

devoir abandonner leur enfant. Qu'advenait-il si elles changeaient de position, si elles laissaient le service domestique? Les travailleurs sociaux proposaient l'adoption mais, bien avant, de nombreuses mères, incapables de garder leurs enfants, les confiaient déjà à des parents adoptifs soit de façon formelle ou informelle.

Notons enfin que cet excellent ouvrage est complété par une impressionnante bibliographie sur les mères célibataires et sur le travail social aux États-Unis. Une telle étude est très pertinente à la recherche qui se poursuit présentement au Québec sur l'histoire des professions féminines comme la diététique et la physiothérapie (Fahmy-Eid et Charles), la pharmacologie (Colin) le nursing (Petitat, Daigle, Cohen), et le travail social (Groulx).

Andrée Lévesque
Université McGill

Craig M. Cameron — *American Samurai: Myth, Imagination, and the Conduct of Battle in the First Marine Division, 1941–1951*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Pp. xiii, 297.

Some wars approach the abstraction of total violence nearer than others. According to Craig M. Cameron, this is not because, as Karl von Clausewitz intimated, organized violence enervates the natural but unpredictable, uncontrollable force of human hatred. Rather, he argues, hatred is readily manufactured for war by the societies and organizations that wage it, largely through the manipulation of abstract images. This imparts an "interactive and integrative" quality to the Clausewitzian model whereby seemingly rational decisions affect and are affected by myth and imagination (p. 6). What the men of the First Marine Division thought about themselves, their enemy, and the world around them affected profoundly the character of the Pacific war. Its barbarity was driven by the mental images they carried into battle.

These were many years in the making. Long before Guadalcanal, their military experience and American popular culture had led Marines to think of themselves as an elite military group defending American democracy. Their unique amphibious warfare doctrine seemed proof of this. An exalted self-portrait led easily to a view of themselves as the country's warrior representatives, "a kind of American samurai class" (p. 30). Hollywood bolstered these myths, while inter-war colonial occupation duties imparted or solidified racial stereotypes. Historical experience and popular mythology, however, were not enough. The Marine persona was carefully cultivated by the Corps itself through rigorous training and indoctrination in the "hypermasculine" ideals of a rigidly hierarchical military structure. The crude objectification of women, which most initiates accepted wholeheartedly, was a crucial aspect of this process. For the Marine, one officer remembered, "the Corps [was] his religion" (p. 63).

The conduct of the Pacific war was also affected by Marine images of their enemy, the Japanese, and of their primary inter-service rival, the Army. Of the two, the former was certainly the most important, although the latter's effect on tactical

operations was often equally significant. The outgrowths of institutional uniqueness included over-confidence and recklessness, leading to high casualties and the early death of the "old" Marine Corps spirit (p. 138). Marine images of the Japanese "drew upon a deeply ingrained racist ideology that has characterized America's expansion since the earliest colonial times" (p. 89). Although the precise nature of such images varied, the Japanese "other" was essential in maintaining the will to fight and in determining the outcome of conflict. This was equally true for the Japanese. Such assumptions resulted in the horrible forms of combat and punishment documented in John Dower's *War Without Mercy* (1986). According to Cameron, Marines exhibited "the same savage responses in battle as their enemy" (p. 126).

The creation and use of myth and identity moved the First Marine Division a long way towards what Cameron repeatedly describes as an exterminationist philosophy of violence, one which he suggests resembled closely that of Hitler's *Wehrmacht* on the Russian front. By the Okinawa campaign in 1945, American technological dominance offered the prospect of fulfilling such totalitarian dreams, or, as he puts it, validating Marine ideology (p. 166). The death of the old Corps had robbed the institution of its distinctiveness — it was now functionally the same as the Army — but its ideological uniqueness and sense of self remained along with a "rationalized, systematized application of violence" (p. 172).

