



Representation of the battle of Little Bighorn in four major films: “Little Big Man”, “They Died with their Boots on”, “Sitting Bull” and “Chief Crazy Horse”.

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RESUMEN

La presente tesis analiza las complejas relaciones entre cine e Historia y más concretamente la representación de la batalla de Little Bighorn en las películas “Pequeño Gran Hombre”, “Murieron con las botas puestas”, “Sitting Bull, casta de guerreros” y “El gran jefe”. La primera está centrada en la personalidad de George Armstrong Custer, la segunda en su carrera militar, la tercera en la vida de Sitting Bull y la última en la vida de Crazy Horse.

Después de haber establecido los hechos concernientes a la batalla de Little Bighorn a través de los libros de los diferentes autores y la comparación de los hechos por ellos narrados, se han estudiado las cuatro películas, comparando las secuencias de las películas con los hechos establecidos en la historia. La tesis también da una perspectiva de la historia de las películas de Indios y los dos grandes conflictos entre los Indios y los Estados Unidos

RESUMO

A presente tese analiza as complexas relacións entre cinema e Historia e máis concretamente a representación da batalla de Little Bighorn nas películas “Pequeño Gran Home”, “Morreron coas botas postas”, “Sitting Bull” e “O gran xefe”. A primeira está centrada na personalidade de George Armstrong Custer, a segunda na súa carreira militar, a terceira na vida de Sitting Bull e a última na vida de Crazy Horse.

Despois de establecer os feitos concernientes á batalla de Little Bighorn a través dos libros dos diferentes autores e a comparación dos feitos narrados por eles, estas catro películas foron estudadas, comparando as secuencias das películas cos feitos establecidos na Historia. Esta tese tamén dá unha perspectiva da historia das películas sobre Indios e os dous conflitos entre os Inidios e os Estados Unidos

ABSTRACT

The present thesis analyses the complex relationships between cinema and History and more concretely the representation of the battle of Little Bighorn in the films “Little Big Man”, “They Died with their Boots On”, “Sitting Bull” and “Chief Crazy Horse”. The first one is centred on the personality of George Armstrong Custer, the second on his military career, the third on the life of Sitting Bull and the last on the life of Crazy Horse.

After having established the facts concerning the battle of Little Bighorn through the books of the different authors and the comparison of the facts narrated by them, these four films have been studied, comparing the sequences of the films with the facts established in history. The thesis also gives a perspective of the history of Indian films and the two great conflicts between the Indians and the United States.

INTRODUCTION

The present thesis is focused on the study of four major films concerning the battle of Little Bighorn. The first, *Little Big Man* (1970), is centred on the personality of George Armstrong Custer, *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) on his military career, *Sitting Bull* (1964) on the life of the medicine man and *Chief Crazy Horse* (1955) on the life of the warrior chief, its main objectives being the comparison between the facts that gave origin to the battle of Little Bighorn and the way they have been represented, deducing from the comparison the quality of the representation, but it also pays attention to the characters that starred in this conflict and, in that sense, the lives of the main ones have been added.

To achieve this objective, this thesis has been structured in six chapters. The first develops a general frame in which the main ideas about Representation are told. In it, there is an analysis of the different kinds of Westerns as well as the different aspects involved in film-making. Some social matters have been dealt with, such as those related to migration. It also deals with the problem of the sources. The second chapter is dedicated to the migration of the Sioux people, from the moment they abandoned their location in Minnesota until the moment of their location in the Black Hills, with the object of inscribing them in the frame of History. It also has the objective of bringing into light the tribes with which they met and the relations resulting in long-lasting friendship or enmity. Chapter three gives a short history of the Indian films. This chapter is complemented by the following one, in which the two main conflicts are studied. Also a biography of the main leaders is given. Chapter five deals with the four major films which are the object of this thesis, analysing them from the point of view of Representation, and adding the life stories

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of the Indian leaders taking part in them. Chapter six shows the conclusions.

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List of Abbreviations

Neb. Hist. Mag:Nebraska History Magazine

Om.Dai. Reg: Omaha Daily Register

South Dak. Hist. Col: South Dakota Historical Collections

1. REPRESENTATION

In the academic panorama, as far as I know, no thesis has been written about the Battle of Little Bighorn from the point of view of Representation. Neither are there articles about the representation of Indians in the battle of Little Bighorn nor any academic work about Indians in films, which includes the non-existence of academic works about the figure of Crazy Horse. However there have been biographies about the life of the great chief, but they were literary works. The novel of Ambrose, even if documented, it still remains to be a novel. There were also works concerning the battle of Little Bighorn, included in larger books, being histories, like that of Doane Robinson or George E. Hyde, in which the lives of some warriors and chiefs were included, some of them fragmentary, but there were also more personal books, such as the one by Margueritte Merington, commenting on the private letters of Elizabeth Custer.

The current thesis was born to fill that space of Representation relating to Indian studies. It deals with the complex relationships between Cinema and History, relations that have been frequent, given the number of historical events represented in the films. Of these representations, there are a large number of films well known to the general public, many of which have been based upon novels, like *Trouble Shooter*, by Ernest Haycox, giving origin to the film *Union Pacific* (1939), which tells the story of the building of that train; *The Saga of Billy the Kid*, by Walter Noble Burns, the origin of the films *Billy the Kid* (1930) and *Billy the Kid* (1940); *Cheyenne Autumn*, by Mary Sandoz, a source of inspiration for the homonymous film, all of them dealing with the History of the United States. There

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are others, however, that speak about the Indian problems, such as for instance the Iroquois, like *The Song of Hiawatha*, by Henry Wordsworth Longfellow, which was the source of the film *Hiawatha* (1910) but, of course, this is not the only tribe the films have dealt with. In fact, there are others which have been more extensively dealt with, the Apaches and the Sioux being the ones which became more famous to the general public. Among the novels dealing with the Apache problem, the one by Paul Horgan, *A Distant Trumpet*, gave origin to the film of the same name, representing the life of Chief War Eagle. Among the films about Cheyennes *Arrow in the Sun*, by Theodore Victor Olsen, which gave origin to the film *Soldier Blue* (1970).

Among the films directly based on reality there are some like *Distant Drums* (1964), *Apache Blood* (1975), *Cry Blood Apache* (1970), *Apache Drums* (1951), or *Hondo* (1953), these last three ones about the Apache chief Victorio; *40 guns to Apache Pass* (1966), *Broken Arrow* (1950), *The Battle at Apache Pass* (1952), and *Fort Apache* (1948), telling different aspects of Cochises's life. The first one is about the purchase of rifles; the second tells the story of the way the Apache chief tried to obtain peace, mixed with the love story of Tom Jefford with Morning Star, while the third one portrays the battle of its name. In the last one again the efforts to obtain peace appear. As for Taza, there is a single film *Taza, Son of Cochise* (1953), while the life of chief Chato has been portrayed in films like *Duel at Diablo* (1966). As for Geronimo, there are several films about him. The life of Mangas Coloradas is told in the film *War Drums* (1957), which portrays the events in which the chief was tortured by a group of Whites. Related to the Sioux the trilogy *A Man Called Horse*,

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composed of *A Man Called Horse* (1970), *The Return of a Man Called Horse* (1976) and *The Triumphs of a Man Called Horse* (1983) is based upon the story engraved in the stone. This film has been included in the section about those films based directly on History, it having been considered that a story engraved on stone was a historic narration. Of the films about Red Cloud, two of them represent Red Cloud's war, *The Indian Fighter* (1956) and *Tomahawk* (1951).

As for the Sources and Methodology my secondary sources have been chosen on the basis of explaining the sequences of the film in order to contrast them with the real facts contained in order to check the reality of the events depicted in the film and deduce if the representation has been correctly done. For that reason I have used for the history of the Sioux migrations the books *A History of the Sioux Indians*, which is a minute narration of the history of this tribe and *Red Cloud's Folk*, by George E. Hyde, who shows his admiration for Spotted Tail, calling him the greatest Sioux chief of that period. According to his way of thinking when he speaks about Crazy Horse he tends to summarize. The book of Stephen E. Ambrose, besides dealing with the lives of Crazy Horse and Custer, based on historic sources, gives an ample panorama of Sioux social life and their environment and also the social life and environment in which George Armstrong Custer grew up and lived.

For general matters of Representation, the book of Stuart Hall, *Representation, Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, gave a great amount of information, as also the book by Gill Branston and Roy Stafford, *The Media Student's Book*, as well as *Consumption and Everyday Life*, by Hugh Mackay and

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The Media Reader: Continuity and Transformation, by Mackay and O'Sullivan. The article by Annete Heydon was of considerable importance to study the characteristics of immigration. For the matters about cinema *Le Cinema et ses Métiers* was useful in order to comprehend the role of each job related to this investigation concerning cinema.

For all the points about Linguistics and its relations with Representation the *Cours de Linhgistique Générale* by Ferdinand de Saussure in the edition of Akal Editores, which includes the first edition with the corrections made by Tullio de Mauro. For the life and customs of the Indians *The North American Indian* was of great use. The fact that Edward Sheriff Curtis had lived among the different tribes for a long space of time was an important factor in its choice. Also, the book by Clark Wissler gives a general idea of the Indian tribes and their customs, inscribing them in their families and complementing it with the information about their linguistic groups. To complement this information other sources have been taken into consideration, such as *The Cheyenne Indians*, by George Bird Grinell. *The Sacred Pipe* provided most of the information concerning the seven rituals of the Sioux tribe. The book is narrated by Black Elk, a medicine man of the Oglalas. *Black Elk Speaks* is another book showing the teachings of Black Elk, this time written by John Gneisenau Neihardt.

As for the battle itself, the book by Capps, *The Indians*, contributed to its narration and brought to light the names of many Indian warriors. *My People, the Sioux* is an account in first person of the life and customs of the Sioux society. In it Luther Standing Bear dedicates a chapter to speak about the battle of Little Bighorn. For

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the life of Crazy Horse *Crazy Horse*, by Larry McMurtry gives a first narration of his life. Some data have been taken from *The Strange Man of the Oglalas*. Also the work of Stephen E. Ambrose gave a good biography of the Sioux chief, being very reliable, for it is based on historical sources. For the last days of the great chief the *Hinman Interviews*, the whole number of the *Nebraska History Magazine* dedicated to this matter, offering the different versions of his death and the events concerning his death as well as what had happened the previous days. Also the Ricker Interviews, which reflect the facts and opinions given by a series of people and transcribed by Ricker himself.

The book by Lawrence A. Frost, *The Court-Martial of General George Armstrong Custer*, provided the data about the court-martial scene, telling the facts that gave origin to it. *My Life on the Plains*, by George Armstrong Custer gives some information for the knowledge of California Joe. Though in the rest of the data there is no guarantee, there is no reason to doubt about this particular piece of information the book of Margueritte Merington was prepared in cooperation with Elizabeth Custer, however there is no risk that the information could be biased in those cases in which Custer is not favoured.

As for my primary sources I have chosen the films *Little Big Man* (1970), *They Died with their Boots On* (1941), *Sitting Bull* (1964) and *Chief Crazy Horse* (1955) as also all those films comprised in the section studying the two great conflicts between Indians and Whites. The methodology adopted for the writing of this thesis has been to consult those secondary sources I consider to be most relevant and compared them with the films. However, the bulk of the study is based on

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direct contact with the primary sources and my reflection on them, comparing what is depicted in the films with what has been written in reliable historically based documents, deducing the facts of what could have happened by comparing the documents.

To represent something is to make it present, whether this is an object, a person or an event and however far it is in time or space or, in other words, to tell a story of real facts, events, persons or objects, such as that of a certain book, photograph, building or, even, an enterprise (which is not included in any of the previous categories, for it is not a fact, event, person or object), has a history, and so it can be portrayed. The way of telling a story has two sides: a reality, which is the object of representation and the way that reality is depicted. The way of Representation can also be different, according to the media used for it, whether this is the image or the word. As for the image, the depiction of a fact, person or event can be made through painting, photography, cinema, or television. In the second great group, the word, the depiction can be made through narrative or poetry; and between these two groups there is a link: theatre, because the latter possesses both ways of expression. As should be clear, every film is constituted by a series of signs, called photograms. In that way, their articulation forms a chain, having a certain meaning, and so it can be studied by the science of Linguistics, but the film chain also possesses another type of signs, here called components, which are not all the same for every film, but that possess a certain meaning, according to the reality to which they refer. As possessors of that meaning they can be studied as a part of Philology.

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The adaptation of a novel into a film implies a transformation with two definite points of reference: the novel, the starting point of the process, and the film, the end point of it. The existence of this process of transformation of a novel into a film implies the existence of a comparison that (most of the times) is in favour of the narrative. A very different matter would have happened if the story had been constructed on the basis of History, not involving any kind of fiction in the middle, that is to say, that the narrative process of the film had not been based on the novel but on the facts giving rise to it. In this case, the results could not have been compared with the fiction, in the event that existed. For instance, if a film made on the life of Crazy Horse is made having as starting point the book by McMurtry, there would be an inevitable comparison between the book and the film, but if the film had been made upon the documents about the life of Crazy Horse, no comparison between the book and the film would make any sense.

The case of the representation of History without the basis of a novel is slightly different. History is supposed to deal with real facts and their ordering, consequently it establishes the truth. Once these facts have been established History can be represented. Contrary to the representation of a novel, the difficulty of representing History is, then, double: firstly to establish the facts and secondly to consider and evaluate the fidelity of the story to the facts. Obviously, the establishing of facts requires the study of a different number of sources, which, in this case, are written, as the events of our study occur in the nineteenth Century. Neither the radio nor the TV had been invented, not to speak of the Internet. Only photography had appeared and thanks to that is possible to know the faces of

some of the protagonists of the battle which are object of this thesis, as well as some figures around them.

The notion of Representation is implied in the terms *Signifier* and *Signified*¹, for the former is another way of denominating the representation and the latter the way of calling the represented thing. In this way it could be said that Saussure has always been speaking of Representation, even though he was using other names, and so it is clearly a part of Philology. Representation has spread through other areas, such as, for instance, Literature, and in this way it can be found in the Literature of the English Renaissance. Theatre is a splendid place to find this theme, because theatre in itself is a representation of life or some facts that have been invented by a mind. As in the last century, the cinema and computers have appeared and, derived from these, the Internet, so studies of Representation had to be capable of studying them. That is the reason why numerous studies about Representation have appeared concerning newspapers, the Internet and, of course, cinema. In this case Representation has not only studied films in a general way, but also the different themes films deal with, such as gender, race, sexuality or sport.

According to Stuart Hall², there are three directions in the theories about Representation: The Reflective, which asserts that language reflects what reality is, the Intentional, which asserts that language expresses the intentions of the speaker or writer and the Constructionist, which assures that meaning is constructed through language. The real fact is that none of these discourses (Reflective, Intentional, and Constructionist) makes the other two false. All three

¹ Saussure 1980 99

² Hall 2000 1

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are true and even coexist in the same communicative act. In a linguistic act, a speaker can be reflecting the world surrounding him or her while speaking of concrete things and can be changing the meaning of things while he/she is expressing his or her intentions. An example of this can be a political meeting, which makes the surveys showing voting intentions fluctuate up and down until the moment of the election.

