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The Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, 1877-1900. By Orlan J. Svingen.

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peril, and destroy trust in individuals and institutions and perhaps even in nature. Valuable as *A New Species of Trouble* is, I wish that Erikson had more fully contextualized the phenomenon of toxic trauma and articulated its implications.

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**The Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, 1877–1900.** By Orlan J. Svingen. Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1993. 197 pages. \$22.50 cloth.

The writing of Cheyenne history and ethnography, a long and distinguished literary and scholarly tradition, has acquired a badly needed addition in Orlan J. Svingen's *The Northern Cheyenne Reservation, 1877–1900*. Svingen begins where many Indian studies end, at the establishment of the reservation community that would define the tribe's political and economic life for the next century.

In 1877, after repeatedly challenging federal authorities, the Northern Cheyenne found temporary homes on the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation in Oklahoma, at Pine Ridge in South Dakota, at Wind River in Wyoming, and at Fort Keogh, Montana, where some worked as scouts for the army. In 1880, Chief Little Wolf's murder of another Cheyenne resulted in his self-imposed exile from the Fort Keogh group, leading him to a homestead about six miles up Muddy Creek, a tributary of the Rosebud. Svingen remarks that the site appealed to Little Wolf as suitable for farming; tribal elders have told me that the lower Muddy was known to the Cheyenne as a place where the buffalo wintered; in any case, it was a known site, not randomly chosen as an alternative to Fort Keogh. The red hills and grassy valleys from the Bighorn to the Powder had been familiar to the Cheyenne for generations. Cheyenne activity in the region has been documented at least as early as 1820, and perhaps even 1806 or earlier. Unfortunately, Svingen never clearly states the precise argument regarding the Cheyenne claim.

As more Cheyenne began to homestead the Rosebud-Tongue region, cattlemen raised objections; the resulting struggle to legitimize the Cheyenne homeland lasted twenty years. In 1884, the Cheyenne received official permission to settle the

Rosebud-Tongue country through an executive order by Chester A. Arthur, but not until William McKinley ordered the establishment of a permanent reservation in 1900 was the question put to rest.

A few influential whites supported the Cheyenne: Most readers will recognize the names of Nelson A. Miles and George Bird Grinnell among these. But other names are not so familiar, although they deserve some credit. Private George Yoakam, for example, acted as a kind of agent for the Cheyenne before they had an official agent. He lived with them, learned their language, and became such a strong advocate that ranchers threatened to kill him unless he left Montana. Wilbur Fisk Sanders, who served as senator from Montana (and, although Svingen makes no mention of it, was also once a leader of the Montana vigilantes who put an end to the infamous Plummer gang) emerges in the story as a crusading civil rights lawyer arguing on behalf of a Cheyenne wrongly accused of murder in what was called an "American Indian Dreyfus Affair."

Prospective readers should know that Svingen calls his study an administrative, rather than a tribal, history. The book is not about the Cheyenne themselves but rather deals with the problems associated with the reunification of the Northern Cheyenne in the Rosebud-Tongue country despite a cumbersome bureaucracy subject to intense lobbying by special interests. A study of the administrative machinery of Indian affairs during this period, especially at the local level, is welcome. However, the emphasis on the bureaucrats, almost to the exclusion of the Cheyenne themselves, is frustrating. Svingen gives almost no attention to the ethnographic terrain of the problem and tells us little of the background of the Cheyenne people he does mention. He makes much of Black Wolf's band bolting from Pine Ridge and settling on Hanging Woman Creek; had he explained, however, that these people were not Tsistsistas (Cheyenne) proper, but Suhtai, the culturally distinct group related to and living with the Tsistsistas, we would know more about why they chose to go to present-day Birney rather than joining the other settlements.

