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Fiction, of course, has frequently been written to advance one cause or another, and few of the most enduring works of fiction pretend to be neutral on those political issues which they embrace. It is one thing, however, to take sides on a heated political issue, and quite another to ignore or submerge the full truth in order to present a single point of view, particularly when it is the point of view of the more powerful of two disputants. Because *The Dark Wind* promises to be widely read, especially in the Southwest, it will have a pernicious influence on popular opinion about the Navajo-Hopi land dispute, and it could influence the outcome of pending legislation.

The title of the novel refers to a certain "dark wind" which is supposed, in the Navajo view, to enter a person and destroy his judgment: "One avoided such persons, and worried about them, and was pleased if they were cured of this temporary insanity and returned again to *hozro*." I hesitate, even in so partisan review of the novel as mine is, to attribute *The Dark Wind* to the effects of a dark wind, but one cannot help but wish that a brighter wind might have made the novel more balanced. It is unfortunate, in any case, that while certain elements in the intricate plot will be commonly understood to be the mere contrivances of fiction, others which masquerade as "background" or even as "local color" will be taken as fact, if only because the plot does not turn on them. Perhaps we can only hope that they come to have no direct influence on the real plot that is working itself out in northeastern Arizona.

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Crowfoot, Chief of the Blackfeet. By Hugh A. Dempsey. Foreword by Paul E. Sharp. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972. 226 pp. \$12.95; \$6.95. paper.

Charcoal's World. By Hugh A. Dempsey. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979. 178 pp. \$11.95; \$3.95. paper.

Red Crow, Warrior Chief. By Hugh A. Dempsey. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980. 247 pp. \$16.95. cloth.

Oscar Lewis in his 1942 monograph, *The Effect of White Contact on Blackfoot Culture*, called attention to a theoretical situation prevalent in the scholarship of that period. He wrote that the methodologies of anthropology had little sense of how to utilize documentary sources, and he demonstrated in his monograph that the methods of history had real contributions to make to the ethnographic record of the Blackfeet people. Admirably, Hugh Dempsey's three detailed portraits of Blackfeet are also substantial additions to the literature of Blackfeet culture. Dempsey shows that the reverse of Lewis's contention is also true, that historians might well gain from the experience of fieldwork in the context of anthropological and folkloric techniques. Dempsey demonstrates that thorough biographical treatment relies upon use of oral tradition and accumulated knowledge learned only by long term fieldwork. Consequently the careers of Crowfoot, Red Crow, and Charcoal are told magnificently.

The subject of leadership has always been a difficult cultural dynamic to understand and describe. Many biographical treatments of Indian leaders have focused on the individual singled out as "chief," with little sense of describing systems of constituency, or an understanding of the kinds of interactions a particular personality exercises within the group he was "leading." The fictitious acts of making "chiefs" by Euroamericans clouded the understanding of many leadership patterns and processes.

Hugh Dempsey, in these striking biographies, has established a new standard of scholarship, emulable by others, interested in the dilemmas and successes of leaders in Plains Indian societies. Through impeccable reconstruction, Dempsey characterizes three very different Blackfeet leaders, documenting their unique and complex relationships to the Blackfeet people. Each of the relationships was different from the others, and each man reflected a style of leadership which provides insights into the complexity of Blackfeet social organization and culture. Each man is described by Dempsey in such a way that each emerges from the shades of obscurity with his personality, the times in which he lived, and his personal and social needs revealed fully.

In the course of writing all three works, Dempsey's increased skills as a biographer are revealed. Dempsey has chosen, as few historians do, to engage in extensive fieldwork. Much of this research was conducted in an anthropological style, reconstructing tribal genealogies, conducting endless interviews, and spending considerable time with the people whose historical

leaders he was chronicling. This is indicated in his command of the language, the use of personal names in Blackfeet throughout the three books, and his sensitive translation of key texts and Native terms. His sensitivity is demonstrated in the extensive interface of information derived from interviews illuminating details embedded in written records. These basic ethnohistorical techniques allowed him to reconstruct the milieu in which each of his "leaders" emerged and found themselves.

