

time, McLaughlin's research is the first systematical one. In short, her results are that the robe could have also been acquired in the 1820s and its ethnic origin is unsure as well. On the basis of three individual accounts – one written by the French-Canadian fur trader Jean-Baptiste Truteau in 1796, the recollections of George Sword (Lakota), and those of Roaming Scout (Pawnee) recorded in the 1910s – Raymond J. DeMallie and Douglas R. Parks examine the motives of Plains Indian warfare. Åke Hultkrantz and Christer Lindberg trace the development of warfare between the Shoshone and the Blackfoot; like the authors of the previous essay, they also use statements by both Native North Americans and Euro-Americans. It is proven by David Fridtjof Halaas and Andrew E. Masich in a very impressive way that ledger book drawings are trustworthy sources. Their examples from the Cheyenne Dog Soldier ledger book show how even details can give evidence of historical events.

“Symbolism” in connection with warfare is the topic of the essays of the fourth part. Thus, Winfield Coleman's research on shamanic symbolism in the art of Cheyenne berdache or transvestite men covers not only their female side but also their male one, as well as their special religious status which associates them with war aspects, too. The two following contributions connect to warfare more obviously. Imre Nagy examines the spiritual oeuvre of the Cheyenne Low Forehead, which led to a distribution of protective shield designs among his people. Using all the sources he could obtain, e.g., information from James Mooney's field notes as well as the shield models he commissioned, depictions of shields in Cheyenne ledger drawings, and one still existing specimen, he procures a table of all shield designs he found arranged according to their similarity and a history of their ownership. Spiritual protection also plays a role in Paul Raczka's article on war medicines of the northern Plains. Taking those of the Blackfoot as a starting point, for which he provides various clues of relations to the bundle complex which was strongly developed among them, he presents further examples from neighboring tribes.

Although “Memories and Change,” the heading of part five, doesn't sound as if it had anything to do with warfare, its essays partly contribute to this theme. George P. Horse Capture gives a short description of the Blackfoot willow stick horses, which were in use as children's toys at least till the 1940s. Mdewakanton Women and their strategies to survive are the focus of attention in Barbara Feezor Buttes's essay. After the 1862 uprising, the members of this Santee Sioux tribe rightly feared revengeful actions by white Minnesotans and tried to omit contacts. The following restriction to reservations and the influence of missionaries made it difficult to maintain the collecting and usage of plants for medical purposes. Hence, these women kept their memories alive by depicting medicine plants in their beadworks, and their recollections are very interesting in general. The last three articles are also rather short, but nevertheless cover their topics adequately. Richard

A. Pohrt shares his knowledge of a Gros Ventre tent design with the reader, which he acquired from two different persons as a youth. Only later in life did he come to the conclusion that the information he obtained then referred to one and the same painting. Carling I. Malouf describes the interesting life story of a Hidatsa man. Bear-In-The-Water alias Adlai Stevenson was born in 1866. He belonged to the group of a Hidatsa chief who decided after an argument with other chiefs and with the responsible agent to live in a separate village outside of the Fort Berthold Reservation in 1870, where they stayed until 1891. Although he was fairly advanced in years at the time of the interview, he had vivid memories of his youth when he worked as a scout for the U.S.-Army and as deputy federal marshal. The last contributor to the publication speaks of his own recollections. When Joseph Medicine Crow was a child it was arranged by adult relatives during a friendly visit to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation that a Sioux boy could count coup on him as a member of the Crow, their former enemies. As a young adult, Medicine Crow participated in World War II and was afterwards honored for his war deeds by his elders.

Part six is a small appendix, which comprises information on the cover and the chapter illustrations as well as on the authors, the latter of which was compiled by the publisher Dietmar Kuegler, and an index.

What the authors of this volume have in common is their long involvement in Native North American anthropological research. But it is also a scientific community with different backgrounds; some are university-trained persons whereas others learned by doing, and some are descendants from Native North Americans, whereas others have only Euro-American ancestors. Nevertheless, their contributions are very homogeneous insofar as the topics are well researched, the style is very readable, and they use various types of sources such as published and unpublished written documents, indigenous pictographs, photographs, and drawings by Euro-Americans, as well as items from the material culture. All these traits are characteristic of Ewers's publications, hence, he would probably have liked and enjoyed this contribution in his remembrance just as well as I do.

Dagmar Siebelt

**Toffin, Gérard** : Ethnologie. La quête de l'autre. Paris : Éditions Acropole, 2005. 157 pp. ISBN 2-7357-0237-5. Prix : € 22.00

L'ouvrage très richement illustré de G. Toffin, directeur de recherches au Centre National de Recherche Scientifique et spécialiste des civilisations de l'Himalaya, se présente comme une introduction certes succincte, mais très bien étayée, à l'ethnologie. Il montre assez longuement d'où elle vient, comment elle s'est constituée, puis quelles ont été les principaux courants de pensée qui l'ont traversée et les principales personnalités qui l'ont illustrée; il montre enfin ce qu'elle devient aujourd'hui où les conditions qui ont présidé à son premier développement ont disparu et où elle est l'objet

à la fois d'engouements et de fortes remises en question. Le mode d'écriture adopté par l'auteur est d'une totale limpidité et évite tout jargon. L'exposé historique et théorique est introduit par le récit de sa première expérience de "terrain" au Népal, et tout au long du texte on trouvera des touches à la première personne qui donnent à l'ensemble une coloration personnelle. Il fourmille en détails significatifs qu'on trouve difficilement ailleurs.

