

# Composition and Iconography in Painted Plains Indian Shirts

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Beginning with his first important article in 1957,<sup>1</sup> Colin Taylor's entire career was marked by a special interest in Plains Indian war shirts. From the outset, he realized that a lack of reliable cultural documentation was a major impediment to establishing meaningful associations between shirts and their makers. With great energy he scoured European and North American collections for shirts that could make those connections. The many previously unpublished shirts he brought to light, and the infectious aesthetic pleasure which he derived from them, are an important part of his legacy. Nonetheless, most of the newly discovered shirts also lack reliable cultural histories, and so the search for connections between shirts and their producers has widened. This study examines painted passages on Plains Indian shirts with a view to better understanding their tribal origins.

In the nineteenth century, the Plains Indian war shirt was synonymous with elevated status and leadership.<sup>2</sup> It typically incorporated a number of standard elements announcing the wearer's military achievements. These elements included fringes, quilled or beaded panels and painted passages. There are two primary types of painting on war shirts: (1) pictorial narrative descriptions of war events and (2) non-narrative rows and arrays of repeated figures which express either numeric or non-numeric information about war achievements and acts of generosity. This study focuses on the composition and iconography of the latter category of painting, and the forces which influenced them.<sup>3</sup>

The 50 examples included in this study are listed on the spreadsheet near the back of this paper. The front and back of each shirt was examined either first hand or from photographs. The shirts in the study group have an average date of manufacture somewhat earlier than 1850. Only some sixteen of the shirts have documentation identifying their tribal origins. These, along with several examples shown in square brackets which I had previously attributed to the Blackfoot and Crow/Hidatsa (Brownstone 2001a & b), are noted on the spreadsheet.

## Composition

Rows and arrays of repeated figures is a dominant feature in painted shirts. It arose partly out of social circumstances, and partly due to the physical structure of shirts. With regard to social forces during much of the nineteenth century, probably no element of Plains Indian society was as pervasive as warfare (Bowers 1965:219). There were a number of social mechanisms which perpetuated and intensified war between tribes. The "cultural interest in self aggrandizement," a prominent feature of Plains Indian society, drove individuals "to maneuver for social recognition" (Smith 1938:433, Mishkin 1940:3). While warriors engaged the enemy they simultaneously competed with their fellow tribesmen for social position. The competitiveness observed by Goldfrank (1945:3, see also McGinnis 1974:35) in Blood society was probably typical, "In warfare, competition was flagrant, rivalrous attitudes overtly and blatantly expressed." Within the framework of war there functioned "a system of warrior etiquette and formal accomplishment" through which men's deeds could be scored and compared (Mishkin 1940:61). Heraldic systems- "conventions by which deeds are recorded and accredited" -were adopted by most, if not all, the plains tribes (Wissler



1911:36-37). Rising through the ranks was marked by the right to wear heraldic emblems of achievement (Mishkin 1940:40, Wissler 1911:36-7). The war shirt was among the most prestigious of these.

The painting of honour marks on shirts was underpinned by the social need to count and advertise success in the performance of creditable deeds. Rows and arrays of repeated figures primarily served this function. Rows of figures fell into two categories: tallies of specific deeds and non-numeric displays of abundance. Rows of figures, by their very form, suggest the act of counting and numerousness, and were often underscored by decorative shirt panels or painted bars. Arrays of figures generally signified the notion of abundance.

Painting composition was also influenced by physical attributes of the shirt. The shirt surface may be divided into the following five subsections: right and left sleeves, right and left upper torso, and lower torso. Since both backs and fronts were almost always painted, a shirt has ten subdivisions. The decorative panels along the sleeves and over the shoulders emphasize these divisions. Painted rows and arrays of repeated figures generally slot into the upper eight subsections. This compartmentalization facilitates the clear display and separation of distinct types of deeds. The orientation and position of rows of figures is generally guided by the contours and decorative panels of the shirt. Figures are usually at right angles or parallel to the outer edge of the torso, or at right angles to sleeve edges. On well over half the examples studied, rows of figures abut at right angles to decorative shoulder and sleeve panels.

The shape of the shirt is essentially symmetrical. If opened up, the back and front mirror each other, as do the right and left sides. The decorative shoulder and sleeve panels echo this symmetry. In the present study, symmetry on shirts is assessed on the basis of the colour and nature of painted motifs in corresponding subdivisions. The “stains” or blushes of colour often found on shirts are considered separately. A stain may cover an entire shirt or be contained within a single subdivision. For example, the Duke Paul shirt (Fig. 1.) bears a black stain along the right torso.<sup>4</sup> The yellow portion of the spreadsheet toward the end of this paper approximately tabulates symmetry vs. asymmetry in painted passages of shirts in the study set. Black “Xs” indicate points of symmetry and red “Xs” indicate asymmetry. The shirts are arranged in order of increasing symmetry. The wide range of symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships is readily apparent.

A total of 403 points of comparison between motifs in corresponding subdivisions were identified. Breaking these down, we find the following ratios of asymmetry vs. symmetry: sleeves (49:80), stains (27:73) and upper torsos (76:98). Despite the essentially symmetrical nature of the shirt, there is a surprising degree of asymmetry in the distribution of painted figures over its surface. One interesting pattern is apparent: there is a strong tendency toward symmetrical relationships between the back and front of torsos (16 asymmetry:67 symmetry), whereas there is a marked inclination toward asymmetry between the right and left sides of torsos (58 asymmetry:29 symmetry). In contrast, Boas (1955:33) found the opposite to be generally true in the art of indigenous cultures, that is, symmetrical arrangements are overwhelmingly to the right and left of the vertical axis.

Outside of the study group there are numerous photographs, ledger drawings and items of clothing indicating that asymmetrical war honour marks may be found among many tribes, including: Hidatsa,<sup>5</sup> Mandan,<sup>6</sup> Sioux,<sup>7</sup> Arikara,<sup>8</sup> Arapaho,<sup>9</sup> Crow,<sup>10</sup> Pawnee,<sup>11</sup> Blackfoot?,<sup>12</sup> Cree,<sup>13</sup> Sauk and Fox.<sup>14</sup> There are several references in the ethnographic literature which indicate that asymmetrical composition on shirts was partly a product of rules guiding the application of war marks. Gilbert Wilson provided extensive details on the Hidatsa and, to some extent, the Mandan systems of “honour marks.” For example, “A man has struck an enemy. He receives just one

stripe on the arm. Every time he strikes an enemy he receives another stripe. If he gets many stripes, they are carried over to the other arm, then to the one leg, and then the other” (Wilson 1916:39). Similarly, a man “could divide his marks. He could put red paint on one legging, and the bars and the cross on the other legging. Sometimes he put part on his shirt, as when he had his shirt half red” (Wilson 1911:286-7).<sup>15</sup>

Wilson’s informants mentioned applying marks to right and left sides, but not to backs and fronts. This suggests that draftsmen considered the left side (both back and front) and right side (both back and front) as the two primary painting fields, a factor which may help explain why greater symmetry is found along the back/front axis than the right/left axis.

### **Illustrated examples**

As an overview, ten examples from the study group are illustrated and examined in the section that follows. The illustrations encourage the reader to orient the right and left sides of the shirt as would the wearer. Painted passages are shown in exploded views, with the backs right side up and the fronts upside down. References in the text are also oriented to the wearer’s left and right.

Duke Paul of Württemberg acquired the shirt illustrated in Figure 1, along with leggings, on his first trip to America, 1822-24, from an unnamed individual. This person explained to Duke Paul that the outfit had been worn by an important chief of the Blackfoot tribe who was killed in battle. The Duke noted that the shirt was “one of the rarest” of Indian handicrafts, valued at thirty horses (Bolz 1999:88). Conn (in Stepney and Goa 1990:83-84) considered this shirt, with its long body and integral neck flap, to be a three-skin type, characteristic of early nineteenth century examples from the northwest plains and plateau. The decorative strips on both the Duke Paul shirt and leggings are remarkable, the latter being of solid blue beads woven on the loom, a technique generally associated with the Great Lakes region. The quillwork panels on the shirt are executed in double-quill zigzag, a technique which is also associated with the Great Lakes region and very rare on the northern plains. McLaughlin (2003:168) described a pre-1825 shirt from the Upper Missouri with quill panels worked in the same technique.<sup>16</sup>

The painting on the Duke Paul shirt is characterized by a complex layering of vertical, horizontal and diagonally oriented rows of repeated graphic motifs. Most prominent are parallel rows of thick orange and black strokes arranged at right angles to the sleeves and torso. Series of shorter orange strokes, coloured red in my illustration, were later painted over the top of these. These short strokes appear to be of unbound pigment applied with the finger. The long thick strokes are likely of pigment bound in a medium and applied with a specialized implement. The left and right sides of the shirt are differentiated by a colour shift from red to black. On the left side is a dusting, or stain, of black pigment. A configuration of pipes, lines and horse tracks is located on the back and front of the upper right torso. On the left is a similar configuration, but with flared lines instead of pipes. The relationship between colours and motifs on the shirt is thus more symmetrical between the back and front than between right and left sides.

Figure 2 illustrates the rows of painted figures abutting the quillwork panels along the sleeves and over the shoulders of a shirt collected by Count Armand Fouche d’Otrante in 1843 or 1844 from a Blackfoot chief “at the Blackfoot Fort [MacKenzie or Chardon] near the Rocky Mountains.”<sup>17</sup> Not shown are the pictorial narrative war scenes painted on the body of the shirt (illustrated in Brownstone 2001a:254). It seems likely that the shirt was painted while fully open, before the sleeves and torso were joined and the quill strips and hair fringe attached. The painted passages under consideration are composed of rows of human upper bodies and thick black strokes. The latter were likely applied with a specialized tool. The graphic elements on the



Fig. 1 Painted passages on a Blackfoot shirt, ca.1822. Traced from the original. Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IV B 303a. Illustrated in Bolz and Sanner (1999:87).

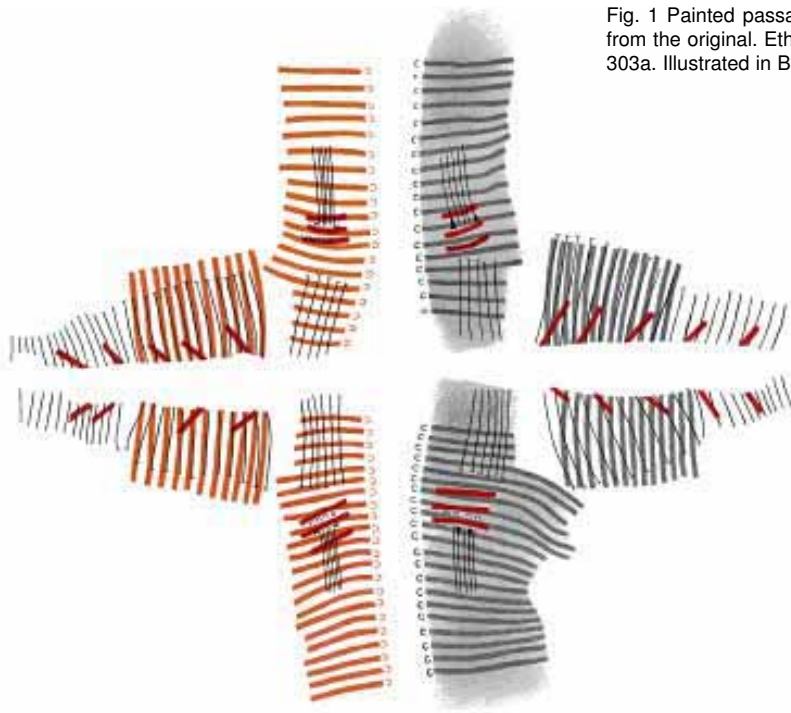


Fig. 2. Painted passages on the sleeves and shoulders of a Blackfoot shirt, ca.1842. Traced from the original. Folkens Museum Etnografiska, Cat. No. 1854.2.1.