The first of the biographies which appeared in 1972 was a study in depth of Crowfoot, the Blood Indian who was to become leader of the Blackfeet division of the Blackfeet "confederacy." There is debate about the nature of this confederacy and questions about whether it ever really existed. Each of the three divisions, the Piegan, the Blood, and the Blackfeet, operated fairly independent of the others. Some of this autonomy emanated from the personalities of particular leaders.

During Crowfoot's younger days he became a warrior competing for status and horses, and life changes were less rapidly occurring. His name, Crow Indian's Big Foot, was shortened by repeated use of interpreters to simply Crowfoot. His mother, widowed when Crowfoot was quite young, remarried and moved to the camp circle of his new father among the Blackfeet. However, the decline of the buffalo, the devastation of epidemics, the impact of the transborder whiskey trade, and the inconsistent applications of law and order by either the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] or the U. S. Army were all events to bring new life adjustments. The eventual settlement on reserves or reservations proved to be the most restrictive atmosphere yet experienced by Blackfeet people. Crowfoot's leadership breached many of the most difficult circumstances in Blackfeet culture history, ranging from survival against starvation when rations promised by the RCMP failed to arrive, to his remarkable control of his warriors, many who were eager to join the causes of either Sitting Bull or Riel. Crowfoot was mentioned as a "leader" as early as 1866 in various traders journals and by the 1870s he was rich in power and influence. The smallpox epidemic of 1869 left him leader of a newly amalgamated band composed of survivors which became known as the Moccasins.

Dempsey related a series of events that exposed Crowfoot's proclivities of leadership from bravery in battles to slaying bears single-handed. But it is Crowfoot's moral character that Dempsey revealed which makes Crowfoot's selection as a leader almost

"natural." One day Crowfoot was drawn to the door of his tent to see that several of his wives' pack dogs were attacking a stray dog who had wandered into the camp. He called out to his wives to stop the confrontation and call their dogs off the new found victim. Crowfoot then called the dog to his lodge, and stoked and fed it meat piece by piece until it was full. After the dog had rested and was satisfied, Crowfoot then led the dog to the camp's edge and sent it on it's way. Symbolically, his behavior in this antidote illustrates a glimpse of Crowfoot's perceptions of himself as a leader. Indirectly, Blackfeet notions of responsibilities of leadership emerge as well.

Crowfoot proved his larger care for his people, not being led astray by his adopted Cree son, Poundmaker, who tried unsuccessfully to lure Crowfoot and his warriors from their pledged peace to join Riel. Crowfoot journeyed to the east of Canada in 1886 and returned to report that the Whites were as numerous as the buffalo once were, and they could not be resisted. Crowfoot could be characterized as the principle "peace chief" of the Blackfeet, and he was praised by Whites for accepting the yoke of the reserve system without resistance. It was not that he was afraid to fight, rather he saw survival for his people as the priority in the times that he was responsible for his people.

In a second book Dempsey tells the powerful life story of a middle aged warrior who was bound to a "world" by his cultural values while being forced to live a new life on the reserve. Charcoal never really "led" anyone in the sense of leader and follower, but he became a symbol by his actions. Non-Indians never really understood his life events, while many Blackfeet saw him as an unchanging and unadaptable person, and thus somewhat pitiable because he was not as pragmatic a man as he could have been. Yet many Blackfeet saw him as a very religious man who was forced to lead out the course of his life events because of his beliefs. In this latter sense he became a symbolic personage of the old ways, a belated hero and someone to be remembered. Dempsey pulls together the cultural and historical threads to resurrect this culture hero of the Blackfeet people.

Charcoal motivated by both jealousy and shame killed his younger wife's lover, which was his prerogative as a husband. In older times he would only by custom take gifts to the newly bereaved family to close the issue, and maintain that justice had

been accomplished. However, Charcoal sensed that the justice of old no longer prevailed. His killing of Medicine Pipe surely meant his own death as well. In another time, if one sensed death close at hand and inevitable, a warrior could go to battle with no intention of returning alive. But the Blackfeet warrior's concern would also be for his afterlife in a spirit world. Medicine Pipe, a lowly adulterer, had preceeded him announcing Charcoal's name as the one who had slayed him. Charcoal sought a welcome in the afterlife as a great warrior, and, if he must die, he must be preceeded by a great warrior or leader. He sought such a person to announce his coming. He considered killing the Blood Chief, Red Crow, or James Wilson, superintendent of the Blackfeet Reserve, but he failed to find them home or nearby. Instead, Charcoal struck by wounding a White farm instructor, William McNeil. Charcoal thought he had killed the man and would now be ready to accept his own death at the hands of the RCMP. Not hearing the news he expected, he began his flight and search for a "chief" to preceed him into the spirit world.