However, there are some differences between the linguistic code and the film code. The first one is that the film code does not possess some basic signs, but components, such as Indians, Cowboys or Outlaws (in Westerns), the Spacecraft (in a space film), the Robber, the Policeman, the Loot (in a film about thieves). In this way “components” have a specific field of action. This is different from language: language has phonemes, plosives, fricatives, bilabial and the sum of these gives the different words that can be classified in types (adjectives, nouns), but a component, such as an Indian or a Cowboy, cannot be used in a film about Hindus or a Space Travel. However the film has some genres (Western, Comedy, Romance), and each of them can have a number of variations, the same as language (Temporals, Conditionals, Consecutives), whose form is more or less fixed. The Western is a very ample genre, composed of many kinds of films having a common core, which in the present study is the fact of happening in a certain region of the United States and dealing with a space of time (from the time of the arrival of the colonists to North America to the end of the Indian wars); however the differences among them are big. This is the reason why they should be classified as follows:

- 1) Those showing the life of farmers, the tasks of sowing, watering, or collecting the harvest, like *Hondo* (1953), about a woman who lives in a farm with her son; and cattle dealers, showing the breeding of cattle and the process of selling, such as the case of *Red River* (1948), about a man who reaches a land and settles on it, establishing a ranch and growing cows that he sells. These two are monographic about each theme, but there are others within these two collectives showing the different types of reactions between them when they appear in the same film, reactions that are not always harmonious.
- 2) Those showing the fight between Indians and Cowboys or Indians and Soldiers can be included in this epigraph. This type of film contains a number of variations. In some films, like *Red River* (1948), the Indians only appear at the beginning, in others they are only an invisible menace, only mentioned once or twice. There are others like *Cheyenne Autumn* (1964) entirely dedicated to their problem. In between, an innumerable number of variations, giving different types of results. Some examples of this type are *Seminole* (1953), showing the last days of chief Osceola of the Seminole tribe, *Geronimo* (1962), in which the conflict is between a tribe and the Whites, *Chato's Land* (1972), which shows the conflict between the Apache chief, and a bunch of Whites or *Yuma* (1957), in which an Indian girl helps a white man.
- 3) Those showing the struggle of Man against Nature. Among the most representative of this group is *The Adventures of Jeremiah Johnson* (1972),

showing the fight of a man to survive alone in the Rocky Mountains, except for a few encounters with another trapper and some Indians. Another kind of fight against Nature is that shown in *Union Pacific* (1939), with the Americans building a railway, developing the whole story of its construction. In this kind of Western, gold-seekers can be included, shown in several films as an anecdote, but in others this activity is an inherent part of it. *Gold is where you find* (1938), a film about the conflict of farmers and gold seekers is the perfect example of it.

- 4) Those showing the adventures of outlaws, among which many are dedicated to the adventures of Billy the Kid. One of them, not the main one, is *Chisum* (1970), starred by another outlaw, John Chisum. The betrayal of Billy the Kid by Pat Garret, the one-time outlaw and later sheriff, is developed in some films. Other important figures are Wild Bill Hickok, a desperado come sheriff, part of whose adventures are developed in *Tombstone* (1993) and *Gunfight at O K Corral* (1957), with whom the not-so-famous Doc Holliday is associated. The adventures of the famous Jesse James and his brother, Frank, are portrayed in the films *Jesse James* (1939), *The True Story of Jesse James* (1957). A great example about outlaws is *The Great Train Robbery* (1903), though in this case the train robbers are completely unknown.

In reference to language, the sign is always arbitrary and has no relation to reality, while in the case of cinema the sign is very similar to reality and, obviously, is related to its form. It can be said that, the more closely related to reality the sign is,

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the better the representation, however the sign (meaning by it a certain figure or character) is not a pre-existing one in the same sense as language, in which there are a certain number of sounds in each language, but has been created from an actor through make-up, dress, acting characteristics, who gives the character (Custer, Crazy Horse, Dracula, Richard II) a certain personality. Following Roland Barthes, the whole action is there, in the actor, like a germ. Barthes speaks of the physique of the wrestler, saying that in it all the fight is contained as if it were a seed that germs in the course of the combat and that it is expressed through the gestures of the wrestler.

In the same way as the fight is in the physique of the wrestler, the action of the Western is also in the physique of the Cowboy or the Indian, on one side, and the outlaw, on the other, because in Westerns there are more than one character on each side, while in wrestling there is only one protagonist on each side, maybe two on some occasions. All of them show the germ of the action, and so what is going to happen in the whole film can be glimpsed with our first look at the characters. Certainly the visage of the Indian and the cowboy can be fierce or friendly, as can be also their attitude. As an example of the fierce Indian the most well-known is Geronimo, and among the friendly cowboys, Tom Jefford, the one interpreted by James Stewart in *Broken Arrow* (1950).

The camera is the witness before which all the actors and actresses work. It is not impartial, because it is modified by lenses, filters, the use of light and other tricks, but, even so it is the witness that lets the spectator see the final product, which is none other than the signifier or representation related to a reality. "It is the

differences between signifiers which signify” (Hall 2000 32). It can be said that what shows if one representation (film, in this case) is better than another is the work of the actor, her / his role being the signifier. But, following Hall, we cannot forget one factor: “The *reader* is as important as the *writer* in the production of meaning” (Hall 2000 33). He speaks of writer and reader, because he is speaking of written media, but, in the case of cinema, those terms should be transcribed as director and spectator. This last watches the film in a personal way, so, given a certain film, the eye of one spectator does not observe the same film as the one beside him and does not observe the same in a first viewing as when he has watched the film a number of times.

The spectator has an opinion that can be coincidental with that of the director of the film or not, and in the latter case it can be the contrary, or it may be within a range of opinions between both of them. The same as readers are an active part of the communication process in written texts, the watchers of a film take an active part in the decoding of the film, forming an opinion themselves of what they are observing. The users of Media messages can exert their power constantly, reconstructing, interpreting, comparing and constructing, and not all people read in the same way. There are sectors in society that read in a mode different from others, and there are sectors in society that refuse to read at all!³ This is due to two different factors: education and prejudices. It is not the same to have an individual that has been educated throughout the years in Primary, Secondary School and University and took profit of all those studies as a person who has no education at

³ Floyd 2000 37

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all, though natural intelligence is also a factor to be borne in mind. But prejudices are also important, for they make up the problem that not even education can delete them from the human mind that wants to preserve them.

“The film spectator is not duped by the cinematic apparatus or forms of narration in the cinema; the spectator is fully aware that what is seen is only a film” (Allen 1993 21), and here the use of the word “only” is problematic, due to its possible double significance: first that the tricks seen are a pure fake (such as for instance blood, stages or even rain), and in that sense it is a good option to know that we are watching a film so as not to let ourselves be too impressed by what is happening on the screen; second, that the story on which the script is based is not real and, consequently, those persons never existed. And in the case of the Western, this causes trouble due to the fact that the observer considers some characters non-existent, such as George Armstrong Custer, Billy the Kid, Jesse James, John Chisum or Pat Garret.

As a piece of background, here we should state that Jesse James (1847-1882) was born in Clay County and had one brother, Alexander Franklin “Frank” and one sister, Susan Lavenia. His father went to California in the Gold Rush with the intention of becoming rich and there they joined the southern guerrilla in the American Civil War, after which the Jesse James band, formed by the Youngers, the Millers and the two brothers James, Jesse and Frank, became famous for their hold-ups. They were followed by the Agency Pinkerton. Finally, in 1882 he was killed by Robert Ford. Another bandit of the Wild West was John Chisum⁴ (1824-

⁴ His story is told in Hough, Emerson *The Story of the Outlaw-A Study of the Western*

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1884), a cattler who was the first in sending his cattle to New Mexico, for which reason he associated with Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving, and became famous for having protected Billy the Kid for years. Pat Garret⁵ (1850-1908), born in Alabama, worked as a cowboy, hunted the buffalo and killed another hunter in a struggle for a buffalo. In 1880 he was elected sheriff of Lincoln County and became famous for having killed Billy the Kid.

Education is another factor that can cause the spectator to focus on the film from one point of view or another, filtering the information according to the prejudices he has in his mind. These prejudices can be caused by the training given or due to the environment surrounding the person, such as the society in which he lives. In repressive societies, boys are educated in hatred towards the others (Jews, Arabs, English), though of course one can hate a certain society or race without having been born in a repressive society.

Floyd (2000) studies whether the media receiver is active or passive. After having studied the conditions around the receiver of news he develops the theory that the receiver is active. Though he does not define exactly what a "passive" receiver is,⁶ from his discourse it can be deduced that a passive receiver is one who does not take part in the news communication process; however it must be considered that no receiver is completely active or passive. It is hard to believe that there is in our society a person who listens to the news without having an opinion. In this case it means that he also has an opinion about the film he watches, for watching a film

Desperado. New York: The Outing Publication. 1907.

⁵ His story is told in Hough, Emerson *The Story of the Outlaw-A Study of the Western Desperado*. New York: The Outing Publication Company. 1907.

⁶ Floyd 2007 134-145.

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requires a certain degree of passiveness to let the film impress the mind, but the observer always reacts in some way, and that is an active position. One of the demonstrations of this active attitude of a receiver, even if not expressed in words, is the fact of choosing a channel, film director or writer with whom he is in tune.

Some spectators who know or believe that information is biased tend to contrast the news of different channels (in the case of television) or different films to gain a real impression. Even those spectators who tend to do this do not always find access to different journals or any other kind of media possible. The easiest media to be found are, obviously, journals or television, but in the case of books, that access is a little more difficult. This search is made in order to approach nearer to reality. The fact that the director assumes some data as true makes the spectator believe that the film reflects reality, when on many occasions this has been distorted, even presenting films as reflecting it, such as is the case of *The Great Sioux Massacre* (1965), among many others.

Floyd (2000) assures us that in news characters are presented in a plain or flat way, making it easy for the reader to understand the events through the actors of always. Though he is speaking of newspapers, what he says is applicable to Westerns, where a complex character is difficult to find, even the most well-known ones, such as Custer or Sitting Bull. In fact the Indian character is always portrayed as simple, flat, even silly, and on many occasions his only function is to be part of an attack on a caravan, a fort or a house(including screams and whoops). It could be considered that sometimes this simplicity can take the form of being under the orders of a White, such as in the case of the Indian scouts, whose role is usually

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only tracking. This is what happens with a character called Hondo, in *Ulzana's Raid* (1972) who appears, tracks a couple of people, and merely lasts a few sequences, after which he dies.

In Westerns, women are reduced to the roles of virgins or whores, because even married women are treated almost like virgins and presented with a certain innocence. The girlfriend of Parrish, in *Sitting Bull* (1964), is an example of this type of girl. Even some Indian women are classified as virgins, like the Apache girl Morning Star in *Broken Arrow* (1950), though in this case it can be suspected that her relation with a white man makes her become virginal. In *Apache Drums* (1951) both positions, the virgin and the whores, are dealt with. Sally, the girlfriend of the protagonist, is considered a virgin, while the whores are represented by the professionals who travel on a wagon, offering their sexual services to the soldiers. Normally, white women kidnapped by Indians are treated as whores, Christie Maribel Lee in *Soldier Blue* (1970) being the perfect example of woman in that role. Her only crime is to have been kidnapped by the Cheyennes and to have become the wife of chief Black Eagle. The role of Mistress Pendrake in *Little Big Man* (1970) is another example, but in this case she is the frustrated, angry wife of a Christian pastor.

The reduction of religion to church implies the fact that if there is no church there cannot be religion. A very significant film in this respect is *Little Big Man* (1970), in which Pastor Pendrake is an intolerant man who reduces religion to rules. In *Apache Drums* (1951), in the very brief appearance of the pastor, he reproaches the whores their work and suggests that the place should be utilized for another

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use. In *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) the pastor has a similar role, but on this occasion he reproaches Custer and his friends, who are singing in the saloon. In *Stolen Women* (1997) the pastor develops the role he is supposed to do, that is, to give some pieces of advice to the protagonist of the film, Anna Brewster.

A man reaches a land, takes possession of it, like in *Red River* (1948), and builds a house, using the land to raise his cattle and when attacked by the Indians he defends his position that the land is only his, even if it is in the middle of Indian Territory. He says: "This is my land and no Indian will take it." The simplicity of the gunman is shown in his brutishness, foolishness and lack of brains, being many times depicted saying that they want to have fun, which is a great many times turned into shooting, killing or destroying a village after having gone galloping into it. But not only characters are painted in a vague way, also the countryside, such as Kenneth Mark Harris, who in his article says:

Most Hollywood westerns are set in an unspecified place associated with the West mainly through icons, the most notable icon being the Western landscape. Even when the actual place name or identifiable backdrops are provided (Monument Valley, for instance), westerns famously convey an impression of placelessness and, though to a lesser extent, timelessness, despite occasional allusion to historic events such as the Civil War (Harris 1990 39).

The aforesaid Monument Valley, desert countryside, has been used in many films. Not all of them are located in the south, which is a problem when analysing a

certain film, because the spectator does not know where it is and the critic has to locate the place and determine if it is correct, this not being always possible due to the vagueness, such as in the case of *Broken Lance* (1954), where the tribe of the Indian fiancée, the Apaches, is not recognized. This is a case of vagueness, but what is far more serious is when films give an erroneous location of tribes, or confuse tribes, as for instance the Apache, living in the desert, in the area of New Mexico, with the Arikara, who inhabit the prairies, and more concretely the Black Hills in Dakota.

In any society, crises mean that the support of the people for their own constructed group can be greater. This phenomenon, known as “mainstreaming”⁷ involves a marginalization of dissidents, an effect of affirmation of the flag, with the leader focusing the support towards his person. In this way, when watching Westerns it can be found that most of the Whites support the policy of the government against the Red Race. Not only had the soldiers supported the extermination of the Indians, but all the rest of the social classes, otherwise it could not be done. Even religious people took part in the marginalization of the Indian Race, with the treatment of these peoples as inferiors, only that they demanded to treat them well but, in fact, they considered the Indians had to be evangelized because, whatever their tribe, were heathens.

This is because the Western world is shown as an example of the only morality possible, and also of democracy, a land in which free markets exist and there is also a certain dose of spirituality, while the morality of the Third World and those

⁷ Ibid. 2000 42

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countries enemies of the West are not only their antithesis, but also superstitious. In this way the Indian world is immoral and their way of government is not analysed, not even considered, due to the fact that it is not thought worthy, so the certain dose of spirituality is denied to them, for they are not Christians, but Pagans or Heathens. In a film like *The Great Sioux Massacre* (1965) a character called Dakota says that "Vultures are higher in the social scale" and in *Sitting Bull* (1964) the Indians are enclosed and served a rubbish food.