Comme manifestement le panorama esquissé par G. Toffin s'adresse au grand public, il serait mal venu de lui reprocher de s'être imposé des limites et donc d'avoir opéré des choix toujours difficiles en pareil cas. Il est question pour l'essentiel de trois ethnologies nationales : l'américaine, l'anglaise et la française. Comme presque toujours quand il s'agit d'auteurs français, la riche ethnologie de langue allemande est à peine effleurée. Je me réjouis par contre de voir que la distinction traditionnelle entre ethnographie, ethnologie et anthropologie a été maintenue, ce qui évite que tout soit noyé dans un concept fourre-tout.

La partie de l'ouvrage la plus innovante et sans doute la plus utile est la dernière : "L'ethnologie aujourd'hui". Du fait qu'au départ la discipline a été définie par un objet purement matériel, l'humanité "primitive", la crise était inévitable une fois que celle-ci s'est trouvée insérée tant bien que mal dans le monde moderne. L'auteur suit avec beaucoup d'attention les inévitables reconversions épistémologiques auxquelles notre discipline a été soumise. De la part des observateurs comme des observés, le regard a changé, et s'est même "inversé". De l'étude de sociétés qu'on croyait "simples", on en est venu aux complexes. D'une ethnologie de la distance – "astronomie des sciences humaines" –, on a passé de plus en plus à une ethnologie de la proximité, à une "ethnologie à la maison". Qu'on me permette de formuler un regret : on voit mal ce qui, sur le plan proprement théorique, a inspiré les nombreux courants de pensée qui ont succédé au structuralisme, un magma dans lequel il n'est pas facile de se retrouver.

Cet ouvrage vivant, même plaisant, et pourtant très solide, donne une image nuancée, réaliste et néanmoins optimiste d'une discipline qui en deux cents ans a toujours su trouver un nouveau souffle. Pierre Erny

**van den Borne, Francine:** *Trying to Survive in Times of Poverty and AIDS. Women and Multiple Partner Sex in Malawi.* Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 2005. 362 pp. ISBN 90-5589-223-0. Price: € 35.00

This book will be of interest to a wide range of readers: to scholars, and also lay people seeking to understand the AIDS epidemic in Africa and those whose main concern is to develop interventions to halt the spread of the epidemic, and to mitigate its effect on communities and individuals. It should also be read by fund-raisers who support intervention projects. In the case of the latter it demonstrates admirably the unique contribution that a careful and nuanced ethnographic approach can bring to understanding the epidemic, and

to providing a critique of the conventional wisdom lying behind the espousal of many approaches to intervention. This book exposes clearly how ungrounded and ill-prepared some of these have been, in their theoretical underpinning, and in their understanding of the societies that well-meaning activists have entered with "ready made" models and answers. An important lesson of the book is, furthermore, that even relatively short periods of creative ethnography *can* add a level of understanding seldom, if ever, achieved by other quantitative methods and large-scale and expensive survey work.

For those unfamiliar with the methods of anthropology and ethnography, the author's engaging and detailed description of how she conducted her research and how she approached the challenges of reaching beyond the widespread mistrust of her presence and motives, to develop an understanding of the complexities of women's (and men's) lives, will be both fascinating and instructive. Thus, while this book tells us a great deal about AIDS in Malawi, it also serves as a means of explaining to nonanthropologists, what the discipline "does" and can contribute to scientific debate. It would make excellent reading for graduate courses in research methodology, as well as in ethnography specifically.

For many professional colleagues and also for African AIDS and gender activists, there may be little that is startlingly new in this volume. The basic message of the chapters dealing with the ambiguities of marriage, the pressures on poor women to survive, and multi-partner sex, are well-trodden and understood highways to HIV infection. However, the descriptions of bar life and interactions in the world of AIDS are written with verve and sympathy. Similarly the author's assessment of the dynamics of social and sexual networking, and what van den Borne chooses to refer to as "bartering sex," add a perceptive commentary on the day-to-day dynamics behind the spread of infection. Indeed they capture a reality invoked only in narrative and sometimes in biographical writing. The researcher allows her research participants to "speak" for themselves in the many verbatim quotations out of which she skillfully weaves her thesis. That it echoes and deepens many "flatter" and less personalised descriptions and analyses by other researchers, is a positive commentary on the success of her methodology. I was particularly struck by the comments made by the author on the way in which the different strategies and tactics being developed and adopted by women in close contact with each other, clashed and impinged on their ongoing interaction. These women are not portrayed as victims and nor are their actions white-washed and overly justified. The author's use of the notion of agency, while not novel in itself, is well-worked out and ample evidence is given to support van den Borne's use of this theoretical construct as a major peg of her analysis. In summary, those seeking major new insights or breakthroughs in understanding the epidemic may be disappointed in this book. There are, in addition, no theoretical pyrotechnics. The theoretical underpinnings of the book are relatively