The flight of Charcoal consumes the remainder of the book. He eludes capture for a number of months in mid-winter, covering territory of several hundred miles. Dempsey portrays the personalities that become Charcoal's adversaries. He does this with a sophisticated sense of motivation with, for example, RCMP Major Samuel Steele who had no frame of reference for understanding Charcoal but is driven by his own sense of glory and duty. Charcoal became a tragic hero, trapped in his world both physically and culturally. In the end he was captured, tried, sentenced, and hanged, an end unfitting an old time warrior.

The third biographical treatment focused on Red Crow, the man who served as leader of the Blood division of the Blackfeet from 1870 to 1900. Red Crow's rise in achievement and status as a young warrior was well delineated by Dempsey in the most developed of the three biographies. Like Crowfoot, Red Crow's elevation to the position of a chief resulted from smallpox taking the lives of many leaders and others in 1870. His was a family of leaders, many of them pragmatic survivalists like Red Crow himself. Rivalry between him and his brother, Sheep Old Man, resulted in his brother being forced to become the leader of another band, leaving Red Crow to succeed their deceased father to be the paramount leader of the Blood people.

By the end of the 19th century the Blood division of the Blackfeet, like most Indian people, was caught between conflicting policies and circumstances. Part of Blood territory straddled the "new" international border, forcing choices not experienced by most Indian people. The problems of whiskey forts, the uncertain jurisdiction between Canadian interests and the U. S. military, and the lack of Canadian response to most circumstances in this region gave rise to the formation of the RCMP in 1873. The destruction of the buffalo herds by senseless killing, the appearance of non-Indians everywhere, and sudden claims for lands always thought to belong to the Blackfeet brought confusion and anger to the Blackfeet nation. However, Red Crow became a civil chief in 1870, which meant he was then responsible for peace and survival. He had served the other role in dual chieftainship, serving as a war chief when a younger man. He knew well the consequences and effectiveness of warfare. Red Crow chose to lead the way to new ways of life of the reserve, living in a cabin and sending children to missionary schools. Although parts of the world were not the same, suggesting it had become a different place, Red Crow remained steadfastly religious, doing all he could to maintain traditional practices and beliefs. Red Crow was at times a difficult man for superintendents to administer. Early reserve life was not easy. Rations were never plentiful. Many promises were not kept.

In 1885-1886 several challenges were made to Red Crow's leadership. Raids were made by his young men on the horse herds of the Assiniboine and Gros Ventres. Red Crow in efforts to return horses gained in this way began alienating some of his young men. If he agreed to a state of war, then only the younger war chiefs controlled the young men. Accepting embarrassment allowed him to still influence the course of events and encourage peace. He personally attempted to turn back as many expeditions as he could. In 1886 a party of two men and four boys went south and did not come back. Later the bodies were found, and the grizzly handiwork was blamed on the Gros Ventres. Demands for Gros Ventre scalps were not put aside easily, but the final result was a treaty of peace concluded with the Gros Ventres.

Red Crow openly exhibited his impatience with those who lived in the past, because in his mind war had outlived its usefulness. It was not that he was without his frustrations. The suppression of Blood ceremonialism beginning in the 1890s

focused on prohibiting the essential festivals and ritual of the Sun Dance. The prohibition was extended to give aways in 1898. Red Crow's response to the restrictions was to make vows to hold a Sun Dance in 1900, and to supply the necessary ritual meat from his own herds. The superintendent was beside himself, but Red Crow demonstrated the principles that would be his legacy. Red Crow illustrated that the Blood as a People could be totally dependent accepting life on the reserves, but could remain spiritually strong and unbroken.

Dempsey's biographies are excellent case studies for courses in leadership and personal life histories of Indian people. The works are readable and engulfing, excellent for captivating student interest. Moreover, these three figures of Blackfeet culture history are now a part of a growing number of persons that through excellent biography have been removed from obscurity and given the historical treatment they deserve.

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