Georges-Albert Astre and Albert Patrick-Hoarau, in their book *Universe du Western*, believe the Western to be the expression of an ethic and that points to one of the problems, because not all the characters defend the same values, so to which of them do we have to pay attention? What kind of ethic must be defended, when the opinions of the different cowboys are different, even opposed? While many of the cowboys defend the extinction of the red race saying "the only good Indian is the dead one", others like Tom Jefford, the protagonist of *Broken Arrow* (1950), try to understand the Indians. Jefford is not the only one, though the most prominent. Those are the two extreme positions, but in the middle there are a great many intermediate characters, such as those people who trade with the Indians found in *The Adventures of Jeremiah Johnson* (1972).

The "normal" has been many times confused with the "usual", but there is something worse than the confusion of those concepts, something that is very common in our society: the confusion of the usual and the true, that is to say: a lie repeated a hundred times will never become true, but it becomes a usual lie. In this way when some news is repeated and the spectator of the film or type of films

becomes accustomed to it, he or she reaches the conclusion that it must be true, so this repetition makes people change their minds, which is a perfect example of Constructionism. But the very fact of repetition shows one of the intentions of the transmitter, as does also the content of the message, which is an example of Intentional discourse.

And here appears the concept of Culture, involving a sharing of meaning⁸, because some consider a “Culture” as the product of a group of people who share ways of interpreting the environment. Though this is true in a rough way, there are certain individuals or groups (not always small ones) who interpret reality in other ways, not agreeing with the imposing culture, and try to change it. These subcultures, being joined by a subtle thread, intermingling among them and forming a whole, are similar to others in other countries (for instance the impressionist painters of England and Spain), though they have certain differences that make them English or Spanish.

Artists interpreting reality in a certain way produce meaning through language, cinema, painting or any other way. When creating, they are searching for a new way of expression and so enriching their cultures, attempting to change reality, and influencing others, as well as reaffirming their own world, communicating with others. This is one reason for painting, writing or making films. In fact a work of art (novel, paint, film) can only be understood if there are individuals who receive it and accept it, otherwise it has no sense to create it. So films try to influence and, in some cases manipulate, opinions, influencing audiences, and, in the cases of

⁸ Hall 2000 2

manipulation, trying to modify their behaviour and many times, to rewrite the past, telling the audience that what happened is different from what really happened and that the meaning of it is different. In some way, films are addressed to those people who are in the same subculture as the director, for which reason the way of thinking and watching the world is coincidental.

Saussure affirms that far from the object preceding the viewpoint, the latter creates the object⁹ and this is also true in what refers to works of art, for they try to change the meaning of reality, even the vision of it. In other words, the angle of vision is intimately related to the discourse: it is the motor that makes the discourse run. It could be added here that without a viewpoint no story can be told, for even the most “neutral” stories need a narrator and the viewpoint of the work is intrinsically joined to the narrator’s, being the product of his / her mind. The point of view also generates a certain person’s approach to Representation and the resources he utilizes shows if he is trying to reflect the reality around him, if he is trying to influence it or show his intentions.

As far as race is concerned, a negative use of the constructionist approach can result in reductionism about race, when the author tries to impose his or her vision meaning “all Indians are the same” or “those men are all barbarians” or, in other words, the constructionist approach to reality from a racial point of view can result in racism, a vision that is clearly exemplified in the film *Little Big Man* (1970) in the dialogue between Reverend Silas Pendrake and his wife, when speaking about Jack Crabb. Unfortunately, this approach has been more common than would have

⁹ Saussure 1980 33

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been desirable. Many of the films about the construction of America, the Westerns, have been made from this angle, such as for instance *They Died with their Boots On* (1941), later analysed, which is full of examples, mentioning only here the words of California Joe addressing Libbie Bacon when he reproaches the mule for being too lazy, comparing it with the Indian race.

One of the best examples of this racism is the film *The Great Sioux Massacre* (1965), in which a character called Dakota exemplifies hatred in the language he uses throughout the whole movie. Another example is *Broken Lance* (1954), in which a half-breed man spends three years in jail for a crime for which he is innocent. They are the justification of the extinction of a race, or a number of tribes. "And so was born the immortal 7TH CAVALRY which cleared the plains for a ruthless advancing civilization that spelled doom to the Red Race" (*They Died with their Boots On*) (1941). So it is assumed that all of them were savages and dangerous for the whites, not telling about the existence of different families (Algonquian, Iroquis, Caddo, Siouan, Penutian and others) and languages (Apache, Lakota, Algonquian); however not all the tribes were hostile to the Whites, some being considered "friendlies". As an example of this, the five noble tribes, among which the most well-known is the Cherokee, who were called like that because they were on good terms with the Whites, not being a menace for them. The real fact was that the Whites were a menace for the Indian tribes, trying to possess a land that belonged to the "Indian Nations", as they were called in the Treaties with The United States.

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The ideological character of the different mass media, newspapers, as well as any other kind of them, is a very clear matter, the linguistic representation being always made from a specific point of view and containing, inevitably, ideological elements. This is the central point in this study of films, because Westerns are created from a racist angle in many cases and they mostly use a double standard, saying that a crime is a good thing when the dead man is the Indian but, when the victim is a cowboy or a U. S. Soldier, that killing is “absolutely horrible,” even if that act was in self-defence, as exemplified in *The Revengers* (1972). When Benedict faces the man who killed his family, he forgives him and does not do anything against him, but before that he has killed a great many of Comanches without feeling remorse. It is precisely here that the viewpoint can be observed creating the object, because we can see the way of thinking that creates the sentence that qualifies a crime as “horrible” and another crime as “necessary,” the former being that of a friend and the latter that of an enemy. And what is said about sentences can also be said about sequences, showing, for instance, an attack, which is justified in one case and rejected in another.

The media do not show a single side of reality to their public, but, according to each occasion, there is a dominant one. In the case of Westerns, the dominant point of view for a long time was that of presenting Indians as savages without brains, who only wanted to attack the colonizers, though there are a few examples that do not show that point of view; however, from the decade of the sixties, the point of view has been changing and nowadays the character of the Indian is depicted with qualities and defects.

A Western offers a relative truth, not only due to the opposition between Indians and Cowboys, but also because comparing the film to the historical facts, the narration always shows part of it, the part that the director is interested in showing. Gill Branston and Roy Stafford (1996) speak of the instability of the sign¹⁰, meaning that a sign, when isolated, is capable of being interpreted in more than one way, but it can be fixed in combination with others. This implies that if the text codified (whether a book, a review, a film or any other kind of text) is inconsistent, the misinterpretation of the message could be very a frequent mistake. This is the case with *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), in which the action of the film is not clear until the spectator has seen a great part of it. The fact that it is a silent movie is a handicap for its understanding, but in many films the signs are clear, even if at a certain moment they do not show the characteristic of stability, when soon another sign is unveiled, making the first one clearer. In fact, some films play with that instability until the moment the director considers it convenient to solve that ambiguity, as, when an Indian is seen in the wild the development of the action is unknown, so various possibilities are considered by the mind of the spectator. The Indian can be hunting or on the warpath, but after the appearance of a cowboy a firm relationship is established between them, being decoded through their attitude: enmity, friendship or any other link between them; however, in certain films that instability is an intrinsic part of the film, as in those with open endings.

Thompson (1999) speaks about the “valorization” of the symbols and divides them between “symbolic valorization” and “economic valorization”. He states that

¹⁰Branston and Stafford 1996 9.

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“symbolic valorization” is the process through which a sign acquires a symbolic value and in consequence, a symbolic value can be defined as the one that a certain society gives to a certain sign. It is in this way that cowboys considered the Indian an obstruction, a representation of all those negative values, such as rape, cruelty, uncivilized life, a life without culture, regardless of the knowledge they had about Nature, their languages, the smoke signals they used, the Universal Indian Sign Language. For the Whites, the Indian was only an obstruction in the development of cowboy life, so massacres made by the U. S. Army were minimized, even presented as cases of justice, such as Wounded Knee, where the Army caught the Indians by surprise, or Sand Creek, when almost the whole band was killed. Other cases in which the Indians killed the Whites were magnified, such as the “Fetterman affair”, qualified as a massacre, despite the fact that it was Fetterman who attacked the Indian village!

Following Foucault's idea of power circulation, which asserts that power circulates involving different types of ideas and ways of cultural expression, one of them being Representation, it must be said that power operates in conditions of unequal relations. This lack of balance is found between persons, institutions, groups, associations and, of course, races. Any of these persons or groups has a way of representing their ideas things, and, what is more important, cultures. The way the American society represented the Indians as their enemies and not only that, but also as an obstruction that should have been erased, shows the dominant power was on their side and that the Indian Nations were on the side of the oppressed. This oppression of the Red Race was the work of a whole society, such as can be

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seen in many films of the genre: from the farmer who sees an Indian on the horizon, to the soldier, and from the child at school to the old man (no matter the reason) for the American citizen (Indians were not American citizens until 1924) the Indian was a dangerous factor. Of course there were individuals who defended the Red Race, but they were also considered dangerous for white society. This is the case of *Dances with Wolves* (1990), in which the protagonist, found dressing in the Sioux way, is seen as a factor disturbing the American way of life and so considered a betrayer to his country, though he had not behaved illegally, selling arms to the Sioux, but having only given them some provisions, such as a small quantity of sugar and coffee. Notwithstanding, the mere fact of dressing like an Indian caused the Army to punish him, a reaction of violence and revenge not letting him any way of escape.

The fact of trying to possess a land that was not theirs led the Whites to use many methods: war, blankets infected with smallpox, hunting of the buffaloes until the Indians were exterminated, together with their customs, rituals, artefacts, pictographs and languages of all the Indian Nations. And here the concept of Nation appears, conceived as a political unit propelled by the linguistic unity based on printing. This use of print, produced by people of the United States (all of them foreigners as well as their descendants), who bear the idea of a nation in their minds, caused all those native people speaking Indian languages be excluded from that conjunct and, consequently, it resulted in the fact of, at least, two sides (the Indian Nations and the United States) but, in reality, a great quantity of nations,

living in the same territory, for each tribe with its differential features must be considered a nation.

The nation, conceived as a real comradeship, is frequently seen in the films about the conquest of the West in the cooperation for the chase of the Indians, no matter if there are hierarchies or not. The film *Chato's Land* (1972) exemplifies the existence of this structure: one man, an old soldier taking charge of a group of people tyrannizing them to the point of making them act as a flock, not letting any of its members abandon that group. Whether the headmaster of the group is a soldier or a civil is irrelevant. Once more the intention to eliminate an individual of the Indian race is shown, contrary to many other times in which this intention was the elimination of an entire tribe. This reaches its extreme point in the reversal of defeats in films, as Kenneth Mark Harris (1990) says: "But once more an American genre (the Western) will provide the means to reverse the failure and assert national identity..."¹¹ This reversal of defeats is made reporting a victory of the United States just after a defeat of the Army by the Indians. Many battles are referred to in this form, showing an immediate attack just after a defeat on the screen, though that attack really occurred months or years later.

American Nationalism was accompanied by a form of the English language different from British. This variety was not only an evolution of the language taken to the States by the colonists, but it was also artificially adopted with the intention of creating a new vocabulary and a new grammar different from the British. Annete Heydon (2004), when speaking about migration, gives some characteristics of the

¹¹ Harris 1990 47

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people who leave their countries into a new one. They are:

- 1) Adaptation to a new culture.
- 2) Development of an intercultural identity.
- 3) Acquisition of new cultural references.
- 4) Learning of a new language.
- 5) Cooperation with the individuals of the new culture.

It would be reasonable to consider that in the case of the United States this phenomenon had also taken place in the same way as in the other cases, however it must be stressed here that in the case of the immigrants into the U. S. A., none of these characteristics appears. On the contrary, the behaviour of the people immigrating to the territory that would later become the United States of America was contrary to that it was supposed to be in immigration.

- 1) Native Americans were forced to adapt to a new culture.
- 2) Cultural identity of the Natives was destroyed.
- 3) Natives were forced to learn a new language.
- 4) New cultural references were not acquired,
- 5) Lack of cooperation with the Indians.

Normally, when people migrate to a new country, they find a new culture, or a number of cultures joined by a common thread, the different Autonomous regions in Spain or the Cantons in Switzerland being an example. Emigrants are usually a smaller number than the population who receive them. In this way, the culture

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which receives them shows the emigrants the way the natives are and teaches them the way to adapt to their society, normally in a flexible way. However, in the case of the United States the number of newcomers was so large that they had the choice not to adapt and they did not do it. On the contrary, they forced the Native Americans to adapt to the new situation. Certainly, number is no excuse, because the Spanish in South America, being even a larger number than the natives and having a dominant position, adapted to the Indian cultures existing there, joining them, and that mixture resulted in a new culture.

As was said before, the newcomers perceived the indigenous tribes as hostile, as an obstruction to their expansionist dream, for which reason they defended themselves, sometimes violently, or, in many cases, attacked them. The large number of newcomers also produced the effect that they could destroy, as they did, a part of the tribes together with their cultural identity. Usually, a person arriving in a new country and staying there has two options: A) not to learn the language of the foreign country, or do it in a rough way; B) learn the language of the new country to which he / she has emigrated. The option of making the indigenous of the country at which he arrives learn the language of the person who emigrates is possible but, most of the times, is not significant. However, in this case, English, the language of one of the peoples coming from outside, prevailed over the different Indian languages as well as over the other languages of the different peoples coming out of America, due to the massive affluence of English language immigrants, so once again sheer numbers let them impose their language.

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Following Heydon, when a person arrives in a new country and stays there for a time, he / she acquires a new amount of knowledge and acquires new points of reference, which happens due to the mixing of emigrants with the people of the country receiving them, but in this case there was no mixing (except in some particular cases) with the Indian tribes, for the Whites lived apart from the Indians. In this way the learning of new traditions could not take place and even less obtaining new cultural references. However, the fact of living in a new country, which is a new space of reference, and the loss of the old space of reference, the country of provenance, made them develop new points of reference.

The fact of the Whites living apart from the Indians and not wanting to mix with them made them think that the Indians were not necessary for their life or, even worse, that they were enemies, which made them not to cooperate with them, except in the cases they needed some type of help, such as scouts or, like in the case of an alliance with a particular tribe to combat another, such as happened with the Crows, with whom the United States established an alliance in order to fight the Sioux.

The United States was composed by people of different countries (Germans, English, and Dutch, among others) and their enemies, the Indian Nations, were not a single tribe, but a great number of them. In fact, it is reckoned that from the outset until today there were between 300 and 500 nations, with different languages forming part of different linguistic trunks. This implies the existence of a large number of languages living together, not only the native ones, but also those ones imported from abroad with the coming of the immigrants, because the latter

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brought their tongues with them. However, English became the vehicle of communication that made the whole United States understand and, in time, also the Indian Nations, which was a great advantage that let all the peoples of the United States communicate, above all for the Non-Indians, because the Native tribes possessed the Universal Indian Sign Language, a kind of language that was used by all the tribes, transcending frontiers.

