

**George BIRD GRINNELL, *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-Tales*,  
(Lincoln : University of Nebraska Press, 1990 [1889])**

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In 1870, George Bird Grinnell, a young Yale graduate employed by the Peabody Museum, spent six months collecting vertebrate fossils in the American west. This experience, in particular his association with two Pawnee guides hired to lead his party, gave birth to a life-time of research on the natural and cultural history of western North America. When he died 68 years later in 1938, Grinnell left a legacy of books, among them, *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-Tales* (1889), *The Fighting Cheyennes* (1915), and the two-volume *Cheyenne Indians* (1923). This review examines the 1990 reprint of *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-Tales* by the University of Nebraska Press (Bison Books Division).

Grinnell collected most of the material for *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-Tales* at the Pawnee Agency in Indian Territory in March, 1888. In his introductory "Note", he explained that the idea for the book grew out of his concern about cultural loss among the Pawnee. After obtaining official approval from Eagle Chief, a friend and respected Pawnee elder, Grinnell began recording histories and personal experience narratives among old Pawnee. A year later he published the material in book-form.

Although Grinnell considered his text free of "romance" and "colouring" with "nothing of the white man" in it, ironically, the book's "whiteness" is its most interesting feature. Grinnell's voice dominates this text. For example, he dedicates his book not to the Pawnee, as one might expect, but rather to the memory of Major Frank North, whose "record of his people is inscribed". A non-Native, North was "commander" of the Pawnee Scouts, an American military battalion formed to deal with "hostile Indians" in Nebraska, Wyoming and Kansas. North figures prominently throughout *Pawnee Hero Stories*. Indeed, some of Grinnell's descriptions of the commander's exploits verge on military propaganda, for example, the following:

The Pawnee Scouts, under the gallant and able leader... saved hundreds of lives and millions of dollars' worth of property, and in their campaigns wiped out in blood the memory of many an injury done to their race by the Sioux, the Cheyennes, the Arapahoes and the Kiowas... [They] were everywhere, and at all times brave men, good soldiers and victorious warriors (pp. 323-325).

Such American/Indian military sentiment pervades much of the book. A "Hero Story" in the first section describes dispassionately an American military attack in 1876 on a Cheyenne village led by Ralph J. Weeks, a Pawnee scout, in which everyone in the village was killed. Another story focusses on Little Warrior, a Pawnee Scout and graduate of Western College, who convinced some

American soldiers in his brigade to refrain from shooting a lone Indian enemy warrior bearing a white flag. Before leaving, Little Warrior offered the following words of advice to the Indian captive :

My friend, you and I have the same skin, and what I tell you now is for your own good. I speak to you as a friend, and what I say to you now is so that you may save your women and your children. It is of no use for you to try to fight the white people. I have been among them, and I know how many they are. They are like the grass. Even if you were to kill a hundred it would be nothing... If you try to fight them they will hunt you like a ghost... (p. 81).

Thirteen "Folk-Tales" comprise the middle section of the book. Many of these focus on Pawnee encounters with spiritual power, "Ti-ra-wa". In these, one sees the influence of Grinnell's Christian worldview. "Ti-ra-wa", according to Grinnell, is a masculine Deity who is "intangible, quite as much so as the God of the Christians". Just as Christians pray to God, he explains, so do the Pawnee pray to the "One Above", the "Ruler", and "Supreme Being". Several accounts of life after death in these stories are reminiscent of Christian stories. For example, in "Boy Who Was Sacrificed," a father kills his son as an offering to "Ti-ra-wa" in the hopes that this would be a blessing, perhaps prompting "Ti-ra-wa" to speak to him face-to-face. However, much to the father's surprise, like the story of Christ, the boy comes back to life, and performs many wonderful deeds, including miraculously bringing others back to life. In the story "Ore-ka-rah", a father uses the words, "No-a" (derived from Biblical Noah?) while imploring the spirits to watch over his son.

The third and final section of the book presents ethnographic notes gathered over a period of twenty years. Here, Grinnell's Eurocentric position is explicit, for example, his description of the Pawnee as a "race of barbarians" who were not taught the "civilized" lessons of self-control, and who had no law, save that of strength. Despite this perspective, however, Grinnell's portrait of the Pawnee is generally positive and sympathetic. A highlight of the book, which appears in this section, is a long and vivid account of Grinnell's participation in a buffalo hunt in July of 1872 (pp. 270-302).

*Pawnee Hero Stories* concludes with a moving description of the removal of the Pawnee from their homelands. Here Grinnell states explicitly that he is not proud of this chapter of his American heritage. The Pawnee removal was, in his view, "a plot" which, if recorded, would reveal "a carefully planned and successfully carried out conspiracy to rob this people of their lands" (p. 397). In his concluding paragraphs, Grinnell returns to the vignette which opened the book - his conversation with old Eagle Chief in March of 1888 - stressing that it was an emotionally charged experience for him.

As an early Euroamerican account of one moment in the history of American/Indian relations, Grinnell's text is a valuable piece of ethnographic writing. As a Pawnee text, however, it is seriously lacking. By the end, for example, one is still left wondering what the 1880s Pawnee conveyed among themselves about these events. Grinnell himself admits there is much missing from his account. "Both sexes," he writes, "spoke freely to each other in matters which are never mentioned in civilized society, and much of their conversation, as well as many of their stories, could not well be printed" (p. 270).

Despite its Eurocentrism and its omissions, however, *Pawnee Hero Stories* is an important book. My only disappointment is that the University of Nebraska Press did not provide in this 1990 reprint a new Introduction placing Grinnell and the Pawnee in their respective socio-historical contexts and explaining the merits of the book in contemporary terms.

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Nicole DORION, *La brasserie Boswell : un essai d'ethnologie industrielle*, (Québec, CÉLAT, Université Laval, 1989, 157 pp., ISBN 2-9205-76-32-1)

À mi-chemin entre le rapport de recherche et la monographie, l'auteure brosse un tableau vivant de la vie quotidienne des ouvriers de la brasserie Boswell-Dow entre 1940 et 1968. Munie d'une solide base de données - sources documentaires et iconographiques, 35 heures d'entrevues auprès de 54 ex-travailleurs ou d'informateurs associés de près à ceux-ci - l'auteure procède à la critique, l'élagage et l'ordonnement de cette formidable masse d'informations avec rigueur et méthode. D'emblée, elle situe son étude dans le cadre de l'usine, d'abord par la recension des témoignages des ouvriers et par l'explication des notions scientifiques et techniques glanées dans les ouvrages pertinents. Toutes les étapes de la fabrication de la bière sont minutieusement décrites en soulignant les changements techniques majeurs survenus durant la période à l'étude. Puis vient la description de la relation entre ces opérations et les lieux physiques où elles se déroulaient. Elle termine sur les conditions de travail: relations ouvriers-