

Andrew Cowell, Alonzo Moss, Sr. and William J. C’Hair eds. *Arapaho Stories, Songs, and Prayers: a Bilingual Anthology*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015. Pp. x + 521 pp.

<http://www.oupres.com/ECommerce/Book/Detail/1891/arapaho%20stories%20%20song%20%20and%20prayers>

Arapaho Stories, Songs, and Prayers continues the collaborative work of linguist Andrew Cowell and Arapaho scholar Alonzo Moss along with the added knowledge and language skills of William C’Hair. In Cowell and Moss’ previous work, *The Arapaho Language*, I noted that while the utility of that work would be of particular benefit to linguists, the authors could have been a bit more informative with their discussions about the Arapaho language in ways that could serve the language interests of non-linguist. *Arapaho Stories, Songs and Prayers* has accomplished this and more, making this an exceptional work that will serve the interests of linguist, students of Arapaho and the Arapaho people themselves.

Arapaho Stories, Songs and Prayers, has been divided into several sections that cross cut important aspects of Arapaho culture and society through various examples, analysis and discussions of creation stories, lessons derived from Nih’oo3oo (trickster) stories, legends and anecdotal stories, speeches, prayers, and songs. Cowell, Moss and C’Hair’s work marks a major contribution to the field of linguistics by virtue of the linguistic richness of these stories, songs and prayers, and because the time period that many of these were collected was prior to the 1900s. A striking feature about these older stories is how the storytellers use the language in ways that is not commonly used by contemporary speakers, a fact noted by Alonzo Moss that I also marveled at when teaching the narrative of a monolingual Southern Arapaho speaker who was born in the late 1800s.

A notable part of this work is the introduction of each of the Creation Account stories where the authors discuss the morphological and symbolic relevance of how certain words and phrases are used. One such example is in “The Arapaho Migration Across the Missouri River...” (p. 55) when the authors explain how the statement, “wo’uu3ee3ein” could have multiple meanings as well as being used by a speaker to express exasperation and condemnation. Such valued discussion is continued in the introduction of the second section, “Trickster (Nih’oo3oo/White Man”) Stories.” An example of this can be found when the authors discuss the use of the morpheme “cécih” to denote “soft.” In the story this is expressed as céciheinóón, and occurs when Nih’oo3oo hears a drum making a soft drumming sound.

In the story of Céboh’oowuníhou’oo’ (“Pemmican Floating Downstream” (p. 92)), told by Cleaver Warden in 1899, Cowell relates that a particular aspect of this story comes with the use of word forms that communicate insults, derogatory statements, as well as a speaker’s particular view of a situation. In the introduction of “Nih’oo3oo Pursued By the Rolling Skull” (p. 102) within this same section, Cowell points out the manner in which the verb for rolling has been modified to elaborate on a variety of situations, such as; toyoni’oxuunotii’wo’oo – to smoothly roll along, no’otiiwo’oo – to reach a place by

rolling, and kohkotiiwo'oo – to penetrate something by rolling. All of these Nih'oo3oo stories are rife with such elements of Arapaho that would have been normally understood when the language was used daily by all Arapaho speaking age groups. The authors bringing to light of the subtle meanings of such words will be of great benefit to both scholars of Algonquian languages and students seeking to learn Arapaho.

The third section of the book is devoted to “Legends/Myths,” many of which have implications for ceremonies. The majority of these are all quite long to tell, covering over 180 pages of text between sixteen stories, and were primarily collected from Cleaver Warden by Alfred Kroeber. While all of these stories provide a variety of linguistic diversity, of particular note is “The White Dog and The Woman” (p. 225), as it is within this story that a variety of old Arapaho terms for egotism, pride, and stubbornness, that for the most part have fallen out of use by contemporary speakers, is provided. Another story worth noting is “Open Brain or Tangled Hair” (p. 241) due to detailed explanations being given that are symbolically linked to culture heroes Found-In-The-Grass and Thunderbird, as well as to Sweat Lodge and Sun Dance Lodge ceremonies.

The section on “Animal Stories” begins with a familiar tale of a race between “The Turtle and the Rabbit” (p. 389), which is then followed by a tale of “The Skunk and the Rabbit” (p. 392). While all of stories within this section are filled with wonderful situational uses of Arapaho, I'll comment on the race between skunk and the rabbit. It is within this story that one finds polysynthetic words that create very comical expression that I also remember Jim Warden using while telling humorous stories to the delight of elder listeners during Sun Dance. An example from the story is when skunk quickly stops, turns around, and using a command form tells/insists that rabbit carefully look right in here, cihbéiisnei'ooóótoo. Of course Nih'oo3oo does and gets sprayed by skunk. This story, as Cowell explains, also gives reference to traditional medicinal practices at the end.

In the section on “Prayers and Ceremonial Speeches,” of particular note are speeches composed by Cleaver Warden of a father for a son and daughter's wedding. I am sure that the inclusion of these speeches will find use by a number of Arapaho fathers at the weddings of their sons and daughters, which essentially will honor Cleaver Warden and the authors for including it in this collection.

Following the last section of the book - that includes songs sung as lullabies, love songs, songs for Age-Grade Society, Crow Dance, Ghost Dance, Sun Dance, hand games, and war - is an appendices section. This will be particularly useful for learners of Arapaho as it lists common prefixes, suffixes, particles and nouns.

The combined efforts of Andrew Cowell, Alonzo Moss and William C'Hair have produced an exceptional work on the Arapaho language. As I progressed through the book I thought how Cowell's gaining the combined guidance and knowledge of Moss and C'Hair has resulted in the perfect team to discuss and bring to light the complex subtleties of Arapaho, and found myself looking ahead in anticipation for their next collaborative work on Arapaho. It is thus with extreme sadness that on June 2, 2015 the Arapaho

people mourned the passing of Alonzo Moss Sr. and I felt the sadness that comes with the passing of a person I deeply admired and respected, and whose humor and company I immensely enjoyed. May *Arapaho Stories, Songs, and Prayers* stand as a lasting tribute to a man who spent the better part of his life as a true scholar of Arapaho working tirelessly in the interest of keeping Arapaho alive.

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