The vision, attested by Chief Seattle, that the Earth cannot be possessed, was used by many Whites who took profit of it by stealing the land. The Whites proposed the different tribes should live in a land that was owned by the States. "If it belongs to no one, then we can take it" they seemed to think, so the Indians were allowed to live in a land that had always been used by them, but later the Whites started to act saying: "as this land is not yours you cannot live on it." Accordingly, the land that had always been the house of the Indian tribes was to be of American ownership, due to an administrative trick, being aggravated by the fact that the Indians did not know how to write. Consequently, when they were "touching the pen," (Indian expression related to the fact of the Indians putting an "x" when signing a treaty) they did not know what they were signing, so the Native Americans could be fooled, and later demanded in order to respect that treaty. In other cases, the treaties were broken by the Whites and no Indian could say the paper said another thing, even if both parts were conscious of what was happening, but though there were considered illiterate in a language that was not theirs, this lack of literacy only existed from a Eurocentric point of view, mainly respecting the English language, but to be more precise, related to the foreign

alphabets, understanding by foreign “all those alphabets and languages coming out of the American continent,” however the Indians could express their stories through pictographs, and their History through “Wintercounts”. In many cases, these pictographs have survived, while in others the wisdom of Indians has passed to certain organizations. The following of trails, the language of gesture, the smoke signals are some of these wisdoms the Indians Nations owned and have been sometimes collected by scholars and written in books. There have also been some organizations, for instance the Boy Scouts, who have allowed them to survive, the point being that many people believe this is a White invention; an exception to this ignorance may be smoke signals, which appeared in many films attributed to the Apaches, whose authors they were. It has been assumed in a certain way that these languages are inventions of the White race and so the Western World dispossesses the Native Americans of their wisdom, an action which can be considered another example of Eurocentrism.

“Typical narrative patterns begin with an act of violence as disruption to *status quo* or initial equilibrium. This set in flow of events often focused on ideological themes such as...nationhood (America usually defined and defended against 'the Indians')”¹² This matter of disruption is a problem of focusing, which comes from the Eurocentric point of view, prevalent in most of the cases. On the contrary, from the Indian one, the disruption would be caused by the intrusion of the cowboys, an example of which can be the invasion of the Black Hills by Custer in 1874 or the attack on the Sioux village by Grattan.

¹² Branston and Stafford 1996 71

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From the previous paragraphs it can be deduced that in many Westerns Indians are conceived not as individuals, but as a mass, and in the best cases a distinction between good Indians and bad Indians is based on the fact that they could be (or not) amiable to the Whites, or that they were allies of the Whites or their enemies. In this way, all Indians of the same tribe are considered the same, regardless of their personality, giving rise to a mixture of dresses, customs or, even, tribes, which results in confusion of all the data about the Indians, so in a film like *Winnetou* (1963) the tribe represented cannot be recognized due to the mixture of features, while in *Broken Lance* (1954) the characterisation of the tribe and the place in which the action takes place does not permit us to recognise the tribe of origin to which the wife of the protagonist pertains.

Another characteristic is that of the marauding Indians, as if they were always around the huts of the Whites with the intention of attacking them, which can only be justified from the point of view of a mind that does not worry about the reality he or she has in front of him, someone who has not cared to make contact with the world around. In many of these films, there is also the assumption that white women are treated in a bad way, even raped, but the raping of an Indian woman is not often heard about. The figure of the hero is represented in the films by an Indian killer, who is more manly the more Indians he kills; however, there are some films that talk about a person who goes into Indian territory and tries to understand, like *Broken Arrow* (1950), which tells the story of a man who decides to study the Apache language and customs in order to negotiate with Cochise.

When a person sees that others share his opinion he is able to maintain his independence and freedom of expression, giving rise to a tendency to be maintained through time, but sometimes a change in the environment makes opinions become non-stable. In cinematic terms, this means that a type of films (Westerns, for example), that was supported by the spectator, evolves into new forms and a new opinion about the different tribes appears, defending them. This is what happened when the Indians become Americans or when the idea of the “good savage” appeared in American society.

It can be said that Representation of the facts in a film is a projection of reality, the director being the projector, the facts the thing projected and the film the projection. If the projector (director) does not distort reality telling facts as they are not, the better the representation. Though it seems obvious, Representation is always of existing things, it not being discussed in this thesis if fantasy characters are real or not in the real world, though it seems reasonable to think that they have a certain existence in the world of imagination; however, there are things that, being real, have never been represented.

“The existence of objects is independent of their discursive articulation...” (Lachlaur and Mouffe 1990 101), which means that the life of a person or a fragment of history exists independently of discourse, but the moment that that fragment of History is told by any means it begins to be a discursive act. The problem that a person, whether a critic or any other type of person, has, when watching a certain film, is not to know the real facts in which the film is inspired, and in this way reality can be absolutely respected or completely distorted. Between these two viewpoints

there is an infinite number of possibilities, but if one wants to consider the real facts, starting from a representation (a film in our case) he has to help himself with another type of sources, like books or reviews, so one can discover a number of truths or mistakes that have not been perceived at first sight. These mistakes can be related to language or to image, because language is only one of the sign systems used for communication in each culture. The gestures of a person and the intonation of the voice are some of the other different systems used. Some of them, like intonation, can change the message or distort it; even the context, not being a sign system, can change the meaning of the message. Of all the media this is especially true in the case of cinema, in which language usually has a secondary role, and here the word "secondary" is used on purpose, because a film can be understood, in the main, by simply understanding the meaning of the image. Of course for the full comprehension of the text (a film, in our case) it is crucial to have a comprehension of the words and one can have access to the text only when he understands something of its ideology.

Inevitably, when trying to tell a story, whatever the means is, some facts have to be cut. A story telling a whole life has to be reduced, due to the fact that fifty or sixty years cannot be completely told in all their details in a film lasting between one and four hours. Only the main facts have to be used, any details becoming useless. So not every event that happens in the kitchen of a house can be told, even if the protagonist is there in a sequence, or when someone is sleeping, as it is irrelevant, unless something unexpected occurs, crucial for the action. A question, appears: what to show in the life of a person? Two problems arise: first, what facts have to

be left apart? And second, intimately related to this: How can these facts be linked in order to make a film with continuity? There are certain facts that, though they are not important, can help to produce an effect of continuity. When a man is seen going into a train and later on a seat reading a paper, for example, it produces the effect of continuity. There are a great many effects of discontinuity (even incoherence) in *The Birth of a Nation* (1915). The work of the film editor is a subtractive one, starting with a large quantity of film and having to eliminate part of it in order to make a film with the rest. This operation, which is subtractive at the beginning, is not perceived by the spectator, except in a positive way, which is the final product.¹³

Ferdinand de Saussure says: “words have relations founded in the lineal character of the language” (Saussure 1980 173). The lineal character also exists in the film chain, but in this case the sequences have to succeed one another in a determined order. Saussure also differentiates between relations *in praesentia* and relations *in absentia*,¹⁴ giving as an example of the former a phrase and the latter a mnemonic series. In the case of cinema the relations *in praesentia* are every sequence related to the other ones of the film and the relations *in absentia* the sequences of the film related to the real facts. The relations *in praesentia* of the film are easy to know, for it only supposes the act of watching and observing. The problem arises when someone tries to establish the relations *in absentia* and check the quality of the representation, for this entails investigating and acquiring knowledge sufficient to be sure of the real facts happened in the life of a person or series of people or to

¹³ Chion 1992 321

¹⁴ Saussure 1980 172

know what happened in a series of events. This work requires obtaining the data to later make the comparison and deduce. If this is difficult in the present, it will be more difficult at a moment in time some two hundred yearsaway from the spectator. When we have the data, the comparison between the representation and the object represented is possible. A film is a synchronic reality, even if it has flashbacks (life also has flashbacks), so it will be divided into sequences or groups of sequences in which there is a certain meaning, which implies a situation that can be analysed. These sequences must be faithful to the object represented, which is the real story.

This thesis is focused on the study of four major films concerning the battle of Little Bighorn, each one studying a main aspect of it, some of them focused on its Indian leaders. One of them, *Little Big Man* (1970), is centred on the personality of George Armstrong Custer, *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) on his life, *Sitting Bull* (1964) on the life of his medicine man and *Chief Crazy Horse* (1955) on the life of the warrior chief, its main objectives being to make a comparison between the facts that gave origin to the battle of Little Bighorn, those that happened the moments previous to it and the way they have been represented in the films, deducing from that comparison the quality of the representation, but it is also important to pay attention to the characters that starred this conflict and, in that sense, it is convenient to analyse the lives of the main ones. For this reason, the film will be analysed through the different sequences, and later these will be compared to the data obtained from the historical facts through the books of Ambrose, Hyde, Frost, Standing Bear, Doane Robinson and Sherry Robinson.

To achieve this objective, this thesis has been structured in 7 chapters. The first is an introduction, which develops a general frame in which Representation is involved, and defining the ideas that give birth to this thesis. In it, besides the differences and links among the three streams of thought, there is an analysis of the different kinds of westerns, as well as the different aspects involved in the process of making a film, these aspects being not only the technical, but also the human. Some social ideas have been dealt with, such as those related to migration. It also deals with the problem of the sources, establishing the degree of reliability each one of them has. The second chapter is dedicated to the migrations of the Sioux people from the moment they abandoned their location in Minnesota to their establishment in the Black Hills and, more concretely, until the moment in which the battle of Little Big Horn took place, with the object of inscribing them in History and specifying the period of time and the causes of the battle in the frame of History. It also has the objective of bringing into light these tribes with which they met and the relations established with them, above all those relations resulting in long-lasting friendship or enmity. Chapter three gives a short history of the Indian films, starting with the "Actualities" and continuing until recent times. This chapter is complemented by the following one, in which the two great conflicts with Indians are studied from the perspective of Cinema, these two conflicts being the ones in which their protagonists were the two best-known tribes: the Sioux and the Apaches. Also a biography of the main leaders starring these films is given. In this section, a full account is given of the main films concerning the battles between the Army and the Apaches on one hand, and the Army against the Sioux and Cheyennes, on the other. Chapter five deals with the four major films which are the

object of this thesis, analysing them from the point of view of the representation of the battle and the events preceding it, and giving origin to it, but also the representation of the life of the leaders taking part in the battle. Chapter six shows the conclusions of this thesis.

From a cinematographic point of view, the Battle of Little Bighorn has been narrated several times, mostly from the U. S. point of view. Sometimes the story has been extensively dealt with, in films such as *Custer's Last Fight* (1912), and its expanded version *Custer's Last Fight* (1925), or *Little Bighorn* (1951), showing the expedition of a patrol that wants to join Custer in Little Bighorn. A modern film, *Son of the Morning Star* (1991), probably the best film about Custer and the battle of Little Bighorn, develops both points of view, the Sioux and the American, with great accuracy, telling the story of the battle starting from the moment of Custer's impeachment till the moment of Crazy Horse's surrender. *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) or *The Great Sioux Massacre* (1965) are other examples. It is alluded to in films like *Soldier Blue* (1970), in which the father of the protagonist is said to have died in that battle, *Lakota Woman* (1994), which speaks about the signing of the treaty and its later breaking by George Armstrong Custer, and many others; *Stolen Women* (1997), a film based on the true story of Anna Morgan or *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949). In the latter, the story of the film starts just after the conflict in which Custer dies, tells the story of Captain Brittles in his six last days in the Army and the extermination of a tribe of Arapahoes. The film has some narrative errors, such as the confusion of the name of Sargent Mackenzie, who later in the film will become Sergeant Quincannon. Also the film *A Distant Trumpet*

(1964) alludes to Custer, on this occasion, speaking about him as a man who exaggerates: "Sergeant Kroger came back with a story that outcasted (sic) Custer." Some of these works are centred on the action at a certain moment or on a whole life. This is the case of *They Died with their Boots on* (1941), which ignores most of the characters, except Custer, whose life is extensively dealt with, together with his wife's. As the film is about his warrior career and the formation of the Seventh Cavalry, this fact could be understandable, however it would be reasonable to have spoken, at least, about two figures like Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, who had a prominent role in the conflict and have been practically ignored.

Others, like *Son of the Morning Star* (1991) develop the lives of both chiefs, George Armstrong Custer on one side and Crazy Horse on the other, and it does so in an extensive way. The film deals with the Kansas Campaign, the Fetterman Massacre and his journey to Washington in order to defend himself from the accusations of not having taken good care of his troops and killed the deserters. The Arikara scouts also appear in the film working for the Army, the most prominent of them being Bloody Knife. The film also deals with the main events in the life of Crazy Horse: his vision, the affair with Black Buffalo Woman and the revenge of No Water. As for the great Sioux chief Crazy Horse there are several films, like *The White Buffalo* (1977), which shows a (probably fictional) encounter between Crazy Horse and Wild Bill Hickok in the Black Hills, with an interesting portrait of the personality of Crazy Horse, as well as the relation between them both, a relationship starting with the aid Hickok gives to Crazy Horse against the Crows. As for the film *Chief Crazy Horse* (1955), it will be studied later. As for Sitting Bull, the

film of his name, *Sitting Bull* (1964), will also be studied here.

The history of the battle from the U. S. point of view has been narrated by Margueritte Merington in her book about the relationship of General Custer with his wife Elizabeth. The main corpus of the book is formed by the letters sent between George Armstrong Custer and his wife; however there are some written to and from different people, for example General Sheridan and Mrs. Sabin. This corpus has been commented on by Magueritte Merington. Stephen E. Ambrose in his *Crazy Horse and Custer*, who dedicates a full chapter to it, starts by describing the view of the Little Bighorn River (or “Greasy Grass” for the Sioux) and the countryside surrounding it, as well as the peaceful life of the people, not knowing what was going to happen, adding that their leaders were fully aware of the situation.

As for the moment of the battle itself, he focuses his narration on Custer, Crazy Horse and Reno, describing their actions, based on some texts and the opinions of some witnesses, but for the narration of the facts following the orders he gave to Martini (“Martin” for other authors) recognising that he only guesses what could have happened. He also analyses the mistakes of Custer and the successes of Crazy Horse, and speculates about the possible consequences of what could have happened if Custer’s behaviour had been different. Benjamin Capps dedicates a chapter to the confrontation. After a very brief account of the conditions giving origin to the battle, that is to say, the Custer expedition in 1874, he describes the day and the situation in the moments previous to the battle, dedicating some paragraphs to Crazy Horse and focusing on his actions; later he tells the story of

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the battle since the appearance of the Whites until the end, adding the possible thoughts of Crazy Horse. The chapter also includes a short account of the battle in pictographs by Red Horse and its translation into English, with some photos, including one showing the casualties of the conflict.

But other ways of treatment can be found, like the narration of the battle by Red Horse or Amos Bad Heart Bull, this one reflected in the book by Helen H. Blish *A Pictographic History of the Oglala Sioux*. These last two ones show the point of view of the Native Americans, the same as the ones by Luther Standing Bear in his book *My People the Sioux*. The account he gives is a second-hand one, for it was told to him by his father when they were living at Spotted Tail Agency. In it he assures that the soldiers knew they were going to die. In the book by John Gneisenau Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks*, the story of the battle is told by the voices of Black Elk, Standing Bear and Iron Hawk. The first narrates the story that at the moments previous to the battle a warrior called Rattling Hawk, who had been injured in the Rosebud, was being healed by the medicine-man Hairy Chin. As Black Elk felt bad for a moment he went to the river, where he met a certain number of people when the soldiers charged. He continues narrating the reactions of the Indians at the arrival of the soldiers, the arrival of Crazy Horse and describes the battle.