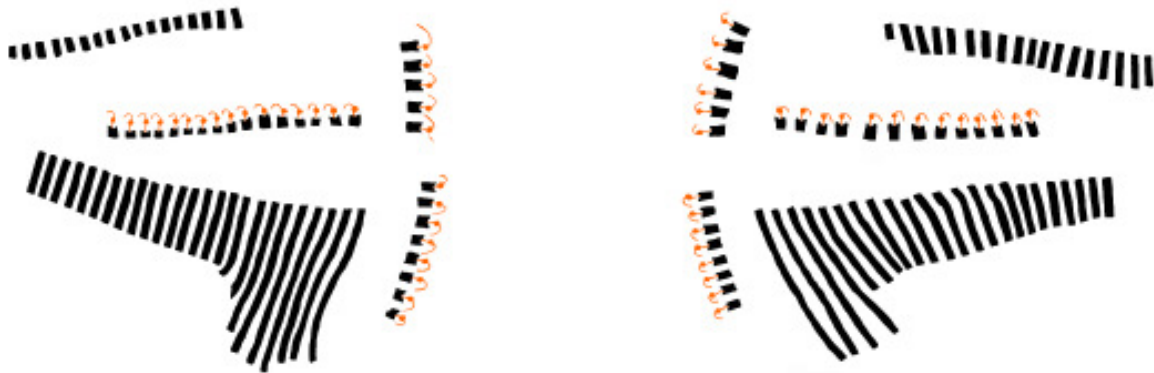


Fig. 3. Painted rows of figures along the sleeves of a "Digger" shirt, ca. 1845, probably from the northern U. S. plateau. Traced from photographs. Nova Scotia Museum, Cat. No. Z 817, on long term loan to the Royal Alberta Museum, Cat. No. H88.56.4.



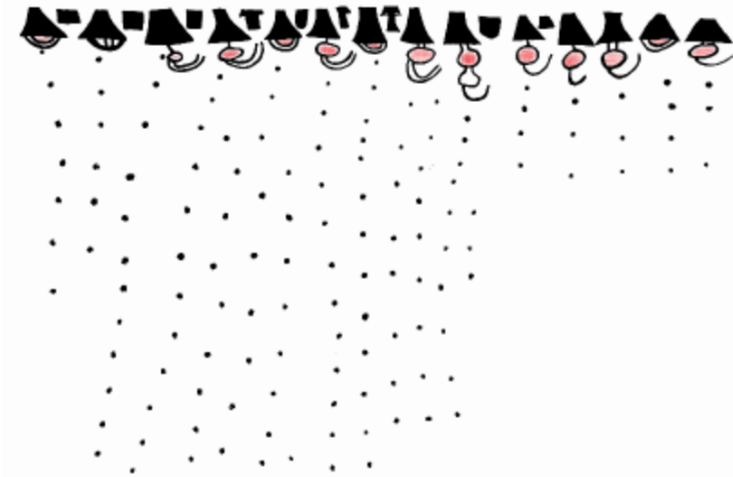


Fig. 4. Painted rows of figures along the left front sleeves of an undocumented shirt, probably pre-dating 1845. Traced from photograph. British Museum, Cat. No. 9063. Illustrated in Taylor (1998:120).

sleeves are symmetrical from right to left but not from front to back, whereas the elements on the chest are symmetrical along both axis.

Figure 3 illustrates the rows of figures painted along the sleeves of a shirt collected by Col. William Chearnley in 1846 on his visit to the “Rockies and other parts of the West, particularly Oregon.”<sup>18</sup> The collection documentation identifies the item as “Digger war shirt.” Non-Natives sometimes referred to impoverished peoples in the barren lands of Nevada, Utah, Colorado and Idaho as

“Root Diggers,” or “Diggers” (DeVoto 1947:432). For example, in 1831 William Gordon referred to bands of “Snake” Indians, principally the “Shoshawnees, Ietans

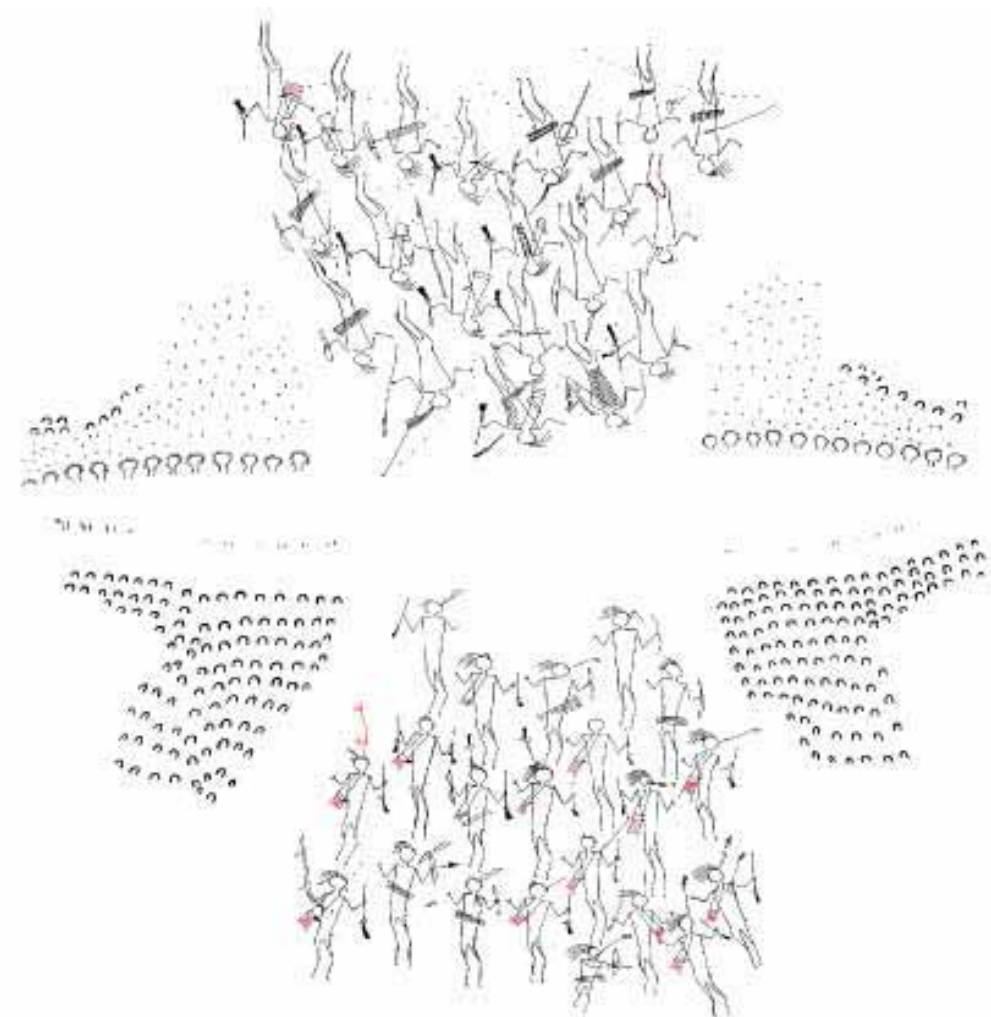
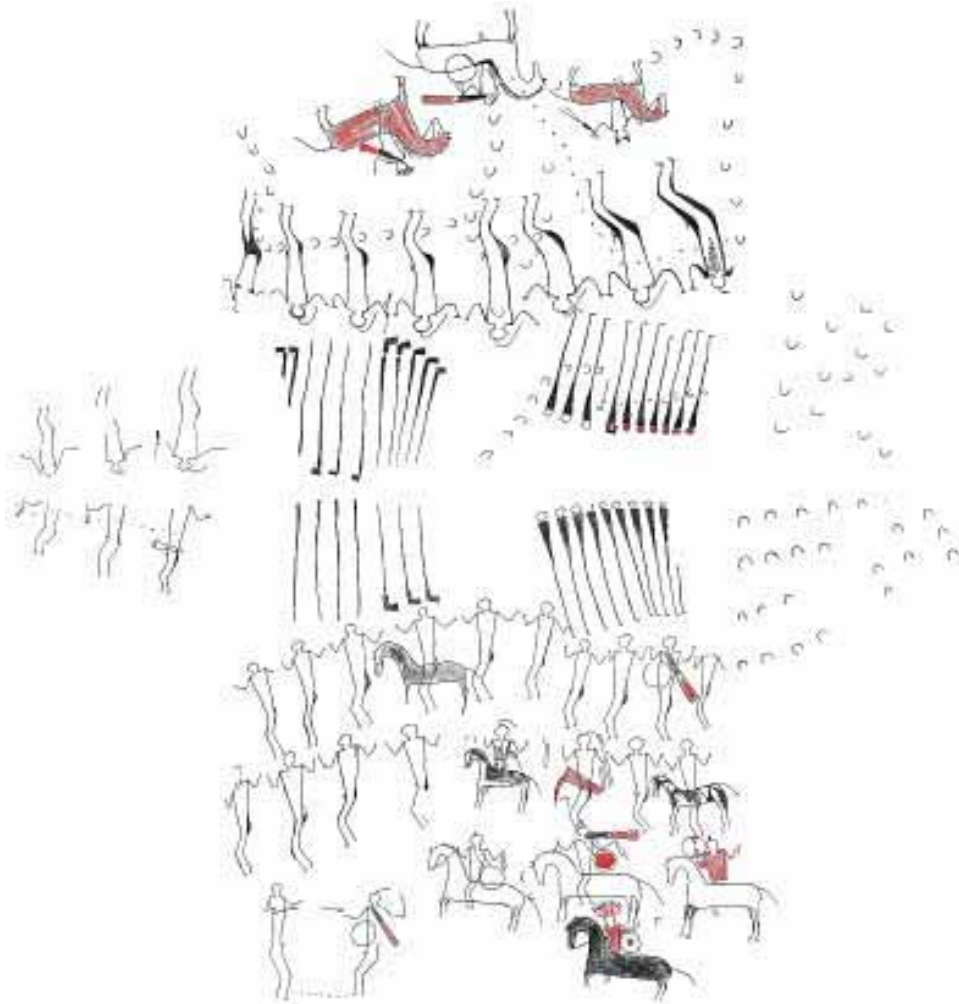


Fig.5 Painted passages on a shirt said to be Mandan or Sioux, probably pre-dating 1840. Traced from the original. Canadian Museum of Civilization, Cat. No. V-H-2 (73/66.187). Illustrated in Maurer (1992:187).





and Camanches bands” as “root diggers” (Chardon 1997:346).

