Notes on the History of Spanish Anthropology

Mária Cátedra

Maryellen Beider

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3. For cocktails: "They should be cold, strong, a little sweet and a little bitter, and you must drink them while they are still laughing at you."

Radcliffe-Brown's personal cocktail invention—which he called the "Claire de Lune" and Nash calls the "Silver Shadow"—consisted of one-third gin, one-third kirschwasser, one-sixth lemon juice, and one-sixth orgeat syrup. (Our fancy piqued, we went out searching for orgeat (almond) syrup, but found the concoction a bit too sweet for a scotch and soda palate.) (G. W. S.)

BIBLIOGRAPHICA ARCANA

I. NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF SPANISH ANTHROPOLOGY

Mária Cátedra
Department of Social Anthropology
University of Madrid
(translated by Maryellen Bieder)

While in theory anthropology builds communication between cultures, its short history has produced great schools or national anthropologies, such as the English, the American, the French and the German. Inasmuch as the diversity of focuses, methods and scientific traditions enriches the discipline, I will attempt to point out very briefly the comparatively more modest and generally little-known Spanish contributions to the different sub-fields of anthropology: ethnography, general anthropology and social anthropology.

The earliest history of Spanish ethnography begins with the discovery of the New World. The diversity of life styles and the difference between the Spaniards and the people of the New World provoked a "chain of response: after experiencing a certain degree of surprise, the Spaniard first registered astonishment, then began a search for the explanation of the strange phenomenon, and lastly exhibited the tendency to share this new knowledge." The Indians expressed their perception of the Spaniards through the symbolism of their codices and in their oral traditions, while the Spaniards described the New World in their letters, natural histories, accounts, reports, etc. In the 16th century, conquistadors, missionaries and administrators provided a quantity of ethnographic data unsurpassed at that time by any other nation. Although the focus is conditioned
by the politico-economic-religious structure of Golden Age Spain, these data omit very few of the aspects which are today considered central to anthropology. In many cases we have empathetic first-hand accounts, scrupulous, and to a degree, objective in nature. The contributions of Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Acosta, Fernández de Oviedo, Diego de Landa y Sahagún are better known, but excellent reports can be found in the works of Diego Durán, Cieza de León, Fray Toribio de Paredes, Valdés, Sarmiento de Gamboa and in the anonymous Relaciones de los Agustinos, among other sources. Paradoxically, Christian theology and the interests of the Crown, which at first sight might appear to have contaminated the objective understanding of other cultures, represent the very institutions which set in motion the gathering of data. The proof of this lies, on the one hand, in the wealth of material on religion, beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, and, on the other, in the quantity of documents in the archives which are filled with ethnographic data--royal communiqués and decrees and reports ordered by the king. Of interest also is the "feedback" which the impact of the New World produced on 16th century Spain, especially in the economic, judicial-theological and religious spheres.

Less well known than the descriptions of America by Spaniards are the 17th century descriptions of a very different place: the Far East. The Augustinian Fathers Fray Martín de Rada and Jerónimo Marín and the soldiers Miguel de Loarca and Pedro Sarmiento comprised a delegation which departed from the Philippines for China at the end of the 16th century, 2 and the Relaciones of Rada and Loarca are excellent. In 1625 the Jesuit Adriano de las Cortes was captured by the Chinese and from captivity wrote his Viaje a la China, which has recently been studied by the anthropologist Carmelo Lisón. 3 The manuscript is an interesting example of the Jesuit's gifts of observation, objective description, attempts at interpretation, and personal verification of data. Following the ecological-demographic introduction comes an attempt to measure the standard of living and the sources of wealth, and a description of the legal system, etiquette, education and, in greater detail, religion (gods and cults, priests and funeral rites).

The earliest history of Spanish anthropology can be dated from 1833, the year in which Vicente Adam published his Lecciones de antropología ético-político-religiosa, which was followed by, among others, the works of Varela de Montes and Febra Soldevilla. The first men to study anthropology were doctors, naturalists, lawyers, philosophers and philologists with broad interests within the area of general anthropology. The year 1865 saw the organization of the
first Spanish Anthropological Society and the publication of its official magazine, the Revista de Antropología; in 1875 Dr. González Velasco, the founder of the Society, created the Anthropological Museum, today called the Ethnological Museum. At this time scientific expeditions were taking place; one to the Pacific which left Cádiz in 1862, one to Greece and other Mediterranean countries in 1871, one to the west coast of Africa in 1887, and one to the Congo and Guinea in 1890. Anthropology and its problems were amply treated in the scientific and literary circles of the day, principally in the Athenaeums. Foreign anthropologists were read and discussed with great interest and personal contact was maintained with similar anthropological institutions.

From at least as early as 1877, Social Anthropology was being taught in Spain. In that year Hermenegildo Giner published the curricula of Biology and Anthropology at the Institución Libre de Enseñanza in Madrid. The part of the course curricula which bears the title "Social Anthropology" consists of 20 lessons covering such topics as ecology, politics, economics, kinship, religion and morality. Of additional interest is the fact that the practical focus of the curriculum is not on the classic primitive societies but on small rural communities. In addition to teaching anthropology, the Institución Libre de Enseñanza organized visits for its students to the Anthropological Museum and even provided questionnaires for use on fieldtrips. The founder of the Institución Libre, Francisco Giner, taught courses on Social Organization, gave lectures and short courses on Anthropology for women, and even proposed teaching Anthropology in the elementary schools (1883).