Standing Bear adds that he had woken up late and was having his first meal when the charge of the soldiers occurred. The situation of Iron Hawk at the moment of the attack was the same, but he adds that the horses stampeded and had to be recovered. George E. Hyde in *Red Cloud's Folk* speaks about the preparatory movements on the side of the U. S. Army, and also about the march of Custer, his

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fast moving, his urgency to attack the hostiles and his self-confidence, but also about the attack of Reno and the retreat of him and his men. The rest of the narrative speculates about what could have happened. Doane Robinson in *A History of the Dakota or Sioux Indians* gives a full account of the battle. Thomas B. Marquis, in his book *Wooden Leg, A Warrior who Fought Custer*, says that he (Wooden Leg) was dreaming when the soldiers arrived. It is important to notice that he includes a scene that would be the portrait of the death of Bloody Knife. He also states the craziness of some soldiers who committed suicide. A very different case is that of Charles Eastman "Ohyiesa," who was educated from his childhood in the United States tradition and who originally wrote in the English Language. His double training, Sioux and American, allow him to write about the Sioux customs properly in English, some of them directly related to the symbolism of war among the Sioux.

I intend to bring to light the facts concerning the battle of Little Bighorn and compare them with the films which are the object of this study. While the role of George Armstrong Custer has been widely treated in *They Died with their Boots On* (1941), logically, because the film deals with the creation of the Seventh Cavalry, the film does not develop the roles of other figures in the U. S. Army, and even less the characters of the Indian chiefs or warriors. The tactical movements of the battle have not been considered, nor the councils of the Sioux and Cheyennes, nor their meetings with the Whites. The annihilation of the Whites in the Battle of Little Bighorn was almost completely true and the keyword is "almost" because of the existence of some survivors: the horse of General Custer "Dandy", an Arikara Indian fighting for the Whites and Frederick Benteen, who was later rehabilitated,

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as well as some others. The question of the proportion between Indians and soldiers in the battle of Little Bighorn has always been considered ten to one in favour of the Indians, though many figures have been given by the different authors. No mention has been found in the film *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) related to any council with the intention of organizing the battle, the only meeting being the one of the chiefs in Sitting Bull's tipi, which is very far from being considered a council, this being a meeting of a great many Indians of different sub-tribes and, even, tribes normally in the middle of the prairie. The fact that a battle had been organized without the meeting of its leaders or by a very brief one seems very confusing. It should have been necessary to have one or more councils with the intention of organizing it.

There were two important factors in the life of the Sioux, the first the appearance of the White Calf Buffalo Woman, one of the most important women in the Sioux tribe, who had given the Dakota their seven rituals and, consequently, influenced the whole of Dakota life. The second factor was the discovery of the horse. No doubt, the appearance of the horse had an important influence in Indian life, allowing them to travel from place to place, hunt, and also transport things and people. In the films about the Sioux in the Prairie, people tend to consider that they were always there, as if they had sprung from the ground. In the best of the cases it is usual to think that they are descendants of those peoples who entered American soil through the Strait of Bering and inhabited the land, but the possibility that they were living in another part of America before History registers their movements is not usually considered by the great public. The fact that the Sioux tribe had been

living in the area of the lakes has been historically proven, however there were references indicating the fact that they had come from the south. No written record has been found giving exact news about it. The documented history of the Sioux starts in Minnesota.

To give an idea of the history of this people, it was thought convenient to speak about the Sioux migrations as well as their vicissitudes and enemies, first from the lakes to the Blue Earth River, and the division that took place there, which resulted in one of the Sioux bands. In the course of the migrations, other things happened apart from the travelling, such as the meeting with other tribes, for instance the Arikaras (who had been blocking their advance), as a precedent of their future behaviour and positioning in the battle of Little Bighorn, as well as their fights for horses or for the land, or the Crows, displaced by them when they reached the Black Hills, as were also the Cheyennes, also displaced, but who displayed a very different attitude.

Some things happened in their travels that altered the everyday life of the Sioux, like the building of some forts or the arrival of new Indian agents. In the course of that migration, some persons became important for the Sioux people, like Standing Bull, the great-grandfather of Sitting Bull, or other chiefs, such as Tamaha or the Wapasha line of chiefs. The discovery of the Black Hills is an important fact in the History of the Sioux tribes, for it was the moment when they took possession of the lands that were going to be their definitive home from the moment they arrived there down to our days. They took them as a centre of operations from which they travelled to other points, such as when the Tetons went hunting near the Black Hills

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and the Oglalas were wandering between the Black Hills and the estuary of Bad River. The first appearance of the Sioux on the Upper Platte, the march of the Tetons from the east bank of the Missouri to the west, and the war of the Trans-Missouri Indians are other important events in the History of this tribe.

The different fur companies had also caused an impact in the life of the Sioux tribe, due to the consequences their establishment had for the advance of "civilization" and for the extermination of the Indians. The action of the government played an important role in the modification of the Indian boundaries and in the different treaties, like the one at Prairie du Chien, and the Cession of a strip of land in the limit between the Dakotas and Sac and Foxes, which modified the territory. In this case, it was due to a government initiative, but other times that initiative belonged to the citizens. The cases of Campbell, who induced the Oglalas to move to the south, the Bent Brothers or Kiplin and Sabille are clear examples. The action of the soldiers was significant in the modification of Indian Territory, such as, for example the raids on the North Platte and the punishment of the Indians, or Colonel Collins' establishment of two forts, or the events of 1864, in which General Sully intended to attack Sitting Bull's band.

The newcomers, among them the Mormons, were not the only influence modifying the Indian way of life. There were influences of other tribes and fights between them, for example the feud between the Oglalas and the Pawnees or the fight between the Crows and the Cheyennes and Oglalas, however, not only the fights between the tribes had an importance, also the struggle between the different chiefs, or even some warriors, was a factor of a certain importance. That is the

case of the struggle between Smoke and Bull Bear. The way the Oglalas were uncomfortable with the newcomers and the new emigrants influenced many events, such as for instance the Mormon Cow Affair, which resulted in the Grattan Massacre, which is the reason why it has also been described here. It is an important fact in the history of the Dakotas and it influenced the behaviour of this tribe and the events leading to the Battle of Little Bighorn. In this Grattan Massacre there were some prominent Indian warriors who were present, as is the case of Red Cloud, and for this reason a small biography of this chief has been included. A certain space has been dedicated to speaking about the Fetterman Massacre and the treaty of 1868, due to the special circumstances around it, because, first of all, it was one of those undeniable victories of the Dakotas, prior to the moments of the Little Bighorn battle. Fetterman's pride was an important factor in his defeat, and has been represented in some films. It was important to establish the chain of events leading from the search of gold by Custer, via the flow of Whites to the Black Hills, passing through the battle of the Powder River and the Rosebud to the Battle of Little Bighorn.

Concerning Representation, it is important to know to whom the film is addressed, what its object and its meaning are, but it is also important to know the characters and why the director chose those characters and not other ones. It seemed that the division among the three streams of Representation: Reflective, Intentional and Constructionist was insufficient, so their links, their common characteristics and their differences are to be considered. There were some points of contact between Representation and Linguistics that had to be studied, but films have a form and a

meaning or, in other words, a signifier and a signified, so it was meaningful to study them here. The sequences of every film have two kinds of relationships, firstly to the facts they represent, and secondly to the different sequences following and preceding them, the former being the relations *in absentia* and the latter the relations *in praesentia*, but in Representation also the reader and writer are to be considered, though as we are speaking of a film they will be transposed as the director and the spectator. They are a crucial part of the communication process. In fact, the spectator is the cause, the reason why a film is made, which implies that without a spectator no film has sense. His mind has certain characteristics, which are not the same in all the spectators. One of those is education, which has to be borne in mind, for it makes a difference in the way the spectator watches a film. The spectator has an ideology, a way of thinking, and this is reflected in the media. A question arose: whether Representation is a real projection of reality whether or not it is biased from a certain point of view. Then the point of view should be known, especially if this could be identified as Eurocentrism, but it was also interesting to know the consequences of it, the possibility of the existence of one or more cultures, if the film was an illusion or, even better, the role of illusion in the film.

The means with which the film is made, by forming part of the production process, were important in Representation, because they were the things that produced that representation, which is the reason why the role of some artefacts, like cameras, lenses, lights and screens, is studied here, but also the people involved in the films, such as the actors, directors, etc. The spectators had also to be studied, because

they have a certain responsibility as receivers who pay to see the media product. The characters have certain features and they are put within a frame, and this frame or stage has some characteristics that should be considered. The role of race and the way it was expressed in the film has a certain space, but race is always related to a land, to a nation and the viewpoint is always related to the object, so it was necessary to deal with all of them.

Dealing with the military career of George Armstrong Custer and involving his relations with the Sioux, *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) should be inscribed in a wider frame. It is inscribed in that kind of films called Westerns, and as such it should be analysed, considering its evolution from the beginnings to our days, starting with the "Actualities", such as *Nanook of the North* (1922), *The Plainsman* (1936) or *Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show* (1898), a kind of documentaries speaking of unknown lands or interesting events, whose running time is very brief, some of them only some seconds; however, they are the beginnings of the History of Indian Films. They are followed by the Narrative Films, telling simple stories. Westerns are here in a process of formation, though some of them start to have a longer duration, lasting some minutes. They were succeeded by the Indian Story Films, such as *Hiawatha* (1910). Here, some biographic data about the real Hiawatha have been included, but as the real person was not the same as the one represented, a certain amount of information about the legends on which the film is based is given with the intention of showing that the representation does not correspond to the object represented, due to the identification of two characters who were different in origin. This kind of film was more complex than the preceding

ones. In this type, films are acted, written and, sometimes, directed by Native Americans, the ones by Young Deer being those that have had an important place, and that is the reason why a brief account of his life and an ample catalogue of the films is inserted.

Personally, I found it surprising to discover that in those years the Indians were not treated as the “bad guys” in Westerns. They could even play the positive part, but in the 1910's, when the Western completed its formation they lost their right to be writers, directors or actors impersonating the Indian characters. From then on Westerns developed, creating sub-genres, incorporating sound and suffering the crisis of The Great Depression. From 1924, the year in which Indians are considered American citizens, the attitude towards Native Americans changed. In the fifties, Hollywood started to treat Indians more respectfully, dealing with social problems and showing Indian culture. In the sixties, the stereotype of the Indian changed and the violence against them was displaced against Mexicans. The seventies give a new perspective to Westerns, becoming more Pro-Native-American and in the eighties and nineties the figure of the “good savage” is shown. So the situation had worsened, only to later improve, and there was a re-conquest of the role of the importance of the Indian.

The conflicts between the United States and the Indian tribes were many, due to the large number of the tribes existing in North America (Cheyenne, Comanche, Navajo), the most well-known being those of the Sioux and the Apaches. It is not the purpose of this thesis to speak about all of them; nonetheless the conflict with the Sioux and the Apaches are a prominent part of the Indian wars. That is why a

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section about the films concerning both conflicts has been included, but the information about these two tribes would not be complete without a small account of the lives of their leaders, which we now cover.

Among the films about Apaches, *Land Raiders* (1964) shows the problem of scalping, *A Distant Trumpet* (1964) deals with mock trials and *Escape from Fort Bravo* (1953) shows the tactics to escape. In this section, the films about Apache leaders show the most interesting events, such as, for instance, the battles of Victorio, in *Distant Drums* (1951), whose appearance is very brief; Cochise, and the films *40 Guns to Apache Pass* (1966), *Broken Arrow* (1950), one of the films that were the turning point in the history of the Indian Films; Taza, and the film *Taza, Son of Cochise* (1953), which shows other prominent moments in the life of this tribe, the same as Chato and the film *Chato's Land* (1972). The most important chief among the Apache, Geronimo, could not be absent in this selection, with the titles *Geronimo* (1962) and *Geronimo* (1993). To end this section the Apache chief Massai, the last of the warriors and the film *Apache* (1951). It is not possible to describe minutely the films of the section concerning the two main conflicts between the United States and the Indians and moreover make a comparison of them with the real facts. It would be a very long work; however a short description of the films has been given.

Among the films about the Sioux, there are a small number of cases in which a white man goes into the Indian world and even becomes a part of it. The first one is *Dances with Wolves* (1990), a second case is that of John Morgan, the protagonist of the films *A Man Called Horse* (1970), *The Return of a Man Called Horse* (1976)

and *The Triumphs of a Man Called Horse*. It is necessary to dedicate a section to chief Red Cloud, the protagonist of the war of his name, who fought for the Bozeman Trail to make it remain in the hands of the Sioux and triumphed in it, making the United States close the forts along that road. Though he was not present at the battle of Little Bighorn, he was the protagonist of a period called Red Cloud's War and was the war chief under whose orders Crazy Horse was for a period of time. That is why his life and some films about him are included here. Those films are *Run of the Arrow* (1957), *The Indian Fighter* (1956), *Tomahawk* (1951), and *Bugles in the Afternoon* (1952). This section cannot be concluded without speaking a little of some films about the Battle of Little Bighorn, such as *Custer of the West* (1967) and *Son of the Morning Star* (1991).

The study of the film *Little Big Man* (1970) is focused on the character of George Armstrong Custer through a handful of sequences, his behaviour with Jack the different times they meet, not only publicly, such as the moment in which the General advises Jack and Olga to go west or when he hires him as a mule-skinner, but also privately, such as the moment in which Jack tries to kill the General and the latter despises him. Other reactions of the General have also been analysed, such as the case of his behaviour on his way to the battle or his craziness in it. The re-encounter of Jack with the general after the kidnapping of Olga by the Indians, the attempt of Jack to kill Custer, the moment in which he despises the opinion of Jack, the moments previous to the battle and some aspects of this, and finally the moments on his way to the battle and his behaviour in it, the moments of his death and his craziness are facets of Custer's personality that have been analysed. The

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analysis of this film also includes the relations of the Cheyennes and the Pawnees with the Whites. In the second case these relations are limited to a couple of sequences, but in the first one a large part of the film is dedicated to it. His relation with Mrs Pendrake necessitated speaking about the acculturation of the Indians and its representation in the film. The film also depicts the desperation caused by living between two worlds, something that might have been very frequent, but also the problems in which Jack puts the General.

The study of the film *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) focuses on the military life of George Armstrong Custer, since his arrival at West Point in February 1857 until the moment of his death. Different phases in this military life have been analysed, such as his admission to the academy, especially in the contrast between fact and reality, and also his behaviour in the academy, his training and difficulties to graduate, but also the military life in itself, since the moment of his first mission, besides his baptism of fire at Bull Run and his arrival at Fort Lincoln and the way he solved the problem of reaching the 2nd Cavalry by finding a horse. The sequence of his promotion to Brigadier General demanded a new analysis of his personality, as well as a new study of History with the intention of knowing the quality of the depiction of the events concerning that promotion. The film also develops part of the life of Elizabeth Bacon in those points of contact with the life of Custer. In this analysis some sequences appear, such as the one in which Libbie receives the news that gold had been discovered, involving her in the causes of the Battle of Little Bighorn, though in a secondary way, and taking to the following theme: the search for gold by Custer, one of the real causes of the battle itself. It

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was also interesting to see the way Libbie met California Joe, describing this man and his personality, due to the fact that he was one of the scouts who were in the battle of Little Bighorn and who, in fact, died there.