This short (56.5cm), waist length, shirt is cut straight at the hem and bears neither decorative panels nor rosettes. Its long integral neck flaps are self fringed and decorated with pierced designs. Atypically, the sleeve seams are laced up along the top of the arm. The shirt has an all-over coating of red ochre. Underneath the coating on the left sleeve are very faint thick black strokes, perhaps from an earlier painting. Hidden by the fringes along the sleeve seams are the illustrated rows of thick strokes, terminated either by human heads or horse tracks, and columns of horse tracks.

Figure 4 illustrates a detail on an undocumented shirt presented to the Christy fund by John Davidson Esq. in 1874 and later transferred to the British Museum.<sup>19</sup> The detail is of a row of figures, largely upside down human upper bodies, abutting the beaded strip on the front left sleeve. Lines of dots trail from the heads of figures. Additional painted passages, not illustrated here, include: alternating red and black parallel lines running down the back left sleeve, black streaks on both sides of the right sleeve and a black stain on the upper torso. The following vertical figures circumscribe the lower torso: three strokes, two spears, one arrow and apparently eight wound marks with long streams of blood flowing from gun shot and sharp weapon punctures. The painting on the back and front torso are almost mirror images, while the sleeves show considerable asymmetry.

Fig. 6. Painted passages on an undocumented shirt, probably pre-dating 1840. Traced from the original. Hamburgisches Museum für Völkerkunde, Cat. No. B.155.



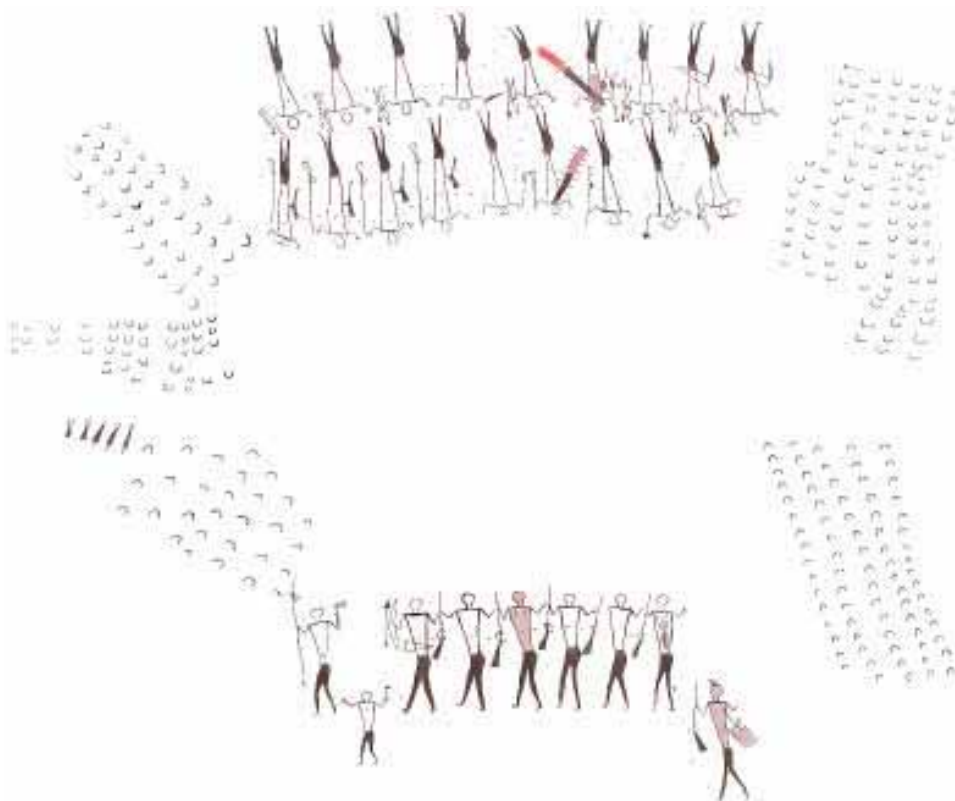


Fig. 7. Painted passages on an undocumented shirt, ca. 1824. Traced from digital photographs. Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust, Cat. No. SHEFM X1978.800.

Figure 5 illustrates the painted figures on a shirt formerly in the Speyer Collection, now preserved in the Canadian Museum of Civilization. The shirt was initially transferred with the information, “432 (D III S. Mandan. Coll. 1832).” The label later sent by Speyer is somewhat different. One side bears the inscription, “Museum Umlauff Hamburg” and “III S. Mandan.” The “III S” is crossed out in black ink and “D” written above. On the other side is written “No. 432 Sioux Indianer.”<sup>20</sup>

Abutting the front edge of both sleeve quillwork panels are rows of upside down heads with spiked hair.<sup>21</sup> Similar to the Davidson shirt, rows of dots trail from the heads. On the backs of the sleeves, under the fringes, are painted rows of horse tracks. Over the front and back torso are 41 painted human figures, apparently enemies suffering injury and defeat. While the enemy heads on the sleeve are indistinguishable, one from the other, each of the enemies on the body of the shirt is uniquely identified by an adjacent weapon which shows how he was overpowered. The imagery may thus be divided into two types, narrative and non-narrative.

Figure 6 illustrates the painting on a shirt preserved without tribal documentation in the Hamburgisches Museum für Völkerkunde. Rows of human figures decorate the left sleeve and bunched horse tracks are found on the right. Rows of pipes and elongated triangular human figures decorate the back and front upper torso. The motifs on the upper shirt thus exhibit symmetry from back to front and asymmetry from left to right. Several human figures and pipes appear to be partially obscured by shoulder and sleeve panels, strongly suggesting that the painting was executed before the quillwork was attached.

The non-narrative images on the upper shirt contrast with the predominantly narrative imagery below. The large majority of figures in lower tiers are of defeated men and one woman. Footprints and horse tracks tread over enemies, as well as make



narrative connections to the protagonist, sometimes identified by a black and red trade cloth military sash and other elaborate regalia.

Figure 7 illustrates the painted figures on a shirt collected by John Stuart Wortley, later the Earl of Wharncliffe, on his visit to America in 1824. The painting on the sleeves is solely composed of horse tracks, with the exception of the five horse whips hidden under the left fringe. In place of neck flaps are crescent-shaped motifs which seem to be painted with overlapping layers of red and blue pigment, and outlined by a lane of blue pony beads. The edges of the shirt are self-fringed and tinted red. The upper torso on both sides is stained blue. On the lower back torso is a series of human figures beginning with the hero on the right. His footprints pass over eight figures, no doubt recording victories over enemies. There are four similar sequences on the lower front torso. On two of these the protagonist wears a black and red trade cloth military sash. In total, 22 defeated men and possibly one woman are shown. The narrative content is clearer than on the previous two shirts, largely because the figures are more obviously divided into sequenced vignettes and the weapons of all participants are shown.

Figure 8 illustrates the painted passages on a shirt and leggings held in the Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, presently on loan to the Deutsches Ledermuseum Offenbach. Christian Feest (2003:27-28) reviewed the origins of the outfit, noting that in the absence of original Darmstadt catalogue records destroyed in World War II we may refer to two printed catalogues. The first, published in 1818, describes the group of artifacts as “dress and weapons of a chief of the savages on the Missouri River, who had been captured by the English.” The second, published in 1844, further elaborates: “dress of a chief of the Osage tribe on the Missouri. It had been taken by force by a British Colonel, O’Hara, and given by him to Mr. Bassé in Frankfurt am Main.” Although Feest was able to learn that O’Hara knew Bassé in Pittsburgh as early as 1772, he has demonstrated that the Osage attribution and the identification of O’Hara as captor of the outfit are almost certainly erroneous. In 1938 Patty Frank, founding director of the Karl-May-Museum, stated in a newspaper article that the suit came from the body

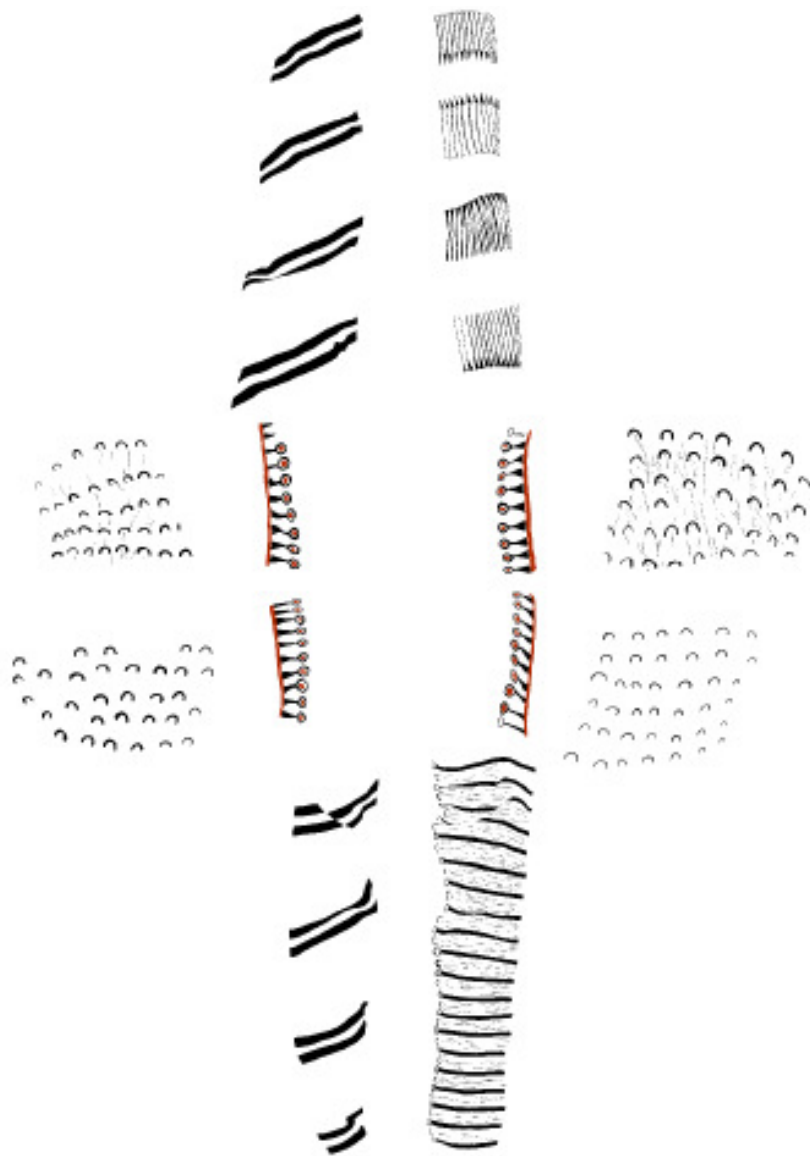


Fig. 8. Painted passages on a shirt and leggings without tribal documentation. Collected before 1815. Traced from digital photographs. Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, Cat. Nos. E 30: 1 [1842/201] shirt, E 30: 2ab [1842/202] leggings. Illustrated in Feest (2003:27).

