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Author
Biolsi, Thomas

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their new Pueblo neighbors? Were the Navajos adopting sheep, and switching over from agriculture to pastoralism? Were large numbers of Pueblo Indians—refugees from the Spanish Reconquest or perhaps even captives of the Navajo warrior—living with the Navajos and imposing a new way of life on them? (The Brugge thesis has other aspects to it, such as the adoption of polychrome pottery to replace the pointed bottom, burnt brown utility type, and the absorption of large amounts of Pueblo religion, but Roque Madrid gave us no clues about this.)

Hendricks and Wilson tend to answer these questions in the negative. There were not many pueblitos (stone houses), sheep, or Pueblo Indians seen on this expedition. It was not Roque Madrid's intention to observe social change, and he makes only unconfirming, slight references to housing, sheep, and refugees, and none on the vicissitude of Navajo religion and pottery. If only the Spanish—and the Navajos—had recorded what we want to know in our time. And so the Spanish did not—nor did they ever—learn what the Navajos were really like.

The Roque Madrid expedition thought it had cowed the Navajos and achieved peace, but the Navajos kept up their raiding for a number of years, when factors beyond Spanish or Navajo control, probably Ute expansion into Navajoland, caused them to make peace with the Europeans and Pueblos, and perhaps even an alliance against the new enemy to the north. Ultimately, even that peace would not last. The Spanish never found the key to a peaceful relationship with the Navajos, and never learned much about the *indios barbaros* on their flank.

William H. Lyon
Northern Arizona University

The Oglala People, 1841-1879: A Political History. By Catherine Price. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996. 234 pages. $40.00 cloth.

This is a work students of Plains Indian history and culture will want to put on the bookshelf between the classics *Red Cloud's Folk*, by George Hyde, and *The Sioux* by Royal Hassrick. It is a detailed ethnohistorical study of the political system, and the colonial situation, of the Oglala Lakota from the entry of traders into Lakota country, to the establishment of the Pine Ridge Agency on

the great Sioux Reservation. The study is based upon a range of archival sources not previously integrated, including U.S. Army records, transcripts of ethnographic interviews, and various Office of Indian Affairs records from both Washington and the Kansas City branch of the National Archives, including the voluminous—indeed, intimidating— "Letters Received." This is a thorough, solid and careful piece of scholarly work.

Price's aim is to examine both the intentions of the Americans regarding the political system of the Oglala, and the political strategies of the Oglala in the evolving colonial context. She brings to light crucial complexities in both areas. Her central theme is the idea that the United States attempted to deal with the Lakota as if they were a "sovereign nation" in the Western sense—possessing a *centralized* sovereign—a king, or a legislature, for example—standing at the head of a *corporate* "nation", a sovereign that could execute international agreements that would be binding, legally and morally, on all "citizens". The American assumption—or hope—was that Oglala political leaders had "the ability to dictate or control the behavior of others through the implementation of written laws, by threatening to use physical force against perceived offenders, and otherwise imposing culturally acceptable sanctions" (p. 60).

But, as Price shows, the Lakota political system never had this corporate-state nature. Pre-reservation Oglala political structure was predicated upon the autonomy of *tiyospaye* (bands), families, and individuals. Group decisions were arrived at through "consensus", but even this was not binding, since *tiyospaye*, families, and individuals were free to move elsewhere if they did not agree with the prevailing decisions, or if consensus broke down. Political authority was ordinarily—and, to some degree, cyclically—dispersed among various loci, including *tiyospaye* chiefs (*itancan*), family headmen, the Chiefs Society, councilors, the military societies, soldier chiefs (*blotahunka*), the appointed camp police (*akicita*), medicine men, *wakiconza*, shirt wearers, and individual women who exerted influence through their kinship relations with men. All these loci of power constituted a system of checks and balances, where power never resided in one place for long.

All this was, of course, very different from the kind of "sovereignty" the American negotiators were familiar with, and it was frustrating to the American negotiators who wanted to get the Oglala and all the Lakota to agree to things like allowing roads through their country, settling on a reservation, taking up farm-

ing, and relinquishing the Black Hills. So the government found it convenient to commission, and go on believing in the authority of, "head chiefs"—even if the phrase meant little or nothing to the Lakota. Price's book is a description of how the United States went about trying to do these things, and how the Oglala responded.

A good example of how things transpired is provided by negotiations at Ft. Laramie in 1866, at which federal commissioners sought to execute an agreement by which the Lakota would allow roads to be built through the Yellowstone and Powder River country. The "peace faction" of the Oglala and Sicangu (Brule) Lakota agreed to the treaty and received annuities in return, but the "war faction"—including Red Cloud, the "head chief" of the Lakota from the Americans' perspective—simply refused to accept the commissioners' gifts and left the council. There was no council, no authority, no person, authorized, or in a political position, to "speak for" all the Lakota.