There is another character in this film who, though not a protagonist of the film, was absolutely necessary for the existence of the battle, Crazy Horse, the war chief of the Oglalas. Also Sitting Bull, who does not appear in the film, and was the promoter of the battle, is a necessary figure. That is the reason why a description of the Dakota chief has been included; however the figure of Chief Crazy Horse would be dealt with later, the same as a description of the Sioux tribe and its sub-tribes, because all of them are involved in the conflict. The sequence of the quarrel with Custer and the arrest of the Sioux chief was not left apart, because it was important to underline the fact that they had not seen each other before, the same as the surrender of Crazy Horse, his escape and later chase, important facts in the life of this Dakota chief and facts derived from the battle and the reactions of the U.S. Army.

Here, a biography of He Dog and Big Road was embedded in the film, because the former was in the tattoo accompanying Crazy Horse in his surrender, and the latter was his heir in leading the band. As neither the duel nor the encounter of them both had ever taken place, the imprisonment of Crazy Horse was not possible, so it might take a space in this work as well as his struggle for freedom, the warriors and soldiers who were present at this moment, especially Little Big Man. It was very important to speak about Little Big Man because everybody considered him a friend of Crazy Horse, but his way of behaving showed a certain ambiguity,

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especially at the moment of Crazy Horse being released, for which reason a biography of this warrior has been inserted here. But I thought it could be interesting to specify the hour of his death and his last words to make clear the circumstance involving his death and the personality of Crazy Horse. There were two events directly related to the battle of Little Bighorn: the battles of Powder River and the Rosebud, before which sitting Bull had his famous Sun Dance, important due to the vision he had. As a direct antecedent of the battle of Little Bighorn the battle of the Rosebud was described, due to the fact that it was clearer in its development than Little Bighorn.

The sequence in which Crazy Horse is reunited with the chiefs of the different tribes that took part in the battle made it necessary to investigate the different groups, and the reality was discovered to be meaningfully different from what is represented. The meeting of the Sioux chief with Custer in the film relates to the Treaty of 1868, while the events were in fact related to June 1876, as well as the exploration for gold in 1874, but the Court-Martial of General George Armstrong Custer, the charges and specifications had nothing to do with the battle, unlike in the film. And to finish this analysis, one of the final sequences in the film shows Custer finding the diary of Libbie Bacon. This, though seen quickly and in passing, is not irrelevant for the narration of the battle. In fact it could have had a certain importance, considering that the book published by Margueritte Merington containing her letters had been written in cooperation with her and contains a narration of the battle. Consequently, its influence cannot be denied.

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The third film analysed is *Sitting Bull* (1964), from the moment in which an off-voice is heard introducing himself and Crazy Horse, then making a digression about the Sioux tribes, presenting them as what they were, the protagonists of the battle of Little Bighorn. The seven campfires were enumerated, explaining who the Sioux were and giving the name of the Sioux sub-tribes, because all of them were there in Little Bighorn camp. The other protagonist of the film, Parrish, is suspected to be a fictitious character; not so Buck John Martin, and the other survivors, Reno and Benteen. The existence of Red Rock agency was dealt with because the fact that the Indians were sent to reservations was one of the causes, not only of the battle of Little Bighorn, but also of all the conflicts with the Indian Nations. In this case the reclusion on reservations was finishing with the old way of life of the Native Americans.

The son of Sitting Bull, his existence and name, were two themes appearing in the film. He cannot be left apart because he has an active role in the film, inciting Sitting Bull to war, while this is here shown as an advocate for peace, though he had really been an advocate for war. Red Rock, the agency in which the Sioux were living in the film, the awful way in which they were obliged to live and to feed was important, due to the fact that it was one of the claims of the Indians, as well as the treaty of 1868, broken when Custer entered the Black Hills, and so one of the direct causes of the battle analysed here, but the death of Sitting Bull's son also appeared in the film and demanded an analysis as well as the rituals of death among the Sioux. The meeting of the Sioux medicine-man with the President had a prominent, role because the Whites' intention was to discourage the Dakotas with a

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demonstration of the power of the United States. Sitting Bull was one of the many Indian chiefs who became discouraged after having come back from Washington. In the film, the name of Sitting Bull appears in pictographs, and, though not the central point of this thesis, in the case of Sitting Bull it was interesting to speak about it. It seemed important to underline the fact that Reno and Benteen were under the orders of Custer. The figure of the spy among the Indians should not be surprising, but it was a curious figure worthy to analyse. It was necessary to speak about the philosophy of warfare, due to differences in the way of understanding it.

The fourth and last film analysed is *Chief Crazy Horse* (1955), starting with a biography of the great chief, Crazy Horse, who was not depicted here from a physical point of view. A certain space has been dedicated to his birth date, which has been so much discussed, as well as his name and youth, during which he made friends with some important members of the band who would have an important role in the battle of Little Bighorn at his death. The affair of Conquering Bear's death, a cause of trouble to the Indians and included in the conflict with the Whites has also been studied here. His relationships with the Fort Laramie Treaty, broken later by George Armstrong Custer, and giving origin to the battle of Little Bighorn, the vision that gave him his name, as well as his relations with the Cheyennes, with whom he spent a great length of time, and who would later be allies in the battle, are other matters dealt. The fact of approaching Black Buffalo Woman, his becoming a member of the Crow Owners Society, his role in the Fetterman Affair, important as a part of the fight for the Bozeman Trail, his affair with Black Buffalo Woman, the birth of his daughter, They-Are-Afraid-of-Her, the

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invitation of the U.S. to go to Washington, with which invitation the U. S. tried to discourage him from obtaining a reservation and, finally, his role in the battle of Little Bighorn and the two preceding ones, his surrender and death are points to be dealt with too.

According to the film itself, the analysis started with the death of Conquering Bear, important because it was included in the war for the Bozeman Trail and the process of burial of the Sioux, including some new details about his death, more specifically the details just after his death. As the film mentions, the cause of the name being in his childhood, it was interesting to speak about the three names an Indian man acquired and, in this case, the three he owned. The vision, which was the cause of his name and made his father sure that he would be a great warrior, had an ample space, but also implied the necessity of specifying his age and the year when he had that vision, also his birth date; as dates were so vague among the Natives Americans related to the Western ones, this point needed clarification. Testimonies of the different witnesses and friends that had been born in years near his have been used. The Treaty of 1868 was an important fact in the life of the Sioux people because it forbade the Whites to have access to the Black Hills.

Though it has no direct relation with the battle, a certain number of sequences about his marriage appear, showing the role of his friends in it and the role of Little Big Man in the film, concerning the relations between these two warriors as allies. Also, the theme of gold was important, this time shown through the role of the miners. The possible existence of Fort Bill Cody has been discussed here. Spotted Tail, Red Cloud, Man Afraid and Roman Nose, appear in the film, the same as

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Fetterman, who influenced the whole Sioux life in the fight for the Bozeman Trail, due to his appearance on the scene, trying to annihilate the whole Sioux tribe, so, besides the affair itself, some notes about Captain Fetterman's personality have been included, as well as the massacre and the wood train. Finally, a part of this work has been dedicated to his surrender as well as to the conversations that led to it, very briefly dealt in this film, speaking about the first tries, too, but there are some facts unrepresented and some information about them had to be supplied. The jealousy between Red Cloud and Spotted Tail influenced the moment after the death of Crazy Horse, due to the power struggle to increase the importance of one reservation over the other. Finally, related to the moment of the surrender it was necessary to add the details, for the representation of the tattoo marching with the intention of giving up the fight was very far from the facts narrated, not only by the Indians, but also by the soldiers present in that event. The desire of Crazy Horse to have an agency of his own, so linked to the proposition to go to Washington, because of the hunger of his people and the illness of his wife are other factors that led to the surrender of the Dakota chief that appears in the film.

In the choice between the terms "Native American" and "Indian" most of the times the latter is used because it is the one documented in the tradition as well as in the treaties. The term "Indian" refers to all of the nations who were in America before the arrival of the conquerors, or in some cases, to a specific tribe. In fact this term is widely used by the different authors, such as for instance Doane Robinson and also George E. Hyde; however, the term "Native American" will be used on some occasions in order to avoid repetition. The term "White" is written with a capital

letter, when used to relate to one or more individuals in a substantive form. The terms “hostiles” and “friendlies” designate a group of individuals of any tribe with these characteristics. Both terms are widely used in all the authors. The terms “Conquering Bear” and “Brave Bear” are used by different authors related to the same person: while Hyde prefers the latter, Mary Sandoz chooses the former. In this thesis the term “Conquering Bear” is preferred. In the choice between two spellings the choice depends on the author. So while George E. Hyde uses the form “Raynolds” Doane Robinson prefers “Reynolds.” In this thesis the form used will be “Reynolds.” For the word used to designate the type of house utilized by the Prairie Indians, Clark Wissler normally uses the word “tepee,” while others, like Stephen E. Ambrose use the form “tipi” with the same meaning; however Wissler on one occasion gives both words. To regularize this spelling, the word used in this work will always be “tipi.”

To speak about George Armstrong Custer, the terms “G. A. Custer, George Armstrong Custer and Custer” will be used in an indistinct way, but in the event of using the term “Custer” this will refer to General George Armstrong Custer. In reference to Elizabeth Custer, the terms Elizabeth Custer, Libbie Custer, Elizabeth Bacon or Libbie Bacon will be used indistinctly. The term “Medicine-man”, being the one the Native American tradition gives to those men charged with practising medicine and magic, is preferred in this work to the term “Shaman”, which is not proper of the Native American tradition. The term “Dakota” is used in three ways: first to indicate a territory; second to name one of the dialects of this tribe, third to name the tribe in their own language. In this third case, the word has been utilized

as an alternative to the word Sioux. The terms “Sentry” and “Sentinel” have both been used with the same meaning in different contexts in order to make the narration a little more fluent.

When writing the Indian names, there are several cases, depending on the way they were written in English (with one word, two words, several words or with a phrase). The cases are the following: 1) A single word, such as “Gall” or “Ice.” 2) Names composed by an adjective and a noun, such as “Crazy Horse,” “Dull Knife” or “Slow Bull”, or a word in function of adjective, this first word being a pronoun, such as “He Dog”, a noun, “Bull Bear” or a verb, such as “Standing Bull” or “Sitting Bull.” 3) Names formed by an adjective and two nouns like “Black Buffalo Woman.” 4) Names formed by a phrase, in which one or more than one words is an article, a conjunction or a preposition, such as “Man-Afraid-of-his-Horse.” In all cases the adjectives, nouns and verb forms will be in capitals, to clearly distinguish Indian names in the text. As the names written in form of a phrase can be confused, they will also be written in capital letters, all the words in these phrases being written with hyphens. Only the forms of articles, conjunctions and prepositions will not be in capitals.

2 HISTORY OF THE SIOUX MIGRATIONS

The first news about the existence of the Dakotas is found in the first pictograph of Battiste Good's Wintercount, where the story of the White Buffalo Woman can be read. Battiste Good, a Brulé living in Rosebud Reservation when he explained the meaning of these pictographs to Reverend William J. Cleveland, gives the date of 901-30 for the appearance of this sacred being and the existence of the Dakota Nation. A copy of this Wintercount was obtained by William H. Corbusier, while he was at Camp Sheridan in 1879 and 1880 from the author himself, and the meaning of its pictographs was explained to Reverend William J. Cleveland and translated into English by the latter.¹⁵ Though the date of the appearance of White Buffalo Woman is not significant, the really important matter is the existence of this legendary figure, because she was the one who gave the Dakota the pipe used in the seven rituals. These rituals are the Keeping of the Soul, the Rite of Purification, Crying for a Vision, the Sun Dance, the Making of Relatives, Preparing a Girl for Womanhood and the Throwing of the Ball.

"Look at the bowl: engraved in it are seven circles of various sizes. They stand for the seven sacred ceremonies you will practice with this pipe, and for the Otcheti Shakowin, the seven sacred campfires of our Lakota Nation." (Erdoes and Ortiz, *American Myths and Legends*, 50). Among these ceremonies, the Sweat Lodge Ceremony takes place in a tipi built for the occasion and consists of the act of sweating in a ceremonial way with the aim of purification, and it is used for purification before any important event like war; the Sun Dance, which consists of

¹⁵ Mallery 1888 288

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the cutting of part of the flesh, mainly in the breast and the insertion under it of a slice of something rigid, after which the dancer is fixed to a pole and in this way he dances, offering his pain to the Great Spirit. This ritual, performed by Sitting Bull before the battle of Little Bighorn, will be later described more minutely as will also the life of the great Sioux medicine man. The Vision Quest is a ceremony in which an Indian is isolated in a far off place and, placing himself on a sage bed, stands for two or three days fasting, until he acquires a vision which answers what he was looking for. The whole account of this ceremony, which was important to acquire a name as a warrior, is told in *The Sacred Pipe*, (pages 44-67). The different versions of the White Calf Buffalo Woman legend differ in the details, though in the main all of them speak of a woman found by two warriors of the Sioux tribe. She gave them the Holy Pipe as a present and explained to the people the use of that instrument and the moments in which it must be used. The White Calf Buffalo Woman is also called "The Woman from Heaven", as Battiste Good says in the commentaries related to PI XXI of the wintercount bearing his name. The identification is clear, when some lines later, she says "I came from Heaven to teach the Dakotas...I am a buffalo, the White-Buffalo-Cow" (Garrick Mallery 1888 290).

The first news of the discovery of the horse is represented in the pictograph related to the years 1141-1210, corresponding to Plate XXII. It is irrelevant for this work whether the date is correct or not: what is to be underlined here is the existence of the Sioux tribe at that date. It is curious to notice that the name the Sioux gave to horses was due to the confusion of those animals with dogs. "Among a herd of buffalo, surrounded at one time during this period, were some horses. The people

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all cried out, 'There are big dogs with them,' having never seen horses before, hence the name for horse, sunka (dog) tanka (big), or sunka (dog) wakan (wonderful or mysterious)" (Mallery 1888 292).

The Western Sioux, or Tetons, of which the Oglalas were one of the seven tribes, were small camps of people on the plains, the same as the Eastern Sioux. The first ones started moving after the middle of the 1600's, the second ones after 1735. At the beginning of the Sioux History this people, who named themselves the "Otcheti Chakowin", a part of the Siouan group, and the most warlike of them all, can be found settled on the Mississippi headwaters. In the middle of the seventeenth century the Yanktonais, composed of the Yankton and the Tetons, began to move. Around 1650, they were near Rainy Lake, between the city of International Falls, in Minnesota, and Fort Frances, Ontario, Canada, raiding the Crees, one of the tribes of the Plains belonging to the Algonquian trunk, who did not frequently fight the Whites. That part of the Yanktonais closest to the Crees would later be a separate tribe: the Assininboins, a tribe of the Siouan family with a similar language.