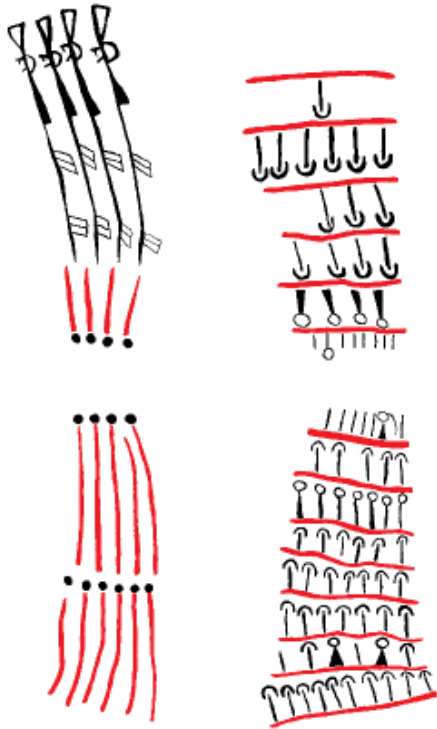


Fig. 9. Painted passages on a shirt collected by G. K. Warren, probably in 1855. Traced from digital photographs. U. S. National Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. E1940. Illustrated in Hanson (1996: frontispiece).

of a chief killed in a fight in 1813 following the battle of Tippecanoe (1811). This led to incorrect speculation that the Chief's outfit originated among the Potawatomi. Despite these stories, the only fact which remains clear is that the shirt and leggings pre-date 1815, the year Bassé's son donated the outfit to the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt.

The Hessian shirt is exceptionally long, 140cm according to the catalogue record, and likely of three skin construction. It bears two pairs of quilled rosettes, on the back and front torso, respectively.<sup>22</sup> Painted horse tracks decorate both sleeves on either side of the quillwork panels. The design would be symmetrical were it not for the fact that the direction of horse tracks is continuous from back to front. Painted "bar tallies," each composed of a row of circle/cone figures underscored by a red bar, run parallel to the inner edge of the quilled shoulder panels. The figures may represent human torsos, with the red interior of the circles perhaps signifying scalped heads. Two figures lack heads, either because they are obscured by the front left rosette or the painter couldn't squeeze the entire figure into the allotted space. The painting on the right back legging is composed of thick strokes terminated by circles, alternating with horse tracks followed by streaks. The same streaking effect also accompanies horse tracks on the sleeve backs. The front, right legging bears two series of arrows and two series of lines with flaring ends. On the left legging are pairs of diagonal strokes which appear to spiral around the leg.

Fig. 10. (below) Painted passages on sleeves and shoulders of a Mandan dancing dress, ca.1888. Traced from photographs. American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50.2/5352. Illustrated in Maurer (1992:223).

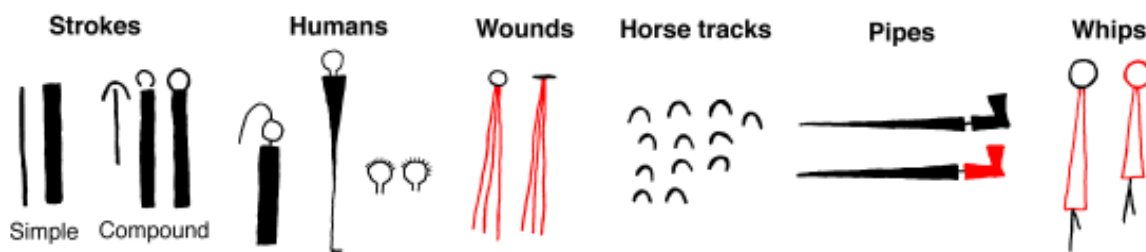
Figure 9 illustrates the painted figures on the torso of a shirt collected by G. K. Warren. Although James Hanson (1996:16 & Fig.1) considers it to be among the items gathered in Little Thunder's Lakota village following the Battle of Blue Water Creek in 1855, formal and iconographic aspects of the shirt indicate Mandan or Crow/Hidatsa origins (Brownstone 2001b:79,81). On the left front are four painted flintlock guns, each followed by a red stroke ending in a black circle. The latter may represent



shot balls and either tracers or flowing blood. Two rows of the same motif continue on the back left. On the right side, back and front, are bar tallies featuring several motifs, including; horse track/stroke, circle/stroke and circle/cone figures. The relationship between the back and front painted motifs tends toward symmetry, or continuity, whereas the reverse is true between left and right sides. Several figures are partially obscured by the beaded bridge between the shoulders and neck, indicating that the painting was executed before sewing down the beads.

The final illustrated example, Figure 10, shows the painted figures on the upper part of a Mandan cotton dancing dress collected by Gilbert Wilson for the American Museum of Natural History. This dress is included because its painted passages are essentially like those on shirts, and its rich documentation illuminates several facets of this study. The dress was sewn by White Bear Woman and painted by her husband, Red White Buffalo, around 1888. She gave the dress to Beaver, who sold it to Wilson along with explanations of the depictions.<sup>23</sup> Each sleeve bears a row of horse tracks near the cuff and bar tallies on either side of the shoulder seams. On the back and front bodice there is a row of five bullet wound marks. Below these are pictorial narrative scenes, not illustrated, involving Lean Bear on the front and Red White Buffalo on the back.

## Iconography



While the composition serves to organize painted elements in the visual field, it is the graphic motifs and their iconographic meanings which illuminate the specific deeds of the shirt wearer. The following discussion on iconography is largely restricted to those motifs found in the ten previously illustrated examples: simple and compound strokes, human forms, wounds, horse tracks, pipes and whips. The occurrence of these motifs in the complete study set is noted on the spreadsheet near the back of this paper.

The simple stroke, ranging from thick bar to thin line, is the most common painted motif on shirts. Strokes, which almost always occur as multiples in rows, are found in 29 shirts in the study set. According to the literature, the following tribes employed strokes to record specific numbers of war deeds: Crow,<sup>24</sup> Mandan,<sup>25</sup> Hidatsa,<sup>26</sup> Lakota,<sup>27</sup> Plains Ojibwa,<sup>28</sup> Plains Cree<sup>29</sup> and Blackfoot.<sup>30</sup> However, painted strokes may not only have served to record precise numbers. For example, on the Blackfoot shirt collected by Duke Paul (Fig. 1.) there are some 126 strokes on the shirt (and 299 on the fronts of the matching leggings). These strokes are so numerous and harmonious in their composition as to suggest a non-numerical proclamation, rather than a precise tabulation, of the wearer's accomplishments. In this regard, Taylor (1957:64) reported that "It is said by some Blackfeet informants, however, that a man who has killed an enemy could call upon another who had previously performed that act, to paint these stripes on leggings and shirt if he wished to do so. The number of stripes was according to taste and bore no relation to the number killed."<sup>31</sup> The



Blackfoot believed their war shirts had supernatural origins and, accordingly, strokes doubly signified the shirt owner's war trails and paths of the mythological weasel (See Raczka in this volume, Taylor 1993:60).

Alfred Bowers and Gilbert Wilson noted complex use of the painted stroke in the Hidatsa system of war honour marks.<sup>32</sup> For example, Bowers (1965:280) stated that the first to strike the enemy in a battle where several enemies were killed painted three black strokes on one legging. The next three to strike the same enemy painted three red strokes. It was considered even a higher honour to strike the last enemy killed. The first to strike the last enemy wore black double strokes the full length of the legging and four pairs of equally spaced horizontal black strokes. The second, third and fourth wore only the four pairs of black strokes.<sup>33</sup> Wilson (1916:1) notes that in body painting the marks were drawn spirally around the leg or arm by fingers dipped in black charcoal mixed with water or red paint. The Hessian leggings (Fig. 8) appear to bear diagonal pairs of strokes much like those described for the Hidatsa. Examples of leggings and body paint displaying diagonal, possibly spiraling, strokes may be found among a number of tribes including: Mandan,<sup>34</sup> Arikara,<sup>35</sup> Hidatsa,<sup>36</sup> Crow,<sup>37</sup> Sioux,<sup>38</sup> Sauk and Fox.<sup>39</sup>

Simple strokes are sometimes compounded by additional motifs. Most typical are strokes ending in horse tracks. Three Blackfoot shirts, including the Duke Paul shirt (Fig. 1), display horse track/stroke motifs.<sup>40</sup> In all three, the motifs are in long rows aligned to opposing edges of the torso. Recalling that the Blackfoot recorded war trails with a simple stroke, their horse track/stroke motifs likely represent horse raiding expeditions.<sup>41</sup>

More complex are "bar tallies," often composed of rows of compound strokes and human forms set at right angles to thick painted strokes, or bars (See Figs. 8-10 and Brownstone 2001b:78-79). Mallery (1972:274) illustrates a simple bar tally in Lone Dog's Dakota winter count consisting of eight strokes united by a single bar signifying eight Crows killed. Gilbert Wilson's informant, Beaver, explained that the two bar tallies with horse track/stroke motifs on the right sleeve of the Mandan dress (Fig. 10) record two successful horse raids led by Red White Buffalo. On the left sleeve a similar tally which combines horse track/stroke motifs with simple stroke motifs signifies that he led a horse raid which met with only partial success. According to Beaver, each horse track/stroke motif stands for a captured horse, while the underscoring bar signifies the raiding party. Typically, a valuable horse was tethered to a picket pin close to the owner's tipi. Correspondingly, the stroke in the horse track/stroke motif may represent the halter cut by the raider to lead away the captured horse. Beaver explained that the bar tally with human torso motifs indicates that Red White Buffalo led a war party that killed Sioux, the long hair identifying that tribe.<sup>42</sup>

This example reminds us that war records ideally display accomplishments in both primary classes of warfare: horse raids and scalp raids. The number of motifs on a bar tally may correspond to the precise number of deeds performed, but not in all cases. For example, Lowie's informant, Blue Bead, described a Crow war party returning from a successful raid: "each one marked up his robe with parallel stripes and from four to six roughly sketched human figures, the number not depending on the number of enemies struck" (1912:237).<sup>43</sup> The sheer quantity and even distribution of bar tally figures on a Hidatsa tally robe collected by Maximilian would seem to be beyond the numbers of deeds achievable by a single man.<sup>44</sup> In this regard, we are reminded of the practice among some tribes, including the Hidatsa, which allowed a war leader to include in his painted war record the total deeds achieved by the men under his command (Bowers 1950:72 and 1965:279, Smith 1943:115). It is also possible that such bountiful displays simply advertised the wearer's prowess, without intending numeric precision.