Such images collapsed within six months of the Korean war's outbreak in 1950, largely due to the changing nature of war itself and the new international system in which it occurred (p. 203). In addition, American society's commemoration of World War II, in its iconography, for example, helped purge wartime images of their rougher hues in a successful effort to reintegrate returning veterans. The brutalization of the Pacific war could not have provided a sound basis for post-war rehabilitation (p. 265).

Certainly, prevailing images of the Japanese, of themselves, and of other groups helped determine the nature and outcome of the First Marine Division's battles, and certainly this phenomenon has been far less frequently studied than doctrine or personality. But Cameron's analysis is prone to sweeping generalizations not supported firmly enough by the evidence provided. His assessment of racism is perhaps the best example. The barbarism, long recognized by scholars and remembered by participants, that marked the Pacific campaign was due in part to doctored Marine images of the enemy, but it was also due to differences of culture and ideology that were, for a time at least, perceived to be irreconcilable by the principals involved. To label such conflicts "racism" is surely to rob that term of meaning, despite the manipulation of differences by the respective national war machines and the horrific consequences that ensued.

Fixation on American racism and its military effects leads Cameron down several dimly lit roads in pursuit of moral equivalents. Some scholars will surely bristle at the suggestion that the First Marine Division practised an exterminationist policy, or that Marines in general probably violated the rules of war as frequently or as wantonly as their Japanese opponents, which the Okinawa chapter clearly implies. Even given the orgy of violence that engulfed the Pacific in the final year of war,

both contentions are dubious at best, Dower's ground-breaking study notwithstanding. As well, many of the racist "myths" Cameron discusses regarding Marine views of Japanese conduct (their ferocity and tenacity in battle, for example) were, in fact, true, just as many Japanese depictions of American excesses (their racist treatment of blacks and Japanese-Americans, for example) were brutally accurate. It is well that self-satisfying, sanctimonious images of American military conduct be dispelled, but not that they be replaced by equally tenuous myths. In the same category is the constant comparison of Marine actions with those of the German Army in Russia, inspired entirely by Omer Bartov's controversial work on that subject. Cameron here stretches a useful point, the need for re-evaluation and comparative sensitivity, into an absurdity.

Cameron's conclusion, that the war is constantly being "rewritten" by Americans to serve specific or societal needs as the occasion demands, is mildly provocative, but too clever by half. While rightly dismissing Paul Fussell's tawdry indictment of the mass of war literature, Cameron proceeds to reduce the same material to motivated myth-making, what he calls "historical cleansing" (p. 265). Literature is rarely so purposive, although the changing patterns of historical interpretation are surely self-evident. Enlightenment and perspective never emerge full-blown in the wake of events. Why should Cameron think otherwise? If so, there would be no need for and no such thing as historiography, a field which, not surprisingly, Cameron often treats with unbecoming (and undeserved) disdain.

Only the most disinterested reader will fail to be challenged by *American Samurai*. For this reason alone, Cameron is to be commended and, one hopes, widely read. In understanding human motivation and the nature of combat in the First Marine Division, we are now forced to consider self-image, gender, and institutional myth-making, among other things, as determinants of military outcomes. This is a useful and overdue caution, and on this level the book clearly succeeds. In making a broader, revisionist case, however, the kind his introduction implies will be avoided, Cameron is far less convincing, if only because of frequent resort to intemperate generalization.

Dean F. Oliver
Centre for International and Strategic Studies
York University

Olive P. Dickason — *Le mythe du sauvage*, traduit de l'anglais par Jude des Chênes, Québec, Éditions du Septentrion, 1993, 451 p.

Neuf ans après la parution du texte anglais, la traduction française du livre d'Olive P. Dickason nous donne une nouvelle chance d'apprécier à sa juste valeur l'érudition et la créativité dont celle-ci a fait preuve dans le traitement de son sujet. Ce qui nous vient à l'esprit en la relisant, c'est combien la connaissance de notre propre héritage intellectuel demeure essentielle pour comprendre la vision des habitants du Nouveau Monde qu'avaient les Occidentaux à l'époque et que, jusqu'à un certain