A survey of field research, including not only descriptive but analytic studies, must mention the contributions of Valero and Berenguer in Guinea in 1891, especially in the areas of social and political organization; Fray Antonio de Valencia in the Palau Islands in 1892 for his analysis of the native concepts of time and religion; Dr. Cabeza on Ponape in the Caroline Islands in 1893 for his description of a Hawaiian-type classificatory system; and P. A. Paterno for his interpretations of Tagalog culture in 1890.

Starting in 1881, the year in which Machado y Alvarez published the outline for the constitution of the Spanish Folklore society, regional studies in Spain itself began to mushroom, making use of questionnaires and local interviews, and various regional folklore societies were formed. This growing interest crystallized in an excellent
national survey, Información promovida por la Sección de Ciencias Morales y Políticas del Ateneo de Madrid, en el campo de las costumbres populares y en los tres hechos más característicos de la vida: el nacimiento, el matrimonio y la muerte (1901-02). The 289 replies received from all regions of Spain, once collated, yielded a total of 3500 separate entries on birth, 20,000 on marriage and 15,000 on death and burial.

A forerunner of the modern studies of rural groups or communities, insofar as these studies are limited to a specific geographical area or small human group, are the studies carried out on the so-called races maudites or marginal Spanish groups, the majority of which live in the north of the peninsula (the Agotes, the Vaqueiros de Alzada, the Maragatos, and the Pasiegos). Neighboring France shared the interest in these marginal groups, and it was specifically a French writer who first employed the generic term races maudites to refer to them. Looked at with a certain degree of aversion by other people, the marginal groups form communities which exhibit a different life style from that of their neighbors and which practice a forced endogamy. An attempt was made to explain the ostracism to which such groups were subjected by conjecturing about their supposed origines maudites. The phenomenon began in the 18th century, but it was only popularized and embel lished in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. In their attempt to trace, through analogy and similarities, the relationship between the present-day community and the supposed races maudites, anthropologists accepted dubious etymologies and questionable archaeological finds, abused the enthusiasm for measuring crania and creating physical typologies, and examined customs, beliefs and institutions. As a result of popular myths and regional traditions, the most widely accepted origins for all these groups were the "Moors" and the "Jews" of different eras of Spanish history. Scholars elevated these theories and other more "erudite" theories of origins to the category of "scientific facts," even though they were mere conjectures; popular racism gave way to scientific racism in the name of the new discipline of Anthropology. Nevertheless, even with such problematical goals and with limited and dubious methods of investigation, the study of life styles, customs, beliefs and traditions continued: The Vaqueiros, for example were the subject of almost 50 studies, including books, magazines and monographs--studies still of interest today for the historical dimension they contribute to present-day fieldwork among this group.
In this century Spanish anthropology has experienced a long period of inertia, broken only occasionally by the outstanding contributions of a few professional anthropologists: prior to the Civil War, L. de Hoyos Sáinz; following the war, Caro Baroja in the field of ethnology, together with C. Esteva Fabregat. More recently, Carmelo Lisón launched the study of Social Anthropology in Spain. Starting in the 1970's when departments of anthropology were formed at the Universities of Madrid and Barcelona, Spanish Anthropology began to experience greater opportunities and a more promising future. With this in mind, the first Meetings and Symposia of Socio-cultural Anthropology have been held (at Puertomarín and Segovia in 1974, at Valle de los Caídos in 1975, and at Barcelona in 1977), generally followed by the publication of the papers presented.

NOTES

1. Carmelo Lisón Tolosana, "Pequeña historia del nacimiento de una disciplina" in Antropología Social en España (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1971), p. 14. Professor Lisón has carried out the most extensive study of the History of Anthropology in Spain. I have drawn from this and other works of his in preparing this article.


3. The manuscript can be found in the section on Spanish manuscripts in the Library of the British Museum.


6. Monographs on Spanish communities are relatively recent, and the majority are by Anglo-Saxon anthropologists. Among studies published in Spanish by Spaniards are: Julio Caro Baroja, Los Vascos (San Sebastián, 1949); Carmelo Lisón, Antropología cultural de Galicia (Madrid, 1971) and Perfiles simbólico-morales de la cultura gallega (Madrid, 1974); I. Moreno, Propiedad, clases sociales y hermandades en la Baja
Andalucía (Madrid, 1971); E. Luque Baena, Estudio antropológico-social de un pueblo del Sur (Madrid, 1974); J. Mira, Un estudio d'antropología social al País Valencíá (Barcelona, 1974); and T. San Roman, Vecinos gitanos (Madrid, 1975).

7. F. Michel, Historie des Races Maudites de la France et de l'Espagne (Paris, 1847), who drew his information on the Spanish groups from M. de Lardizabal y Uribe, Apología por los Agotes de Navarra y los Chuetas de Mallorca, con una breve disgresión a los Vaqueros de Asturias (Madrid, 1786).

8. For a present-day look at these marginal people, see Julio Caro Baroja, Los pueblos del norte de la península ibérica (Madrid, 1943), and the short article by Lisón "Sobre áreas culturales en España" in Ensayos de antropología social, pp. 40-108.

9. Under the direction of Lisón, doctoral dissertations have been written on the Vaqueiros de Alzada, Agotes, Maragatos and Chuetas.

[Editorial Note: Although it was not possible in the time or space available to ask the author to comment on the problem, one cannot help noting an obvious foreshortening of the recent history of Spanish anthropology, which one assumes bears some relation to the political history of modern Spain. (G.W.S.)]

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