When the English arrived in Hudson Bay in 1668, the French were penetrating through Lake Superior, and the Tetons, who seemed to have been dwelling south of the Yanktonais, were still near Sauk Rapids until 1680. When these withdrew towards the South, the Tetons also had to move. Both groups, the Yanktons as well as the Tetons, were at the south of their previous settlements in 1700. The Sissetons (one of the seven tribes of the great Sioux Nation, which form part of the central Dakota Sioux or Santees), and other groups of the Eastern Sioux, were living in marshes at that time. The Sioux of the Western group went towards the

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South to the Minnesota Valley and then to the Missouri. The Yanktonais also went toward the South, to the Minnesota River, in the great elbow-bend, where the Yanktons crossed the Minnesota and made their home in the area of the Blue Earth River, while the Yanktonais went up the Minnesota River. Around this time, the Tetons coming from the elbow-bend of the Minnesota River divided into two bands: the Oglalas and the Brulés, who crossed the river and stayed in the land west of the Blue Earth River, while The Teton Saones,¹⁶ went to the headwaters of the Minnesota River.

Later, the Yanktonais group also divided into two parts: the Yanktons and the Yanktonais. And after 1735 the Sissetons migrated southwards to the elbow bend of the Minnesota, dividing themselves into two groups: one going to the Blue Earth River, a tributary of the Minnesota River, in South Minnesota; the other one to the headwaters of the Minnesota. The other bands, migrating up to the Minnesota, resided in the woods, which probably gave rise to the term Saone (those who shoot among the trees), while the Tetons went westward. In 1700 the Teton band of the Oglalas, who did not yet possess horses, seemed to be in the area of the Blue Earth River. Whether the Brulés were there or not is not known, for this term did not exist until the year 1750. From 1700 to 1750 they seem to have used the Big Sioux River, a tributary of the Missouri River, running through Eastern South Dakota and northwestern Iowa, and Little Sioux River, which runs from the Iowa border to the Missouri, whose tributary it is, as a channel to the Missouri. About 1700-1725, two tribes, the Omahas, a tribe of the Siouan family living in Lower

¹⁶ Hyde 1937 12

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Missouri, and the Iowas, a tribe of the Siouan family living in Lower Missouri, and who partly lived from agriculture and partly hunted buffalo and deer, were near the Big Sioux estuary, and north of them the Arikara, popularly called Rees, a tribe of the Caddo family, living most to the north. When the latter moved to Dakota after 1723 and settled in the land between Chamberlain, located in Brulé County, South Dakota, and Pierre, the capital of the State of South Dakota, located in Hughes County, near the Missouri River, the Ponkas, a tribe of the Siouan family, who had been part of the Omahas, joined the Arikara, and both of them went together to the Black Hills.

About 1760 the Chippewas, a tribe of the Algonquian family living in the Central Area or Old Northwest, who took part in Pontiac's war, defeated the Santees in the Forty Years' War and, consequently, the Santees had to leave the area of the Lakes and go down to the prairies, while the Tetons, who had come from the Big Stone Lake, in the state of Minnesota, appeared on the upper part of the Missouri River. At this date, the Arikara were supplied with horses and made two hunting expeditions a year: to the Black Hills and to James River. They were friends of the Kiowas, a tribe of the Aztec-Tanoan stock and part of the Tanoan family, from whom they obtained the horses and other articles. About this year, when the Tetons started to cross James River, they were blocked by the Arikara until 1786, in which the Arikara were decimated by smallpox. By this time, the Saone-Tetons were coming from the Minnesota River upper waters through the Kettle Lakes, for which reason it is said they were named "Two-Kettle", followed by the Yanktonais, who were advancing, while also westward the Oglalas and the Brulés, followed by the

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Yanktons crossed near Crow Creek estuary and started going up along the Bad River, followed by the Brulés while the Arikara found themselves forced to move towards the North and blocked the Saones until 1795, in which the Arikara moved northwards again.

At the end of 1766 or the beginning of 1767 the Yanktons and Yanktonais had to leave western Iowa, pressed by the Ottoes, and settled in James Valley. The Oglalas now led the advance of all the Teton towards the West, crossing through Sioux Pass. The Arikara seemingly deserted the Great Bend, over the Sioux Pass, at a date near 1775, when an Oglala war-party, whose leader was Standing Bull, the great-grandfather of the Sioux leader Sitting Bull, discovered the Black Hills. The Brulés followed the Oglalas, so all the land between the estuary of the White River, in South Dakota, and the Cheyenne River. It comes out of Lake Oache and passes through the Black Hills and the Badlands, also called Good River by the Indians, and then of Sioux ownership. The Oglalas went towards the Black Hills now, following Bad River upwards, whilst the Brulés went Southwards to the White River, which was just southwards of the Badlands, a large territory that was considered a land of spirits and too bad to live in. At this time the Cheyennes were occupying the Black Hills.

At this moment Wapasha was leader of the Wahpekutes. He was probably living in the city known nowadays as Winona (Keoxa, among the Dakota), a city in the state of Minnesota, in the county of its name. It owes its name to the daughter of chief Wapasha III. His son, Wapasha II, succeeded him as chief and, after him, the son

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of the latter, Joseph Wapasha.¹⁷ In this year (1775) Tamahawas also born, who never had a clear idea to which of the two parts (Sioux or Cowboys) he belonged to, because he was jailed by the U. S. Army after having served them! He was loyal to the US, but he also ruled the band of the Redwings, in the upper Missouri. Redwing, Tatankamane and Walking Buffalo are three names for the same person, the chief of a band of Sioux living upon the Lake Pepin, a natural lake in the Mississippi River, near the city of Saint Paul, Minnesota.

In 1778 the Brulés and the Oglalas were fighting the Arikara, Crows, Kiowas and other tribes. The problem with the Crows, a tribe of the Siouan group living in the Upper Missouri, started due to a minor incident in 1785-6, when they were living northwards in the Black Hills, a mountain range extending through South Dakota and Wyoming, whose highest point is Harney Peak, and were forced to move West, near the Powder River, a tributary of the Yellowstone River, which, with its 375 miles, runs through the states of Montana and Wyoming. The hostilities between the Brulés and Oglala bands of the Teton tribe and the Cheyennes seem to have a Brulé origin and though there was a conflict soon they made peace. The Brulés and the Oglalas displaced the Kiowas and Crows from the Black Hills. In 1794 a Sioux band, probably Brulés, who were wintering on the Missouri, spoke about the Saones, calling them Northern People, because they were wandering alongside the east part of the Missouri northwards, these being divided into five bands: Miniconjous, Sans Arcs, Two Kettles, Hunkpapas and Sicasapas. There

¹⁷ For a detailed account about the life of this chief consult T. Emogene Paulson's book *Who's who among the Sioux*. Institute of Indian Studies. The University of South Dakota. Vermilion. South Dakota. State Publishing Company. 1988.

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was a migration up Cheyenne River led by the Miniconjous in which the Sans Arcs and the Two-Kettles were also involved. The Hunkpapas and the Sicasapas did not take part in it, remaining in the east part of the Missouri.

It is precisely the band of the Minniconjous which seem to be the first to have crossed the Missouri to the west bank, near Cheyenne River estuary. In 1798, after the battle of Prairie Rice Lake and other series of battles, the Chippewa settled on the Santee Lakes and the Dakota accepted their final defeat in the area. In 1804 the Dakota were north of the Cheyenne River. In 1796 the Arikara and the Mandans, a tribe of the Siouan family living in Upper Missouri, near the city of Bismarck, were living together, while a part of the Mandans preferred the Tetons to live with. Later the Oglala mixed the Saones, for which reason in the year 1840 the Oglala were of mixed blood. From 1795 to 1804 the Tetons were established in the whereabouts of the Great Bend, the Brulés and Oglalas were wintering near the estuary of Bad River and the Saones near the estuary of Cheyenne River. In 1804 the Brulés were crossing the Missouri, while the Yanktons were now in possession of the old lands of the Brulés. These and the Oglalas met at the estuary of the Bad River. With the removal of the Arikaras from the estuary of Cheyenne River, the Minniconjous led the Saones up river to the top of it.

Around 1810 the Tetons sat in assembly and the Cheyennes with them, and raided a camp of Crows. Later, around 1820, they moved towards the west of the Powder River. In 1805 Zebulon Pike (January, 5, 1778-April, 27, 1813), an American military and explorer, known for having led the Pike Expedition, in which he

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cartographed a great part of Louisiana,¹⁸ found the Dakotas at Lake Pepin, a natural lake in the city of St. Paul where he met, firstly, Redwing and later Little Crow, with whom he made a treaty. In this the M'dewankantons, whose chief was Little Crow and who were living at Kaposia, a city near the Mississippi River and the state of Wisconsin, nowadays St Paul, gave the United States nine square miles. In the spring of that year Zebulon Pike held a council at the falls with the Sisseton.

From 1800 to 1825 the Tetons hunted to the east of the Black Hills, with the Saones near to Cheyenne River and the Cheyennes, a tribe of the Algonquian family living in the Plains country, whose first news dates from 1680. They had been farmers, growing corn, beans and squashes and later became hunters. Curtis assures us that they were enemies of the Sioux; however in the Battle of Little Bighorn they were on the Sioux side.¹⁹ The Sioux appeared for the first time on the upper Platte in 1815, accompanied by the Cheyennes, who had the idea of making them sign peace with the Kiowas, but their idea did not work. During this time, the Oglalas wandered between the Black Hills and the estuary of the Bad River, going together with the Brulés and Saones on some occasions, on others camping near Bear Butte, a geological feature in South Dakota important for the Sioux and Cheyennes, and more specifically at its estuary. In 1811 the Brulés, Yanktons and Miniconjous were near the Great Bend, below it, and the Oglalas in the upper part of the Cheyenne River together with the Saones.

¹⁸ He wrote *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike to the Headwaters of the Mississippi river, through Louisiana Territory, and in New Spain, during the Years 1805-6-7*. Philadelphia: C & A Conrad. 1810

¹⁹ Curtis 1911 89

When the Arikaras left the Grand River, the Tetons, who were in a great proportion Hunkpapas and Sicasapas, could advance from the east bank of the Missouri to the west one and settled between Cannonball, in North Dakota, and the Cheyenne River. In 1819 Colonel Henry Leavenworth stationed a military post at the estuary of the Minnesota. In his way from Prairie du Chien, (located in the confluence of the rivers Wisconsin and Mississippi, in the frontier between the states of Wisconsin and Minnesota. and owing its name to the Crow chief *Alim, Chien* in French), to the estuary of the Minnesota was with him Forsyth, who met Wapasha and a son of Redwing. On the 24th of July four bands of Sioux coming from the upper part of the Minnesota River (Peneshon, The Arrow, Shakopee and The White Bustard) met them and some goods were distributed among them. The following spring he tried to make the Sioux of that part make peace with the Chippewas. In 1822 there was a terrible war between the Trans-Missouri Indians, that is to say, the Tetons and the Cheyennes on one side, against the Crows, Rees (abbreviation of the name "Arikaras"), and Mandans on the other. The Tetons and Cheyennes defeated the Crows, Rees and Mandans in such a way that they never recovered completely, consequently the Tetons' territory became larger, spreading to the Big Horn, a river in Montana that goes to the Bighorn Lake, and the Yellowstone from the Little Missouri, a river in North Dakota running through the Badlands.

Now the Columbia Fur Company, founded by the employees dismissed from the Hudson's Bay Company and North West Company when these two merged, and

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the American Fur Company, founded by John Jacob Astor on the 8th of April 1808,²⁰ built several forts: the former at the estuary of James River, in Dakota: Fort Tecumseh, established in 1822 to be used by the Columbia Fur Company as a trading Post. In 1827 it was sold to the American Fur Company and abandoned in 1832. Also the Missouri Fur Company, founded in 1809 and dissolved in 1830, after having had several names,²¹ built another one, Fort Recovery, started in 1793 and finished in 1794 under the orders of General Anthony Wayne. In 1823, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company went into the region with the construction of a new one, Fort Brasseur, at the estuary of the White River, which runs through the Badlands. In the year 1825 the Hunkpapas, Two Kettles and Sicasas were on the west bank of the Missouri River. In this year, a division of the territory was made in the treaty signed at Prairie du Chien, in Wisconsin, near the rivers Wisconsin and Kickapoo. "The Yanktons not being present, the portion of the line from Des Moines to the Missouri was not to be considered as settled until the Yanktons consented to it" (Robinson 1967 144). And also: "The eastern boundary of the Dakotas territory is described in the same section as beginning at the mouth of the Upper Iowa, extending across to a point two or three miles from the east bank of the Mississippi and follows the bluffs north, crossing Badaxe River to the mouth of the Black River and thence to the point on Chippewa River, a half day's march below the falls" (Robinson 1967 145).

²⁰ For further information, see Chittenden, Hiram Martin *The American Fur Trade of the Far West*, New York: Francis P. Harper. 1902.

²¹ For further information, see Sunder, John E. *Joshua Pilcher: Fur Trader and Indian Agent*, Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press. 1968.

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At this time, the white traders, having found a fur-hunting paradise in the Rocky Mountains and near the Powder River, tried to make the Oglalas move from the Black Hills to the Platte. In 1828 the Wahpekutes settled on the Cannon River, in Minnesota,²² and it is known that the Cut Heads, the band of chief Waneta, a chief of the Yanktonais, who became important in the 1812 war, were living near Elm River. As the limit between the Dakotas and the Sacs and Foxes had presented problems, the Indian Department proposed in 1830 a new division, for which reason they assembled the Indians with the intention of securing a strip of land which became a frontier between the Dakotas and the Sac and Foxes.²³ This proposal was accepted, and after the usual negotiations, the Dakotas agreed to renounce a strip of twenty miles in favour of the government and the Sac and Foxes ceded a similar strip of land. Both of these united were known as the neutral belt, which spread from the Missouri to the Mississippi.

The Dakotas, and more specifically the Minniconjous of One Horn, were somewhere near the Niobrarah,²⁴ when George Catlin,²⁵ (July, 26, 1796-December 23, 1872) the American painter, famous for his watercolours of the Indians, among them the portraits of the Seminole chief Osceola, the Sioux warriors Little Bear, Steep Wind and Dog, also a Sioux Scalp Dance and who also portrayed Lewis and Clark, arrived on the Yellowstone, a steamboat, an event which happened on the 22th of May, 1832. His watercolours became an important event for the Sioux, who

²² Robinson 1967 161

²³ Robinson 1967 162

²⁴ A river in Nebraska.

²⁵ He is the author of a book called *Letters and Notes on the Manner; Customs and Conditions of the North American Indians*, (2 volumes). Edinburgh. 1926. Also the book *Indian Art in Pipestone*. (Eweers J. G. de.) Washington D. C. 1979.

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celebrated his presence giving a Dog Feast, a celebration in which the people ate dog, cooked in his honour. The Minniconjous chief, One Horn, presided the celebration. Campbell was the one who decided to induce the Oglalas to move from the Black Hills to the south. Between 1827 and 1829 the Cheyennes and Arapahoes had been persuaded by the Bent Brothers to leave the Black Hills and move south to the Platte.