The two types of compound stroke motifs on the sleeves of the Nova Scotia



Museum shirt (Fig. 3) indicate a balanced display of horse raids and scalp raids. One combines a stroke with a horse track and the other combines a stroke with a scalplocked head. The head most likely represents that of a vanquished enemy, while the stroke may depict his torso and/or a war party. Additional scalplocked head /stroke motifs are found on a sketch of a Hidatsa robe drawn by Kurz (Brownstone 2001b:Ill.15g), on a pair of Crow/Hidatsa leggings in the Opcocno Castle Museum (Brownstone 2001b:Ill.15c),<sup>45</sup> on the Hidatsa tally robe collected by Maximilian (Brownstone 2001b:Ill.15d),<sup>46</sup> and along the quill strip of a tally-type robe likely of Blackfoot origins in the National Museum of Ireland.<sup>47</sup>

Like the scalplocked head/stroke motif, the more abstract circle/stroke motif may also represent a human figure. The right legging belonging with the Hessian shirt (Fig. 8) bears a row of circle/stroke motifs. The leggings worn by The Maker of Roads, a Hidatsa warrior depicted by Bodmer, bear similar circle/stroke motifs.<sup>48</sup> The bar tallies on the right side of the Warren shirt contain circle/stroke motifs (Fig. 9), and there are other examples, as well.<sup>49</sup>

In contrast to circle/stroke motifs, rows of more realistically rendered human upper bodies, full figures and severed heads are fairly common in Plains Indian painting. Rows of figures are sometimes sequentially connected by footprints or identified by specific weapons or regalia, thereby imparting narrative information. In other instances figures are indistinguishable one from the other and display no sequential relationship. The latter type of configuration is particularly of interest in this study, since it is more characteristically found on shirts than on other Plains Indian painting supports.

Fifteen of the shirts under study display rows of human upper bodies. Three shirts, including the illustrated d'Otrante shirt (Fig. 2), display rows of v-neck upper bodies depicted in a style associated with the Blackfoot (Brownstone 2001a).<sup>50</sup> Upper bodies with torsos tapering toward the head like those on the Hessian shirt, Mandan dress and Warren shirt (Figs. 8,9&10) are rare. Apparently, the only other example is the shirt worn by Mató Tópe in Bodmer's portrait (Brownstone 2001b:fig.15e). Upper body tallies with torsos which taper toward the waist are found on eight of the shirts under discussion, including the Davidson shirt (Fig. 4).<sup>51</sup> Two of these have primary tribal documentation, one said to be Arikara<sup>52</sup> and the other Sans Arc Lakota.<sup>53</sup> Both display a set of features in common with four other shirts: the rows of tapered upper bodies abut to quilled shoulder panels and are associated with rows of pipes.<sup>54</sup>

Ten of the shirts under study display non-narrative tallies of full human figures. All but one of these feature triangular bodies. There are primarily two types of triangular humans. The first is found on two shirts in the study group, both documented as Blackfoot.<sup>55</sup> Some sixty Blackfoot paintings contain triangular figures which are almost always in context with pictorial narrative scenes. Outside of these, a model of a Hidatsa bed canopy bears a tally of five Blackfoot-type triangular figures said to represent the number of times Son of Star struck the enemy.<sup>56</sup>

The second type of triangular figure is distinct from the Blackfoot-type, less in its appearance than the context in which it occurs. This type is found on the Hamburg Museum shirt (Fig. 6) and six other shirts in the study set.<sup>57</sup> In five of these the rows of figures are counterbalanced by rows of pipes.<sup>58</sup> Only two shirts with non-Blackfoot type triangular figures have primary tribal documentation, both indicating Sioux origins.<sup>59</sup>

Five shirts under study bear rows of severed heads.<sup>60</sup> With the exception of the Canadian Museum of Civilization shirt (Fig. 5), all display heads in association with pipe tallies. Only two have tribal documentation: the Canadian Museum of Civilization shirt, considered to be Mandan or Sioux, and the Royal Scottish Museum shirt thought to be Arikara.<sup>61</sup>

Severed heads appear on a small number of robes painted by the Sioux,<sup>62</sup>

Crow [?],<sup>63</sup> Mandan,<sup>64</sup> and Mandan or Sioux.<sup>65</sup> These robes also display pipes, either in tally-like groupings or held by a protagonist. Related to severed heads are images of headless bodies found in paintings and engravings of several tribes, including: Pawnee,<sup>66</sup> Oto<sup>67</sup> and Iroquois.<sup>68</sup>

According to the literature, decapitation was practiced by a number of tribes, including: the Pend d'Oreilles,<sup>69</sup> Iowa,<sup>70</sup> Osage,<sup>71</sup> and Sioux.<sup>72</sup> The Sioux are mentioned most often in this regard and it is noteworthy that the gesture designating that tribe in Plains Indian sign language is the motion of cutting the throat (McClintock 1910:404). In addition, several references state that in Sioux paintings severed heads represent enemies killed (Beckwith 1926:374-375 in Bol 1989:126) (Bushotter in Dorsey 1894:488-489).

Nine of the shirts under consideration bear tally-like representations of wounds.<sup>73</sup> Beaver explained the rows of wound marks on the Mandan dress (Fig.10), beginning with the front left side: "(1) One wound, body pierced by bullet which did not pass into the body. This is shown by the fact that the wound mark has a superimposed colour over the red ground colour. (2) Four other wounds recording that Lean Bear was shot twice and each time the bullet went thru marking 2 wounds, in all four wounds." Regarding Red White Buffalo's record on the back of the dress, Beaver simply notes, "five wound marks."<sup>74</sup> Wounds appear often in narrative painting and are realistically shown as blood issuing from the point of injury on heroes and foes alike.

The literature indicates that receiving a wound while engaging the enemy was considered to be an creditable deed by most Plains Indian tribes, including: Ponca,<sup>75</sup> Hidatsa,<sup>76</sup> Mandan,<sup>77</sup> Crow,<sup>78</sup> Cree,<sup>79</sup> Ojibwa,<sup>80</sup> Lakota,<sup>81</sup> and Kiowa.<sup>82</sup> Correspondingly, warriors would display wound marks painted either on their body or clothing. For example, Wilson noted among the Hidatsa, "If a man had been wounded he could place a mark for his wound on his leg, either on the bare leg or on his legging; this was a circle in red with three or four lines running down representing blood" (Wilson 1916:38). Leggings from several tribes display wound marks: Arikara,<sup>83</sup> Pawnee,<sup>84</sup> Cree<sup>85</sup> and possibly Assiniboine.<sup>86</sup>

Horse tracks served several different functions in Plains Indian painting. Frequently, they were repeated in "trails" to map out sequential events in narrative pictorials. In some instances, horse tracks were massed in large numbers to represent mounted war parties in context with narrative scenes.<sup>87</sup> At other times, large numbers of horse tracks were bunched together, independent of narrative scenes, apparently to proclaim a warrior's proficiency as a horse raider and/or his generosity in giving away horses. While the latter type of horse track imagery is rarely found on early war exploit robes,<sup>88</sup> it appears on the torsos and sleeves of thirteen of the shirts under study (Figs. 3,5,6,7,&8).<sup>89</sup> Four of these are Sioux documented and one is Arikara. Smutty Bear, a Yankton Sioux, posed for a photograph in 1858 wearing a shirt with bunched horse tracks on the left upper torso and less discernible stroke-like figures on the right.<sup>90</sup>

A few shirts<sup>91</sup> and robes<sup>92</sup> display horse tracks which may tally precise numbers of deeds. However, there are a considerable number of written accounts of various tribes employing painted horse tracks to record precise numbers of horses. The explanation accompanying the Mandan dress (Fig. 10) states: "On the wrists of the sleeves painted in green are horse shoes, 4 on a sleeve. These record that Red White Buffalo once had a horse shot under him."<sup>93</sup> Wilson (1916:9, Fig.39-n) noted that among the Hidatsa: "A man who had captured an enemy's horse and returned safely to the camp with the horse put four horse tracks on one leg. If he did this with a second horse he put four tracks on the other leg. If he returned with a third he put four tracks on one arm." Bowers noted that the Mandan (1950:72) and Hidatsa (1965:279) painted horse tracks on their blankets and robes to indicate horses captured, bunching

