and determines the relations of all parts of creation one to another." I applaud Vander's identification of essential ideological principles operating in Shoshone religious art, and my own fieldwork with the Northern Ute suggests an additional fundamental premise which may address some of Vander's findings; the belief in the animate nature of all things appears ineluctably in forms of American Indian art and thought (see, for instance, Romeo 1985 and Reynolds

n.d.). This concept of the universe as animate extends beyond a belief in the presence of spirit in natural objects such as water and rocks. Northern Utes say, for instance, that a dance itself has its own developing life form. Andrus (1979) described tribal religions in general as viewing the world as a continuing process of creation, with truth constantly realized in ceremonial experience as opposed to being embedded in dogmatic laws. This means that philosophy itself is a living process. The omnipresent belief in animism may relate to the "dynamic" aspects of artistic form which Vander explicates, and the "continuing" nature of tribal religions may bear on instances where she finds changing meanings for text translations given by one informant over time or between informants at one time. She reports a sense that "much of the meaning of the text still lies locked inside" (p. 39). Jorgensen (1972) quoted Northern Ute as saying that no one person knows the complete meaning of the Sun Dance. The continuing development of religious dance forms as a living process yielding truth allows for changes in meaning and partial realization of the whole as the process unfolds; multiple meanings may be held in suspension and resolved at a later date.

Overall, the sensitivity of the author, developed in intensive fieldwork with one subject, makes this a superb study of Wind River Shoshone Ghost Dance songs and beliefs. Additional benefits include transcriptions of the Ghost Dance songs which appear in the monograph.

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