

## THE ANNALS OF IOWA

ronment. Family, folklore, and religion were vital elements which kept most slaves from accepting the master's definition of his property as inferior and worthless except as a work animal. To Escott, the remarkable aspect of slavery was not the degraded condition of its survivors but the level of humanity which they retained in such an impossible situation.

As Escott notes, Phillips was not totally wrong when he questioned the reliability of the narratives. An individual of advanced years might remember incorrectly. But eight hundred separate persons recalling a similar condition increase the probability that such a condition existed. Unlike B. A. Botkin, whose *Lay My Burden Down* of 1945 was an impressionistic sampling of the narratives, Escott categorized all available narratives and tabulated his findings. He also made allowances for the over-representation of house slaves and children in the sample. His conclusions tend to be cautious, understated, and well-documented.

*Slavery Remembered* will not end the debate over the nature of slavery. No works have earned that distinction. But this thorough examination of a major body of evidence should stand as one of the sources without which later studies will be incomplete.

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*Ethnicity on the Great Plains*, edited by Frederick C. Luebke. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1980. pp. xxxiii, 237. Illustrations, index, maps, notes, tables. \$15.95.

Traditional studies of ethnicity in America have described urban communities as being the preservers of immigrant societies. The American cities' monopoly on ethnic studies in the United States exists only because recent scholars have neglected the colorful histories of the many non-Indian ethnic groups who settled in rural America. One ignored region has been the Great Plains. This collection of essays, edited by Frederick C. Luebke, demonstrates that many foreign born peoples moved onto the Great Plains and, like their urban counterparts, altered, retained, or strengthened their ethnic identities.

The authors of the articles that Luebke has assembled originally presented their papers at the second annual symposium sponsored by the

## *Book Reviews*

University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Center for Great Plains Studies. Because the Center has encouraged a multi-discipline approach to the study of the Great Plains, scholars from the fields of anthropology, folklore, geography, history, and sociology contributed papers to the Great Plains symposium on ethnicity. With so many disciplines represented, Luebke employed a broad definition of cultural communities within the Great Plains states in his selection of material rather than a physiographic conception of the Great Plains region. As a result, some papers discuss ethnic settlements outside the Great Plains environment, but within the various states or provinces that are part of the Great Plains. The essays range from a description of a Hungarian community in Saskatchewan to a study of Czech and Mexican cultural patterns in Nueces country, Texas.

In the first selection, "Historic Approaches to the Study of Rural Ethnic Communities," the author, Kathleen Neils Conzen, describes the study of rural ethnicity as a neglected area. She argues that research into settlement patterns on the Great Plains is an obvious place to begin since ethnic communities have been established on the Great Plains. Because most of the authors, within the collection, tend to confine their work to a general discussion of a particular ethnic group's Great Plains experiences, future researchers will have to respond to her challenge.

Of all the selections, Linda Dégh's article, "Folk Religion as Ideology for Ethnic Survival: The Hungarians of Kipling, Saskatchewan," is one of the more revealing. Dégh concludes that the Hungarian Highlanders and Lowlanders who settled upon the Canadian prairie became more aware of their ethnic background after a major religious confrontation occurred between the two groups.

Overall, the editor maintained quality in selecting materials for the book, even though there is minimal discussion of the Great Plains environment as an agent in preserving or diminishing a group's ethnicity. Nevertheless, Luebke compiled a useful work, one that was needed as a starting point for future ethnic studies on the Great Plains.

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