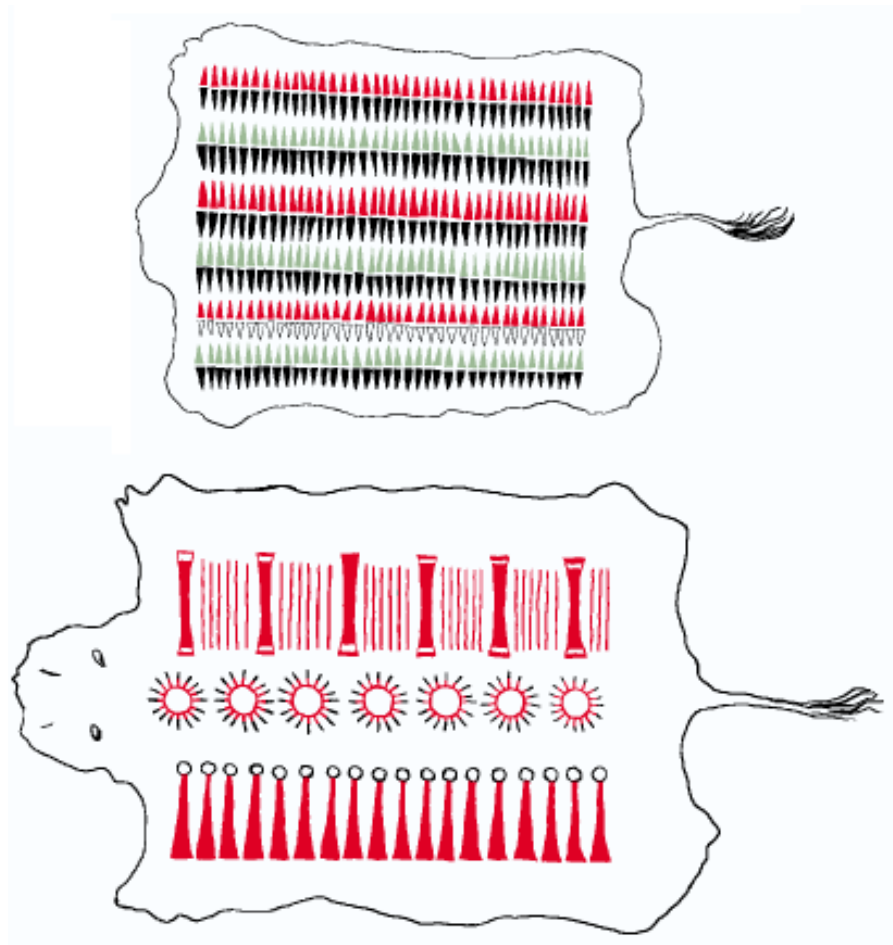


them in groups to indicate the numbers taken on each raid. The aforementioned Hidatsa bed canopy model bears four horse tracks with streaming blood which symbolize the number of times the owner had a horse wounded underneath him (Gilman 1987:104). A warrior in an Arikara ledger drawing wears a robe bearing identical motifs.<sup>94</sup> Skinner (1915:794) noted that Ponca horse raiders were rewarded with the right to wear a white shirt or blanket with horse tracks on it, and that Plains Ojibwa raiders (1914:483-84) painted horse tracks on their tipis and garments. Skinner (1914:518-19) also noted that Plains Cree who captured horses wore black horizontal marks 3 to 4 inches long on one border of the blanket, one for each raid, and hoof prints, one for each stolen horse along the margin. Jefferson (1929:48) and Goddard (1919:310) observed Plains Cree at sundances wearing blankets with painted horse hoofs which stood for the number of horses captured. Bushotter (in Dorsey 1894:488-489) describes the images on a Teton shield, “the horse tracks indicate that he ran off so many horses.” Hassrick (1964:96-97) mentioned that the Lakota painted horse tracks on their horses or leggings to indicate the number of horses captured, the colour of the track echoing the colour of the horse. Kurz (1937:35) made the general statement that red and yellow hoof prints stood for horses stolen, while blue or black hoof prints denoted horses presented as gifts. There are also visual records of horse tracks painted on clothing and bodies of dancers among the Mandan,<sup>95</sup> Arikara,<sup>96</sup> Hidatsa,<sup>97</sup> Crow,<sup>98</sup> Sioux,<sup>99</sup> Assiniboine<sup>100</sup> and Cree.<sup>101</sup>

Fig. 11. Re-drawing of sketch attributed to Maximilian. According to the inscription quirts, headdresses, guns and red blankets are represented on the lower robe. Joslyn Art Museum, Cat. No. PM8.

Rows of pipes, as illustrated on the Hamburg shirt (Fig. 6), appear in thirteen of the shirts under consideration. On eleven of these, the pipes are juxtaposed with rows of tapered upper bodies and non-Blackfoot type triangular full bodies.<sup>102</sup> Only three of the shirts have primary cultural documentation, one said to be Arikara<sup>103</sup> and two identified as Sioux.<sup>104</sup> As mentioned, pipes are featured on four of the five shirts displaying severed heads.

Apart from shirts, the top tier of a documented Sioux tipi liner collected by the trader Laframboise around 1835 shows a row of six pipes with a horse track at each mouth piece,<sup>105</sup> much like on an undocumented Opocno Castle Museum shirt.<sup>106</sup> The Rhône Museum Sioux shirt has a row of pipes with severed heads



at the mouthpieces.<sup>107</sup> A robe in the University of Pennsylvania Museum, said to be Sioux, bears groupings or tallies composed of pipes, severed heads and horse tracks.<sup>108</sup> The top tier of the painted cowhide collected by Lowie also has seven tallies composed of pipes, severed heads and horse tracks representing instances where Charges on Strong led war parties that captured horses and killed Shoshone and Dakota enemies.<sup>109</sup> The tally painted on the model Hidatsa bed canopy commissioned by Gilbert Wilson contains two pipes said to represent the times Son of Star led war parties (Gilman and Schneider 1987:104). Bushotter in Dorsey (1894:488-489) noted that on a Teton shield “The three pipes on the shield..... denote that on so many expeditions the deceased warrior carried a war pipe.” Mallery (1972:424) similarly illustrates a drawing with four pipes alongside Two-Strike, indicating that this Oglala led four war parties.

Among such tribes as the Hidatsa,<sup>110</sup> Arapaho<sup>111</sup> and Teton,<sup>112</sup> it seems that the war party leader actually carried a sacred pipe on the war path. Pipes held by warriors appear in the war record paintings of a number of tribes. There are six or seven early Sioux and Mandan war exploit robes which show the war leader holding a pipe.<sup>113</sup> The Crow name for pipe-holder translates to “The-One-Who-Manages-the-War-Party” (Wildschut 1975:34) and Crow war party leaders were required to own sacred pipes (Lowie 1912:233 and 1922:361, McGinnis 1974:47). However, the pipe he carried to war was a common one (Lowie 1912:233) and pipe imagery, with the possible exception of Charges on Strong’s robe, appears to be absent from Crow paintings. The pipe seems to have played a less significant role in Blackfoot war party organization. In their war paintings pipes usually represent those of their enemies and are displayed in tallies of captured goods.<sup>114</sup>

There are several examples of pipes in paintings which are unrelated to war deeds. Major Pike transcribed an Ojibwa speech in 1806 which asks that the Sioux paint calumets on blazed trees as a sign that they are willing to treat for peace (Mallery 1972:360). Beckwith (1926:374-375 in Bol 1989:126) noted that the Lakota painted images of the horsehair pipe to signify generosity. In 1904 George Dorsey collected an Arikara robe bearing three “calumet” pipes which, according to the former owner, “show that the ceremony was given to the owner of the robe three times.”<sup>115</sup> Most rows of pipes on the shirts in the study group probably record war party leadership. The pipes on Opcno Castle Museum and Rhône Museum shirts<sup>116</sup> which terminate in hoof prints and severed heads almost certainly signify leadership in horse and scalp raids.

Rows of horse whips are found on seven shirts under consideration, including the illustrated Sheffield Museums shirt (Fig.7) and the leggings accompanying an Opcno Castle Museum shirt.<sup>117</sup> Of these, only a Sioux shirt has primary tribal documentation.<sup>118</sup> Typically, whips are delineated with a circular wrist strap, tapering stock and short double lash. Occasionally, the lash is omitted, in which case whips may give the appearance of human upper bodies with the torso tapering toward the head.

Maximilian (1906:264) described a type of robe which tallied objects given away, including: “whips, indicating the number of horses given, because the whip belonging to the horse is always bestowed with the animal.” Maximilian collected a Hidatsa robe, apparently of the “giveaway” type, which includes eight whips, six of which are grouped with pipes.<sup>119</sup> A schematic drawing of a Hidatsa robe attributed to Maximilian bears a German inscription which translates as follows: “drawn by chief Yellow Bear depicting things he gave away – quirts, headdresses, guns and red blankets.”<sup>120</sup> The inscription refers to the lower robe illustrated in Fig. 11, with the headdresses portrayed as red circles with black tipped radiating lines probably representing eagle feathers. Plains Indians also drew feathers as elongated diamonds split into contrasting colours. Thus, the robe above may display rows of headdress



trailers. Usually such conventionalized feathers were repeated in concentric rings to form the radiating pattern of a headdress, with perhaps a parallel reference to the sun.<sup>121</sup> The Field Museum preserves an Arikara buffalo robe with twelve such sunburst/headdress motifs framed by repeated whips and three ceremonial pipes.<sup>122</sup> The accompanying information, almost certainly related to George Dorsey by the former owner, is as follows: “Row of red designs represent quoits [quirts]. Designs resembling Calumet pipes shows that the ceremony was given to the owner of the robe three times. Twelve headdresses were made for him in his lifetime. Seven times he was in the battle when they captured a head dress and they were tore up. That is why there are seven painted here which are not complete.”<sup>123</sup> Bodmer drew a portrait of Birohka, a Hidatsa, wearing a robe with multiple sunburst/headdresses motifs (Goetzman et al. 1984:314). Only two of the headdresses are fully visible. One has three whips without lashes in its center and the other has two hourglass motifs, possibly representing blankets. An Arikara ledger drawing illustrates a robe, worn between 1872 and 1876, with a large central sunburst and bordering row of whips and wound marks (Greene 2006:75).<sup>124</sup> The Peabody Museum Harvard preserves a robe with a row of six headdresses drawn much like the drawing from Maximilian’s journal (Fig.11) and a row of 31 red and black whips.<sup>125</sup> These tallies flank a large central quillwork sunburst, reminding us of Maximilian’s (1906:Vol.23:261) description of Mandan buffalo robes with images of the “feather cap under the image of the sun.” A photograph, probably taken before 1880, shows one man among a group of Hidatsa, Mandan, Arikara, and Sioux chiefs who appears to wear a robe bearing sunburst and whip motifs.<sup>126</sup> Finally, a narrative war exploit robe probably painted by a Sioux Indian between 1820 and 1830 (Ewers pers. com. August 11, 1991), contains four tallies each composed of 2 or 3 crossed whips and horse tracks, no doubt announcing horse giveaways.<sup>127</sup>

## Conclusions

Speaking predominantly about the first half of the nineteenth century Bernard Mishkin (1940:7) noted that, “The acceleration of contact and diffusion of typical traits has, in recent times, given rise to the relatively homogeneous culture area in the Plains and constitutes one of the main effects of horse culture.” While Mishkin (1940:3) considered that the “method of ‘scoring’ war records in one tribe did not differ materially from that operation in another,” other scholars emphasized the differences between tribal heraldic systems (Smith 1938:427, Grinnell 1907:247). Under these circumstances it comes as no surprise that the present study does not yield clear cut connections between painted shirts and their makers as much as “stylistic networks, whose boundaries are not congruent with ethnic or cultural boundaries (Feest and Kasprzycki 2001:189).”

With regard to composition, we find significant trends toward homogeneity in the Plains region. Rows and arrays of repeated figures is a constant feature of shirts in the study set, a product of the widespread practice of publicly counting and advertising success in the performance of honourific deeds. The physical nature of shirts also influenced painting composition. Draftsmen repeatedly took advantage of the eight subsections of the upper torso and sleeves, compartmentalizing rows and arrays of figures to organize and clarify deeds of war and generosity. They extensively oriented and positioned painted figures according to the contours and decorative panels of shirts. While the shape of the shirt naturally influenced composition toward symmetry, heraldic conventions for applying war marks pushed composition in the direction of asymmetry. The data indicates a marked tendency toward asymmetrical relations between the right and left sides of the painting surface, whereas symmetry prevails between backs and fronts. Non-narrative imagery dominates the upper shirt whereas narrative imagery tends to be located below.

The search for tribal identity through iconographic features has proved difficult.





Not the least impediment is the similarity in motifs, as well as the deeds which they signify, from one tribe to the next. Another difficulty lay in what Wissler (1927:22) described in his study on the distribution of Plains moccasin types as a “loose interrelation of parts.” In this regard, the iconographic significance of a given motif may shift considerably, even within a single culture. For example, the simple strokes used by the Blackfoot sometimes recorded exact numbers, while at other times their meaning was more symbolic, both numerically and mythologically. Similarly, four horse tracks painted by a Hidatsa in one instance recorded a horse shot from under its owner, while elsewhere the same motif painted by a member of the same tribe stood for the hoofs of a single stolen horse. Such shifts in meaning remind us that pictographs were not essentially self explanatory, but relied on additional sources of information, including oral accounts. Despite these complexities, a review of the data offer a number of opportunities to culturally link iconographic motifs with shirt makers.