The same criticism can be made of Svingen's treatment of the ranchers, whose names he mentions without telling us more about who they were. An example of an important stockman who had to move in order for the Northern Cheyenne Reservation to be created was Patrick Lynch, who owned his ranch in partnership with his cousin, Marcus Daly, founder of the Anaconda

Copper Company. Anaconda, in turn, spawned the Montana Power Company, which today owns the gigantic coal mines and mine-mouth generators of Colstrip, north of the reservation, and which has also had to readjust its operations to accommodate the Cheyenne, just as Lynch did more than a century ago. Ned Randolph's *Hell among the Yearlings* (Norton, 1955) and Margaret Bailey Broadus's *Through the Rosebuds* (Caruso Associates, 1987), although they describe a generation later than the period considered by Svingen, could have provided excellent auxiliary material about local ranchers and their attitudes.

Granted, these probably do not constitute major omissions, but Svingen's slender volume could use a bit more background and color to support its narrative. One usually finds this kind of information by talking to the people who live there, whether in formal ethnographic research or in informal conversations. For example, a Cheyenne elder told me a story that had been passed down in his family to the effect that Nelson A. Miles, at one point, arranged for a Northern Cheyenne Reservation that reached all the way north to the Yellowstone and east to the Powder. Could this story be a result of Miles's idea for an Indian Territory in the north to take some pressure off Oklahoma? Or was Miles telling the Cheyenne one thing and his friends in Washington something else? Again, this may not be crucial to the problem of formally establishing the reservation, but it does show the kind of directions that the study could have taken had the author tapped into local traditions. Svingen is not alone in trying to take on a problem in Indian affairs without fully considering the cultural context; several historical, educational, and economic development studies have appeared recently that make the same mistake. One would hope that, as we learn more about community issues, this error would become less common.

Svingen relies largely on governmental reports and memos sent back and forth between Montana and Washington. This could have resulted in deadly dull prose, but the author's straightforward writing and storytelling ability overcome the nature of the sources, resulting in a lively narrative. Those who are not acquainted with the geography of the area will want to keep a good map of Rosebud County handy, since the book's editors have reduced the author's maps almost to the point of unintelligibility. In fact, the University Press of Colorado's editorial work on the book was less than could be desired: An article listed in the bibliography on Ned Casey and his Cheyenne scouts at Fort

Keogh is attributed to Margot Liberty and then again to Katherine Weist. (Weist is the correct author.)

Recently (September 1994), the Northern Cheyenne Reservation suffered forest and range fires, and one of the very oldest homesteads burned to the ground. Juanita Robinson Lonebear, part of the family associated with the house, watched the flames consume it. "It was heartbreaking," she wrote to us. But it should remind us all that Indian culture did not end when reservations were created. Generations of Cheyenne have experienced their own history on the reservation, as indicated by Ms. Lonebear's feelings about the family homestead. Scholars such as Svingen are on the right track when they undertake studies of reservation life. For the study of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, the future is rosy. Rumors are afoot that ground-level studies of reservation life—education, family, health, economic development—are in the works by Gregory Campbell, Duane Champagne, Margot Liberty, Erica Pressing, and Carol Ward. And, if Wayne Leman would (please) give us an update of Petter's dictionary by publishing his own exhaustive Cheyenne-English/English-Cheyenne dictionary, we would have an important tool to continue badly needed studies of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, especially during the period from 1910 to 1960.

I end with two additional remarks about the circumstances of the book. First, in the introduction, Svingen notes his service as a teacher at St. Labre Catholic Indian School in Ashland, Montana. Svingen is not the only former Labre teacher to make a contribution to Cheyenne studies; the academic community should thank Fr. Emmett Hoffman at St. Labre for making it possible for Svingen and other scholars to live with and learn from the Northern Cheyenne people. Secondly, the publication information notes that the royalties generated from the sale of this book will be donated to Dull Knife Memorial College, the tribal college of the Northern Cheyenne. Sadly, the objectives of Native American studies have often been obfuscated when participants spew accusations of ethical misconduct at each other ("I'm a friend of the Indian more than the other person is") rather than concentrating on solid scholarship. But, by assisting the Northern Cheyenne with their struggle to develop their reservation, Svingen teaches us a lesson in what ethical scholarship really means.

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