The negotiations for the critical Ft. Laramie Treaty of 1868 are even more telling. While this treaty is today the central legal document and charter for the Great Sioux Nation (this treaty comes up whenever Lakota people speak about their political status as Indian people or about the Black Hills; anybody who has talked to Lakota people about sovereignty or Indian rights has heard a great deal about "The '68 Treaty"), at the time the shirt wearer American Horse reminded the commissioners that if the treaty were signed by only a portion of the people, it would be binding on only a portion of the people. Not even a shirt wearer could act for "the people". Red Cloud pointed out that "although he personally intended to honor the treaty, he did not possess the authority to control the warrior societies" (p. 83). As Price makes clear, it is problematic to assume that this treaty was an agreement between the United States and "The Great Sioux Nation" or "the Lakota", or "the Oglala", since it was signed by members of the peace faction; the war faction—where Crazy Horse was a leader—had refused to touch the pen. What exactly did this treaty mean from the Lakota perspective, and how might that alter our understanding of treaty interpretation in the 1990s?

Much of this dispersion of political authority was just traditional Lakota politics as usual. Some of it, Price explains, was a function of the crisis situation the Oglala people found themselves in. When defense was necessary, it was customary for authority to move from the civil chiefs and authorities to the military leaders

and warriors. Thus, it is not surprising that younger men not only claimed, but also clearly were allowed, more influence at a time when the United States was attempting to seize Lakota lands. During the 1876 Manypenny Commission negotiations for cession of the Black Hills, for example, one heavily-armed *blotahunka* rushed into the council session, ordered the chiefs to leave the negotiations, and even struck one chief with the flat side of his gunstock club. Such action by a younger man against an older chief, Price explains, could only have been appropriate when deadly serious strategic matters were at stake—like the sale of the Black Hills.

While this kind of non-centralized political process was not desirable from the American point of view, it had its distinct advantages for the Lakota people, even when confronting an industrial nation-state. Price's book makes obvious, I think, that we should not see pre-reservation Lakota politics as "factionalized" if that means hopelessly divided. True, Oglala people often went their separate ways, and there were even homicides committed over which way people should go. But it may be that both scholars and Oglala people themselves make entirely too much of historic Oglala "factionalism"—Red Cloud vs. Crazy Horse, Bear people vs. Smoke people, the war faction vs. the peace faction. Price's book shows that the divergent points of view actually proved useful to Oglala negotiators. The chiefs could always hold up the independence of the warriors to the American commissioners: the chiefs could not control the warriors if the warriors did not get what they demanded from the United States. There is powerful diplomatic craft in this kind of stance.

It will be very interesting and instructive to observe how this book is received among Oglala and other Lakota people, who, of course, have a developed oral history on the subject not dependent upon written sources. I can easily see this book being adopted as a textbook (perhaps, not uncritically) at Oglala Lakota College or Sinte Gleska University, and I would certainly like to hear the lectures on this book by Lakota Studies instructors (for example, my friend and colleague Victor Douville at Sinte Gleska), and the essays on it by Lakota college students. Certainly I look forward to reviews of it by Lakota scholars. In the meantime, I have learned a great deal about nineteenth-century Lakota history and culture from this book. It is meticulously researched, well argued, and very readable. It is a major contribution to, and I highly recommend it to my colleagues in Plains Indian studies.

Thomas Biolsi
Anthropology Department
Portland State University

The Raven Steals the Light: Native American Tales. By Bill Reid and Robert Bringhurst. Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc. 1996. 152 pages. $10.00 Paper.

Measuring just 41/4" wide by 5" tall, *The Raven Steals the Light* epitomizes a true pocket book. The wandering folklorist could easily carry this little gem in a backpack for those times when a good Haida folk tale would suit the mood of the weather or the woods. Inside covers as jet black and shiny as Raven's feathers, readers find 11 tales of the Haida, Native Americans from western Canada's Queen Charlotte Islands. Reid heard longer versions of these tales from the late Haida storyteller Henry Young of Skidegate. Consequently, research folklorists would not categorize these as "authentic" tales that they might use for research. Rather, Reid's interpretations represent only the core of Haida story ideas.

The tales, which poet Robert Bringhurst assisted in penning from Reid's memory, may conjure for some readers a potpourri of Biblical creation myths combined with Grimm's Brothers or Russian fairy tales. The title myth provides a good example Raven, through the eternal darkness at the beginning of time, overhears the patriarch who holds the light captive muttering about his treasure and his refusal to share it with anyone. This reminds readers of how the queen in "Rumpelstiltskin" outfoxed this feisty elf by overhearing him sing his name. Her discovery saved her child. In the Haida story, Raven devises a magical way to impregnate the patriarch's daughter by transforming himself into a hemlock needle which she swallows while gathering water. Hers is a virgin birth in the Biblical sense. Raven, impersonating her human baby son, uses tantrums to make the patriarch remove the light from a set of nested plain wooden boxes. Here readers are struck by the lack traditional carving detail on the boxes until they realize that artists require light for wood carving. The moment the patriarch gives Raven-boy the light to play with, he transforms back into Raven, escapes through the smoke hole, but drops half the light when an eagle attacks him. This light splatters