Simple stroke configurations tend to be considerably more symmetrical among the Blackfoot than other tribes. Diagonal or spiral strokes are most strongly associated with the Hidatsa and Mandan, followed by the Arikara and Sioux, and very weakly with the Blackfoot. Bar tallies appear to have a distribution restricted to the Mandan, Hidatsa and Crow. Rows of triangular full figures are of two types, one associated with the Blackfoot and the other, less certainly, with the Sioux. Rows of severed heads appear to be most strongly connected to the Sioux, less so with the Arikara and Mandan. Wounds appear to have been used by all tribes, with no discernible tribal differences. Bunched horse tracks are most strongly associated with the Sioux, secondarily with the Arikara and Mandan, with little apparent presence in paintings from other tribes. Rows of pipes are again strongly associated with the Sioux, with weaker connections to a number of adjacent tribes. Rows of whips tend to be connected to the Sioux, Arikara and Hidatsa.

Apart from individual motifs, connections may also be made between tribes and clusters of motifs. Specifically, pipes tend to cluster with either severed heads or non Blackfoot-type triangular full and upper body forms. Whips and to a lesser degree bunched horse tracks figured into these clusters with considerable frequency. These groupings, like the individual motifs they contain, appear to be concentrated among the Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara and Sioux peoples. It thus seems likely that in the mid-nineteenth century these cultures whose lands straddled the present border between North and South Dakota, known as the Missouri Plateau, shared a visual vocabulary differentiated from that of the remaining peoples in the study group to the north and west.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Plains Indian Shirt.

<sup>2</sup> War shirts were connected with leadership in the following tribes: Sioux (Curtis 1908:22; Wilson 1918:164); Hidatsa (Wilson 1916:10,41); Mandan (Bowers 1950:74); Crow (Lowie 1912:119,231;

Lowie 1922:253; Morgan 1959:168; Wildschutt 1975:34,37-38); Cheyenne (Horse Capture and Horse Capture 2001:104), Blackfoot (Sleigh interview, Hank Papers, Glenbow Archives).

<sup>3</sup> Not included in this study are several important early shirts which bear only narrative-type imagery: Berne Historical Museum, Cat. No. N.A.15; Peabody Museum Harvard, Cat. No. 90-17-10/49309; Civici Musei Reggio Emilia, Cat. No. 113.

<sup>4</sup> Some information regarding the practice of staining shirts among the Mandan and Hidatsa may be found in Bowers (1950:70,73) and (1965:279), Wilson (1911:3,286,287) and Wilson (1916:22-23).

<sup>5</sup> Photograph showing leggings of Lean Wolf, Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives, BAE GN 00173/Bell Collection 06645100; Photograph showing leggings of either Porcupine or Antelope, Beinicke Rare Book Library, ID No.1049622; Body paint on painted hide, U.S. National Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 165055.

<sup>6</sup> Photograph showing War Eagle's shirt, Chronister 2003:21; Photograph of body paint of Bad Gun, Chronister 1998:45; Leggings of Lance Owner, American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50.1/6017a-b; Body paint of He-who-follows-the-eagle, Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives, Photo Lot 90-1, number 303; Photograph of leggings of Chief Bad Gun, Beinicke Rare Book Library, ID no.1049620; Bodmer's portrait showing Mató Tópe's leggings and body paint, Goetzman et al. 1984:308,309; Bodmer's portrait showing leggings of Máchcsi-Karéhde, Goetzman et al.1984:300.

<sup>7</sup> Leggings, Peabody Museum Harvard, Cat. No. 74-25-10/1889; Leggings, Southwest Museum; Body paint of Thunder Bear, Montana Historical Society, Cat. No. 954-807; Leggings in Bodmer's portrait of Wahktagei, Goetzman et al. 1984:186.

<sup>8</sup> Photograph showing leggings, Beinicke Rare Book Library, ID No. 1049636; Photograph showing body paint of Spread Face, Beinicke Rare Book Library, ID No. 1047030; Ledger drawings showing body paint, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, MS154064a BAE 085105.10.,25; Bodmer's portrait showing leggings of Pachtuwa-Chta, Goetzman et al. 1984:283.

<sup>9</sup> Burbank portrait of Black Coyote, Private Collection.

<sup>10</sup> Burbank portrait of Deaf Bull, Peabody Museum Harvard, Cat. No. 99-23-10/54066; Photograph showing body paint, Museum of the Rockies, Cat. No. 83.21.2; Photograph showing body paint, Montana Historical Society, Cat. No. 955-798.

<sup>11</sup> Leggings, Field Museum, Cat. No. ?.

<sup>12</sup> Medicine Calf's? leggings, British Museum, acc.no.1887.12.18.1.

<sup>13</sup> Kane 1968:276

<sup>14</sup> J. O. Lewis lithograph showing body paint of Keokuck, Buffalo Bill Historical Center.

<sup>15</sup> For similar descriptions of asymmetrical war marks see Bowers (1950: 70, 72) and Wilson (1916: 1). For asymmetrical arrangements of hairlock fringes on shirts see: Wilson (1916: 119) and bowers (1950: 72).

<sup>16</sup> Peabody Museum Harvard, Cat. No. 99-12-10/53041.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in translation from the collection list.

<sup>18</sup> Royal Alberta Museum accession file.

<sup>19</sup> Personal Communication, Jonathan King, 2002.

<sup>20</sup> Canadian Museum of Civilization accession file.

<sup>21</sup> The heads are not unlike the conventionalized Omaha enemies depicted by Baptiste Good, the Brulé Dakota (Mallery 1972:294). McLaughlin (2003:166) believes this hairstyle identified Caddoan peoples.

<sup>22</sup> Similarly, the Duke Paul shirt has paired rosettes on each neck flap. The Hamburg shirt has a pair of quilled rosettes in each sleeve panel. The Sheffield shirt is decorated with a matching pair of quilled rosettes on the back torso and a single rosette mid-chest in the front.

<sup>23</sup> Anthropology Department, accession files, Cat. No. 50.1/5352.

<sup>24</sup> Lowie 1912:231, Nabokov 1967:34 and Wildschut 1975:37-38.

<sup>25</sup> American Museum of Natural History, accession list, Cat. No. 50.1/5352.

<sup>26</sup> Wilson 1916:58.

<sup>27</sup> Dorsey 1894:488-489, Hassrick 1964: 96-97,335; Walker 1980:273.

<sup>28</sup> Skinner 1914:483-84.

<sup>29</sup> Skinner 1914:518-19.

<sup>30</sup> Rows of strokes represent precise numbers on the following painted hides: Royal Ontario Museum, Cat. No. HK461; Minnesota Historical Society, Cat. No. 851 and Pitt Rivers Museum, Cat. No. 1895.61.1. See also Kidd 1986:62.



<sup>31</sup> According to Taylor's (1957) note of acknowledgement, John Ewers' informants likely provided this information.

<sup>32</sup> Walker (1980:273,274, 275, 277, 280& 281) provided examples indicating that the Lakota also had a complex system employing simple strokes to designate specialized information. DeMallie (in Walker 1980:259), however, suggested that the insignia used by the Lakota were more inconsistent and idiosyncratic than indicated by Walker.

<sup>33</sup> For further information on Mandan and Hidatsa stripe marks see: Bowers 1950:72,73; Curtis 1909:147; Wilson 1916:1,2,4, Figs39,40; Wilson 1911:286-7.

<sup>34</sup> Photograph of leggings of Bad Gun, Beinicke Rare Book Library, ID no.1049620; Leggings, American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50.1/6017a-b; Photograph showing body paint, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Photo Lot 90-1, number 303.

<sup>35</sup> Bodmer's portrait showing leggings of Pachtuwa-Chta, Goetzman et al. 1984:283; Body paint in ledger drawing, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ms.154046A BAE 085105.25;

<sup>36</sup> Photograph of Lean Wolf's leggings, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, INV 06651600; Bodmer's portrait of Hidatsa Pehriska-Ruhpa showing body paint, Goetzman et al. 1984:319.

<sup>37</sup> Ledger drawing by a man named Above showing body paint, Montana State University, Cat. No. 930.30.

<sup>38</sup> Leggings, Peabody Museum Harvard, Cat. No. 74-25-10/1889; Leggings, Southwest Museum; Photograph of Thunder Bear showing body paint, Montana Historical Society, Cat. No. 954-807.

<sup>39</sup> Body painting on Lewis' portrait of Kee-O-Kuk, 1835, Boehme, Feest & Johnston 1995:Fig.3.

<sup>40</sup> Pitt Rivers Museum, Cat. No. 1893.67.1 and Manitoba Museum, Cat. No. H4.4.4.

<sup>41</sup> The horse tracks with streaks on the Hessian leggings may be a variation of the horse track/stroke motif. Other variations of the horse track/stroke motif are found on a shirt with no tribal identification, U.S. National Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 403,344a, and perhaps the Plains Ojibwa shirt, Museum fuer Volkerkunde Wien, Cat. No. 421.

<sup>42</sup> American Museum of Natural History, Anthropology Department, accession files, Cat. No. 50.1/5352

<sup>43</sup> Typically, bar tallies are rendered in black and red (see Figs. 8,9). In this regard, Gray Bull, a Crow, noted that war party members painted their war deeds on their clothing before triumphantly returning to their village. Traditionally, a buffalo was killed and its blood was mixed with charcoal to make the paint (Lowie 1912:235). The red blood and black charcoal may have a symbolic connection to colours used in bar tallies.

<sup>44</sup> Ethnologische Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IVB202, see Brownstone 2001a:Fig.15.

<sup>45</sup> Opcno Castle Museum, Cat. No. 6916.

<sup>46</sup> Ethnological Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IV B 202.

<sup>47</sup> National Museum of Ireland, Cat. No. 1882.3881.

<sup>48</sup> Goetzman et al. 1984:315.

<sup>49</sup> Leggings collected in 1838, American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50/847; Shirt, Robert Hull Fleming Museum, Cat. No. 1986.2.1LA; Plains Ojibwa shirt, Museum fuer Volkerkunde Wien, Cat. No. 421.

<sup>50</sup> Gilcrease Museum, Cat. No. 4776.6.187; Folkens Museum Etnografiska, Cat. No. 1854.2.1; ex Donald Ellis Gallery.

<sup>51</sup> Opcno Castle Museum, Cat. No. 6914; National Museums of Scotland, Cat. No. 389; National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 8/8034; Opcno Castle Museum, Cat. No. 6915 (and matching leggings Cat. No. 6916); National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 2/9035; British Museum, Cat. No. 9063; American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50/841; Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cat. No. NA 202.486; Detroit Institute of Arts, Cat. No. 1988.44.

<sup>52</sup> National Museums of Scotland, Cat. No. 389

<sup>53</sup> National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 5/6565. Bob Brewer found a number of Stanley Morrow photographs of Chief White Bull wearing this shirt, identifying its tribal origins.

