

Old Songs and Singing Games. Collected and edited by Richard Chase.

Pp. xxii + 49.

New York: Dover, 1972. Reprint of 1938 edition (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press). \$1.00.

An Introduction to English Folk Song. By Maud Karpeles.

Pp. viii + 120, notes, bibliography, discography, index.

London: Oxford University Press, 1973. \$1.15.

Reviewed by Graham Kash

Both these books are designed for persons who may not be familiar with folk-songs, but the approaches are quite different.

The main purpose of Chase's short collection is to provide schoolchildren with an opportunity to participate in the folklore of singing and dancing. Within this limited aim, the book has considerable merit. There are suggestions for teachers. The songs and dances are arranged in ascending order of difficulty. Helpful dance-diagrams are included. The twenty-one items range widely, covering such categories as ballads ("The Farmer's Curst Wife"), play-party songs ("The Noble Duke of York"), and nonsense songs ("The Oakum in the Woods"). And all the lore has a traditional background.

But from a strictly folkloristic viewpoint, the book is a mixed bag -- largely unsatisfactory because of the frequent use of composite versions (as in other works edited by Chase, such as his collection of Jack tales). Chase defends this treatment on the grounds of aesthetics (pp. v - vi). He could have considered the alternative of using the particular authentic versions which he considers to be the most artistic. He is more of a transformer than a collector -- but at least he does reveal what he is doing.

Maud Karpeles, a follower and assistant of the late Cecil Sharp, is likewise concerned with the aesthetic experience of participating in folksinging (p. vii). But she does not believe that aesthetics can justify the wholesale alteration of texts and tunes. She criticizes and praises various collectors according to their respect for authentic collecting (Chapter 8, "The Folk Song Society and Later Collections," pp. 82 - 91). Still she shows some toleration -- perhaps too much -- for the collating of those songbooks which are intended for the public and not for scholars.

Throughout her book, Miss Karpeles seeks to bridge this gap between the populace and the academicians. Generally she succeeds, though it is doubtful whether the chapters on music could be thoroughly comprehended by a novice. She surveys such matters as the definition of folksong (involving Sharp's "continuity, variation, and selection," p. 3); the mutual relations of folk and art music; and the categories of folksong. Frequently she prints texts and tunes to illustrate her statements. Always she is under the posthumous influence of Cecil Sharp -- a beneficial influence which unites fieldwork with a deep understanding of music.

The last three chapters (8 - 10) are the most provocative, for here the author gives relevant facts and speculations about the current and future state of folk music. She concludes that mass communication has discouraged folksong in general, and variation in particular. Yet, she reasonably proposes, the modern media may paradoxically help to spread an awareness of folk-song.

Overall, Miss Karpeles provides both an introductory course and a refresher course. The abundant bibliographical aids will help both the novice and the seasoned scholar. The book contains little that is really new, but a great deal that deserves to be remembered.

An Annotated Bibliography of Javanese Folklore. By James Danandjaja.  
Pp. xxx + 157, author index, maps.

Berkeley, California: Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, University of California, Occasional Paper No. 9, April 1972. No price indication.

Reviewed by Sandra Brown Eminov

Mr. Danandjaja is one of perhaps very few individuals competent to compile and annotate a bibliography of Javanese folklore. As Alan Dundes indicates in his glowing preface, Mr. Danandjaja's cultural and educational background is peculiarly suited to such a work. An Indonesian of Chinese descent, the author attended Dutch schools, studied English literature, and eventually received the equivalent of an M.A. in Anthropology at the University of Indonesia. After several years of teaching and field research, he pursued graduate work at Berkeley, studying Asian Studies and Folklore. The Bibliography was his M.A. thesis in the Berkeley folklore program. This unusual combination of wide-ranging linguistic skills and anthropological and folkloric training contribute to the excellence of the present work.

Though Mr. Danandjaja makes no pretense of having included all published works on Javanese folklore, he has done an admirable job of providing a fairly complete bibliography of pertinent articles, monographs, and books written between the early nineteenth century and the present. In an informative introduction, he surveys the field of Javanese folklore, outlining major works in the various genres, and indicating the status of folklore studies in Indonesia where folklore "...remains a stranger to Indonesian academic life..." (p. xxvi).

Two features of the Bibliography are of interest so far as content and arrangement are concerned. Most basic is Mr. Danandjaja's reliance on Alan Dundes's definition of the folk as "...any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor." This enables the compiler to include materials usually associated with the Javanese Great Tradition; articles on village dance may be found tucked between monographs about Javanese court performances. Mr. Danandjaja is justified in including materials from both the Great and Little Traditions for, in Java, "There is no fundamental difference between the two; they vary only in their degree of refinement, whether of movement or of costume and ornamentation. One is reminded here of Gesunken Kulturgut... [but]...there is also a diffusion in the reverse direction" (p. xx).

The arrangement of the Bibliography follows Jan Brunvand's tripartite division of folklore into verbal, partly verbal, and non-verbal forms. It appears that the Brunvand classification is used for the sake of convenience: surely, it is not peculiarly suited to any non-Western folklore corpus. Mr. Danandjaja writes, though, that Brunvand's system "...has so far proved satisfactory" (p. xxv). In cases of items belonging to overlapping genres, cross-references are provided.