<sup>54</sup> Opcno Castle Museum, Cat. No. 6914; National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 8/8034; National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 2/9035; Detroit Institute of Arts, Cat. No. 1988.44.

<sup>55</sup> Brooklyn Museum, Cat. No. 50.67.5a; Pitt Rivers Museum, Cat. No. 1893.67.1.

<sup>56</sup> American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50.1/5479 a-c.



- <sup>57</sup> National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 00.7085; National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 16/5277; Hamburgisches Museum Fur Volkerkunde, Cat. No. B 155; Brooklyn Museum, Cat. No. 50.67.1a; Peabody Museum Harvard, Cat. No. 10/53041; George Weston Collection; Kenneth Rendell Gallery.
- <sup>58</sup> National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 00.7085; National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 16/5277; Hamburgisches Museum Fur Volkerkunde, Cat. No. B 155; George Weston Collection; Kenneth Rendell Gallery.
- <sup>59</sup> Brooklyn Museum, Cat. No. 50.67.1a; George Weston Collection.
- <sup>60</sup> In addition to those noted on the spreadsheet, a shirt in the American Museum of Natural History (Cat. No. 50.1/762), said to be northern Arapaho, displays a row of painted human heads in association with two pipes.
- <sup>61</sup> Catlin shows bar tallies of disembodied heads painted on the shirt of Bloody Hand, an Arikara (Truettner 1979:90).
- <sup>62</sup> Robe acquired from Kohler in 1846, Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IV B 208 EMB; Undocumented robe said to be Lakota (Hall 1926:15; Lucy Fowler Williams, et al 2005:148), University of Pennsylvania Museum, Cat. No. NA 10721. See also the American Horse's winter count in Mallery 1972:563.
- <sup>63</sup> Painted cowhide collected by Lowie from Charges on Strong, American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50/6826.
- <sup>64</sup> Robe from Mató Tópe, Berne Historical Museum, Cat. No. 113.
- <sup>65</sup> Early nineteenth century undocumented robe said to be Sioux or Mandan, Musée du Quai Branly, Cat. No. 86.17.1.
- <sup>66</sup> Seymour illustration, Beinicke Rare Book Library, ID no.3728460.
- <sup>67</sup> Harrington 1913:113.
- <sup>68</sup> Pictographic record illustrated in Carpenter (2005:92-93), club in Canadian Museum of Civilization, Cat. No. III-X-236.
- <sup>69</sup> Jackson 2000:144.
- <sup>70</sup> Skinner 1915:688.
- <sup>71</sup> Smith 1938:458.
- <sup>72</sup> Clark 1982:326, Neill 1872a:181 in Wallis 1947:21 and Lowie 1922:267.
- <sup>73</sup> In addition to those noted on the spreadsheet, the American Museum of Natural History preserves a northern plains shirt bearing wounds, approximately 35 in number, as its only painted motif (50.2/4725). I know of only two robes with tally-type wound marks: one attributed to the Mandan chief Mató Tópe with very faint wound marks, Ethnological Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IV B 198; Robe appearing in an Arikara drawing, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, MS 154064B BAE 085106.05.
- <sup>74</sup> American Museum of Natural History, accession file, Cat. No. 50.2/5352.
- <sup>75</sup> Skinner 1915:794.
- <sup>76</sup> Wilson 1911:156-7, Wilson 1916:33,38-39, Bowers 1965:279,402.
- <sup>77</sup> Bowers 1950:72.
- <sup>78</sup> Lowie 1912:202-4, Wildschut 1975:37-38.
- <sup>79</sup> Kane 1968:276, Skinner 1914:518-519.
- <sup>80</sup> Howard 1964:85, Skinner 1914:483-484.
- <sup>81</sup> Curtis 1908:22, Beckwith 1926:374-375 in Bol 1989:126, George Sword in DeMallie and Parks in Taylor and Dempsey 2003:72, Hassrick 1964:96-97, Jahner from Bushotter's MS No.26 1975:193, Walker 1980:273.
- <sup>82</sup> Mishkin 1940:39.
- <sup>83</sup> Arikara drawings, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ms. 154064a, BAE 085105.10, 25 and 14.
- <sup>84</sup> Pawnee leggings, Field Museum.
- <sup>85</sup> Kane 1968:276.
- <sup>86</sup> Manitoba Museum, Cat. No. H4.07.77.
- <sup>87</sup> Among the early robes: Snite Museum of Art, Cat. No. 63.9.4; Mató Tópe's Mandan robe, Berne Historische Museum, Cat. No. 113; Musée du Quai Branly, Cat. No. 86.17.1.
- <sup>88</sup> Among the early robes: [Blackfoot?] Royal Ontario Museum, Cat. No. 2006.79.1 (Brownstone 2001a, King 2001); Possibly Bodmer's "Piegan Warrior" Joslyn Art Museum, Cat. No. NA 148;



[Crow/Hidatsa?], National Museum of Denmark, Cat. No. Hd60. The Crow seem to have had a special ceremonial robe with clusters of painted horse tracks. See Mallery 1972:501 and Lessard 1981:66.

<sup>89</sup> Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, Cat. No. E 30:1; Sheffield Gallery and Museums Trust, Cat. No. X1978.800; Opcno Castle Museum, Cat. No. 6914; Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cat. No. NA 202.486; National Museums of Scotland, Cat. No. 389; Canadian Museum of Civilization, Cat. No. V-H-2; Musée du Quai Branly, Cat. No. 09.19.57; Hamburgisches Museum Fur Volkerkunde, Cat. No. B 155; Peabody Museum Harvard, Cat. No. 76-51-10/11004; Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IV B 150; Brooklyn Museum, Cat. No. 50.67.1a; Peabody Museum Harvard, Cat. No. 10/53041; American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50/841.

<sup>90</sup> National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, BAE GN 03565 06597800.

<sup>91</sup> U. S. National Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 403,344a; American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50.1/5352; Staatliches Museum fur Volkerkunde Munich, Cat. No. J.910; Royal Alberta Museum, Cat. No. H88.56.4; ex. Donald Ellis Gallery.

<sup>92</sup> Among the early robes: Undocumented [Sioux?] robe, University of Pennsylvania Museum, Cat. No. NA10721; Hidatsa robe formerly belonging to Two Ravens, Ethnological Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IVB203; robe of Charges on Strong, Crow [?], American Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 50/6826.

<sup>93</sup> There are also examples of Lakota women's dresses decorated with war honour marks including horse tracks commemorating the capture of horses. One is preserved in the Robinson Museum in Pierre, South Dakota. Apparently in Weygold's papers there is a photograph of Winyan Hanska wearing a similar dress, along with the explanation that the pictographs commemorate the deeds of a grandchild killed by the Crows. The Denver Public Library preserves a photograph, Cat. No. X-31297, of a Women's Victory Dance held in 1891 showing several women in similar dresses bearing war marks.

<sup>94</sup> National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, MS154064b, BAE085106.03.

<sup>95</sup> Photograph of War Eagle with painted shirt (Chronister 2003).

<sup>96</sup> Photograph of body paint of Spread Face, Beinicke Rare Book Library, ID no.1047030.

<sup>97</sup> Hide painting of Grass Dancers, U.S. National Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 165055.

<sup>98</sup> Drawing of a Grass Dance by Above, Montana State University-Billings, Cat. No. 930.30.

<sup>99</sup> Photograph of body paint of Thundering Bear, Montana Historical Society, Cat. No. 954-807.

<sup>100</sup> Drawings of Grass Dancers (Robertson 1993:27 & 76 and Brassier 1987:88).

<sup>101</sup> Model war deed tipi door, Royal Ontario Museum, acc.no.912.40.47.

<sup>102</sup> Opcno Castle Museum, Cat. No. 6914; National Museums of Scotland, Cat. No. 389; Detroit Institute of Arts, Cat. No. 1988.44; National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 8/8034; National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 00.7085; National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 16/5277; Hamburgisches Museum Fur Volkerkunde, Cat. No. B 155; National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. No. 2/9035; National Museum of the American Indian, 9/6565; Kenneth Rendell Gallery; George Weston Collection.

<sup>103</sup> National Museums of Scotland, Cat. No. 389.

<sup>104</sup> Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IV B 150 and George Weston Collection.

<sup>105</sup> State Historical Society of Wisconsin, acc.no.1962.285.4.

<sup>106</sup> Opcno Castle Museum, Cat. No. 6914.

<sup>107</sup> Museum-Departement du Rhône, Cat. No. 979-3-357

<sup>108</sup> University of Pennsylvania Museum, Cat. No. NA10721.

<sup>109</sup> Lowie 1922:316.

<sup>110</sup> Wilson 1914:119.

<sup>111</sup> Clark 1982:41.

<sup>112</sup> Bushotter in Dorsey 1894:488-489.

<sup>113</sup> Early nineteenth century Sioux robe, Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IV B 208; early nineteenth century Sioux robe, U.S. National Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 2130; Sioux robe sketched by Eugene Girardin in 1849 (<http://projetgirardin.free.fr/>); Mató Tópe's Mandan robe, Berne Historical Museum, Cat. No. 113; early nineteenth century undocumented Sioux or Mandan robe, Peabody Museum Harvard, Cat. No. 99-12-10/53121; early nineteenth century undocumented Sioux or Mandan robe, Musée du Quai Branly, Cat. No. 86.17.1; undocumented robe, British Museum, Cat. No. 917. Smith (1943:115) confirms the role of the pipe carrier in paintings. Several ledger drawings show Lean Wolf, Hidatsa, holding a pipe and the inscriptions identify him as war party leader, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ms 2372, Box 11, NAA INV 08743700 and NAA INV 08744900.

<sup>114</sup> Blackfoot warriors sometimes carried a special "black-cover pipe" on the war path, apparently to



control the weather (Wilson 1958:122,163,235).

<sup>115</sup> Field Museum, Cat. No. 15327.

<sup>116</sup> Opcno Castle Museum, Cat. No. 6914; Museum-Departement du Rhône, Cat. No. 979-3-357.

<sup>117</sup> Opcno Castle Museum, Cat. No. 6916.

<sup>118</sup> Brooklyn Museum, Cat. No. 50.67.1a.

<sup>119</sup> Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Cat. No. IVB202, illustrated in Brownstone 2001b:79.

<sup>120</sup> Attribution and translation kindly provided by Marsha Gallagher, pers. com. Jan.11, 2006. For more references to Yellow Bear's robe(s) see Maximilian 1906:32,66.

<sup>121</sup> Catlin (1926:281) considered this design to represent the sun.

<sup>122</sup> Field Museum, cat. no.15327

<sup>123</sup> Field Museum accession file.

<sup>124</sup> National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ms. 154064b, 08506.05.

<sup>125</sup> Cat. No. 74-25-10/7895. Given to the museum in 1874 by General Henry A. Morrow.

<sup>126</sup> Beinicke Rare Book Library, ID No. 1044624.

<sup>127</sup> U.S. National Museum of Natural History, Cat. No. 2130.

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