Around the year 1834 Kiplin and Sabille were sent to Bull Bear (chief of the Kiyuksa band, who in time had become head-chief of the Oglalas), in order to induce them to leave the Black Hills and go to the Platte with a hundred lodges. In 1834 the Oglalas appeared on the Platte under the leadership of Bull Bear. As it seems that in in this year the Oglalas had two hundred lodges, obviously the other hundred lodges stayed in the Black Hills. Some of the ones living in the Black Hills later migrated to the Missouri. The Cheyennes and Arapahoes claimed these lands that now the Oglalas were occupying, because they were Cheyenne and Arapaho territory, though many of the bands of these tribes had gone to the River Arkansas. A battle between the Cheyennes and the Pawnees, a tribe of the Caddo family who, in the seventeenth century were inhabiting the center of Nebraska, the so called "Medicine Arrow Fight" called the attention of these two tribes, while the Oglalas, moving into the Platte, raided the Pawnees when going in their half-yearly buffalo hunts. Discouraged by the Brulés, the Pawnees left Loup Fork, in Nebraska, and went to the south of the Platte where they built a new camp. The United States delayed some years, but finally forced the Pawnees to go back to Loup Fork.

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The Dakotas were on the Mississippi in 1835, because in this year Catlin, who was among the Dakotas, painting the portraits of Wapasha, Walking Buffalo and Little Crow was visiting the Mississippi.²⁶ This was the year of the establishment of the Protestant missions, one of them by Dr Williamson “on the north side of the Minnesota near the lake²⁷”, while Rev. Stevens settled at Winona, where Wapasha’s band was, and Mr. G. H. Pond became a farmer for the band near Lake Calhoun. The three of them tried to put the Dakota Language in black and white. The Indians of Dr Williamson’s mission belonged to the Wahpeton band. 1836 was the year in which Mr. Gavin settled at Trempealeau, a city in Wisconsin on the shores of the Mississippi River, with Wapasha’s band and the Dentons at Redwing.

In 1837-8 a feud was maintained between the Oglalas and the Pawnees, due to the continual attacks of both tribes on each other. This feud was ended with the death of 80 Pawnees, a high number for a war between Indian tribes. It was in 1839 that some bands of Oglalas, among them the Bull Bear’s band, went downwards from the Laramie Fork to the Laramie Plains, while other bands of Oglalas, among them the Smoke band, occupied the Laramie Fork. At this moment the Crows were living in Bighorn Country, and sometimes attacked the Oglalas and Cheyennes. In 1839 a band of Wahpetons were living at Lac qui Parle, in Minnesota, and another one of Yanktons near Fort Pierre.

In 1840, with the traders, the Oglalas and Brulés demoralized and liquor entering the camps in great quantities, it was habitual to find a Sioux warrior killed by a fellow tribesman, something unusual at other moments, to the extent that when the

²⁶ Robinson 1967 171

²⁷ Ibid. 173

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government of the United States sent a special agent to stop this situation, he followed the trail to the Black Hills, camp by camp, marked by the Sioux dead with signs of liquor. It was at this time that the struggle between Smoke, chief of the Teton Hunkaptila, and Bull Bear, the only son of Stone Knife, who led the Kiyuksa band, reached the point of a public fight with the killing of one of Smoke's horses by Bull Bear. The former did not say a word, but his followers (among whom was Red Cloud, at this time very young) were waiting for an opportunity, which took place in 1841, and so Bull Bear was killed, and some say that Red Cloud was the author. The real facts are that Little Wound (Ca. 1835-1899), chief of the Southern Oglalas, who apparently was a son of Bull Bear and later became chief of the Bear people, hated Red Cloud for having killed his father. Also Yellow Lodge, Red Cloud's brother, was killed. This year, there was one band, at least, of Wahpekutes at Fort Ridgely and another one, this one of Wahpetons, at Lac Qui Parle. This last one was still there in 1845. After the death of Bull Bear new emigrants went into America.

The Oglalas felt uncomfortable with these newcomers. Moreover, they realized that the new emigrants were destroying the Platte Valley and making it a territory where the Indians were considered strangers. This year, also the Cheyennes and Oglalas, located near Independence Rock, on the Sweetwater, river crossing the Rocky Mountains, were considering an attack on the emigrants. In 1842, the Oglalas, Cheyennes and Arapahoes were going towards the North Platte in order to clean the Sweetwater of traders. At this time of History, some of the Oglalas can be found near Fort John, while some Minniconjous and Brulés were in the Black

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Hills and Whirlwind's people, the Kiyuksa band, previously led by Bull Bear, were in the Laramie Plains. In 1847, the Mormons reached the capital of Utah, Salt Lake City, where the gold seekers arrived two years later. About this time, cholera appeared in America. In 1851 the Indians were informed of the council that was going to take place in the Upper Platte, but they did not seem very interested. In 1853 a great assembly of Cheyennes and Sioux took place near Fort Laramie, in which there was trouble and the Indians and the U.S. Army were involved. Some time later, on September 10th, agent Fitzpatrick came and had a council with the Indians about the amendments to the 1851 treaty, but the Sioux chiefs did not want to hear anything about it.

In those days, the U.S. Army had an interpreter that the Indians did not like because he was continually bullying them, the same as also other soldiers, among them lieutenant John Grattan, who had just come out from West Point. This man, who was usually provoking the Sioux, had his opportunity in the summer of 1854, when a Minniconjou shot a cow of a Mormon caravan crossing a Brulé camp. This fact was reported to the Whites, the Sioux apologized, but the Mormons did not want to accept those apologies. The 19th of August, Lieutenant Grattan went to the camp of Brave Bear, one of the principal men of the Bad Faces, a band of the Sioux tribe, to arrest the Indian who had killed the cow and put his forces in line. The Indian chief tried to persuade the warrior to accept being arrested, but he did not want to surrender to the Whites. Grattan fired and Brave Bear gave the order not to shoot back, but the lieutenant fired again and the Sioux chief fell dead, so the Indians shot, which made all Grattan's men fall. The small number who could

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survive did not last long, for they were killed a little later by the Indians. Red Cloud did not take the leading part in the killing, but he was present in it and joined those Oglalas, who started an exodus because they did not want to remain slaves of the Whites. In October, this band of Indians seems to have been north of the Platte, trying to induce others to take revenge on the Whites.

When the next Indian Agent, Thomas Twiss (abt. 1807-1871), a West Point Graduate and Indian agent, who had charge of the Oglalas and Brulés of the Upper Platte, took possession of his charge in 1855, he made all the "friendlies" move to the south part of the North Platte River, though he later changed his mind and welcomed them onto a tributary of the Laramie Fork. By the time Harney arrived at this village, Twiss had gathered 400 lodges. Harney attacked and devastated the village, killing 68 people. In 1857 a great council took place to the north of the Black Hills. In this year and the previous one the lands along the Missouri River were settled and the Sioux induced to sell their lands and to go to the reservations; subsequently the Yanktons sold them, which enraged the Tetons. The Platte had, then, become a place of suffering where the Sioux Oglalas could only live under the dominance of the Whites, but neither the Oglalas nor the Brulés wanted this situation to continue. A short time after 1854 the groups of the Republican River joined the southern Cheyennes and went together as far as the Arkansas. At a certain moment the Smoke People turned to the north, settling on the lands of the Cheyenne River, in the south fork, while a small group of Oglalas (very much joined to the Whites) remained near Fort Laramie.

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At the time they moved to the Republican Fork, the people of the Oglala Bear took possession of the Pawnee lands, which led to them being raided by this tribe, and the Oglalas retaliated. When Smoke's band started to go northwards, which happened about 1855, the Black Hills region was full of Sioux, who had set eyes on the Powder River (a tributary of the Yellowstone, which runs through Montana and Wyoming and in its running passes through the Bighorn Mountains), and Bighorn countries, which were Crow territory, even while the Sioux attacked constantly. In 1854 a part of the Crows was provoked to go to Fort Union, at the estuary of the Yellowstone, in search of annuities, being attacked by enemies, when they were on their way back home, killing a lot of people, so the next year they did not go and stood at the estuary of the Little Bighorn.

Captain W. F. Reynolds found the Crows at the estuary of the Little Bighorn in the summer of 1859, but later the same year they were forced to leave this place and settle north of the Yellowstone. Agent Twiss, who had taken possession of his charge in 1855, moved the agency (or "reservation," such as it would be later named) from Fort Laramie, located at the confluence of the North Platte River with the Laramie River, to Deer Creek, at the moment when Red Cloud left Fort Laramie. The Bad Faces moved to Powder River, though some remained nearby. In 1861 the agency was moved back to Fort Laramie and the Bear People Oglalas settled the Republican River. It was 1862 when a group of Santees, who were coming for refuge, appeared in the upper part of the Missouri River. These Santees divided into two: one part going northwards and the other part joining the Tetons at the west part of the Missouri River, a part of which tribe then, were involved in a

war they did not seek.

At this point it is necessary to explain the position and responsibilities of the figure called “shirt wearers,” one of whose most honoured members was Crazy Horse. McMurtry speaks about their responsibilities, saying: “Although he (Crazy Horse) was given the honor of being a shirt wearer, a position whose responsibilities he fulfilled as best he could by providing for the weak and helpless ones of the tribe...” (McMurtry 1999 8-9). Ambrose adds some interesting details, but the full account cannot be given here; however some fragments are inserted with the intention of illustrating that figure: “In the summer of 1865 the Oglalas decided to revive a governmental system that had fallen into disuse after they started hanging around the Holy Road. The system had been given to them early in the century by a great medicine-man who had learned it from the Blackfeet. It called for seven older leaders, men over forty, called the 'Big Bellies,' to act together as a chiefs' society” (Ambrose 1975 124).

The text continues telling the responsibilities the Big Bellies would exercise, such as advising and governing their people, and to execute their orders four strong young men might be selected. These were the “shirt-wearers.” Ambrose adds the obligations of these, saying that they worked as a police corps, adding that they might be wise and should counsel and advise, and only in extreme cases they were permitted to use force. George E. Hyde adds that the fact of being a shirt wearer does not imply being a chief. The men leading the Crazy Horse camp at the moment of the surrender in 1877 had this charge, the same as Crazy Horse, even not being a chief. Also He Dog and Little Big Man, who were leading the column,

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were shirt-wearers, despite the fact that they were not chiefs.

The coming of these White troops started the war in 1864. While some officers, like Major General S. R. Curtis, Brigadier General James Craig and Brigadier General Robert B. Mitchell were sending telegrams alerting the government of the danger the Indians supposed in those moments, the Indians continued their everyday life. After Irwin and Jackman were reported to have been chased off by the Cheyennes, Chivington followed them, with the final result of not finding more than horses and little more, while the Cheyennes affirmed that they had not chased off Irwin and Jackman, because it was no use for them. Approximately at this time General Curtis ordered General R. B. Mitchell to take the Indians to Camp Cottonwood. These Sioux were the southern groups of Oglalas and Little Thunder's and Spotted Tail's band, whose chiefs, who were extremely friendly, came to Camp Cottonwood thinking there would be a big council.

By the middle of the summer, there were some not very important raids along all the North Platte. In the South Platte, things were different and were not good for the Whites. As the U.S. Army could not stop the Indians, they had the idea of burning the grass in the Platte, more specifically on the south part of it. With the approach of Winter the roads were opened again, because it seemed that a great part of the Indians wanted peace; even so the Whites were not content and thought they had to punish the Indians for their past hostilities. General Curtis decided to do it, even though on some occasions the bands were not hostiles, but friendlies. This was the case of several Cheyennes who had travelled to Washington: Lean Bear, one of the three Cheyenne chief who were advocates for peace, was killed in

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May, 1864, when he went to shake hands with Lieutenant George Earye, the other two being White Antelope, first a scout and later a chief of the Cheyennes and Black Kettle, who was in the Sand Creek Massacre at the moment of the attack and escaped. These last two chiefs went near Fort Lyon, first called Fort Wise, with their men. There, Colonel Chivington and his men surprised them near Sand Creek, a territory in the State of Colorado, today located in Kiowas County. They escaped to Smoky Hill Fork, a branch of the Smoky Hill River, which runs through the States of Colorado and Kansas, where White Antelope was shot dead and Black Kettle was able to escape.

In late December the Indians went to Cherry Creek with 1200 warriors, where they attacked a wagon at Julesburg. On 7th, January, 1865 the Indian warriors killed fourteen soldiers and four civilians. Then, after the charge, the Indians moved northwards to White Butte Creek, while Black Kettle, who was still for peace, moved towards the Arkansas River. The Sioux decided to go northeast, the Cheyennes went northwest and the Arapahoes north, attacking the Whites and their positions. The village pitched their camp from Moore Creek up the Platte and started their way the 2nd of February towards the North Platte, after making a final visit to Camp Rankin, from where they went to Julesburg. At Mud Springs they had a skirmish with the Whites, in which they acquired some mules and horses, after which the Indians, going to Sand Hills, found that Colonel Collins made the Indians work to obtain the plunder, in which they failed, so they moved to the Black Hills.

In 1864 the Powder River Sioux hunted buffalo and raided the Crows. The agency of the upper Platte was at the east of Fort Laramie. When the Indian war started in

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summer, Colonel Collins protected Smoke's band from the emigrants, who were prone to shoot without thinking. This same year, the Tetons, who were north of the Platte, formed two groups: the southern one comprised the Oglalas of the Smoke band and a part of the Sans-Arcs and Minniconjous. They were associated to the Northern Arapahoes and Northern Cheyennes. In autumn the friendly Oglalas, who inhabited the upper part of the Powder River, were between the war of the Platte and the one in the Missouri. What the hostiles of the south told made the Powder River bands accept the pipe of war. The U.S. established two forts: one on the Yellowstone and the other on Powder River but, not suspecting anything, the Sioux went to camp in their usual places to hunt buffalo on Powder River and Little Powder River, and later went on a hunt on Tongue River, where a big council was held, in which attacking the Whites was considered. In this council Red Cloud and Young-Man-Afraid were present.

Red Cloud (1822-1909), the famous Sioux leader and protagonist of the war in defence of the Bozeman Trail, was born in the winter of 1822 in the country between the Missouri and the Black Hills. His father was Lone Man, chief of a band of Brulés, one of whose prominent members was Man-Afraid-of-His-Horse, the father of the warrior with the same name, born in the winter of 1814-15. According to Keating "He was born the winter the blazing star passed over the Sioux country" (Keating 1824 316) and was named Red Cloud due to the passage of a meteorite through the sky. It is interesting to notice here that other Indian warriors and chiefs, like Tecumseh, of the Shawnee tribe, were called like that due to the passing of a meteorite through the sky, which if true would give a very accurate date, for this

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fact seems to have occurred the night of 20th September, 1822 near the estuary of the Minnesota River. George E. Hyde speaks about the possibility that his name had been taken from a vision in which a buffalo and a red cloud appeared, and adds that this vision was painted on the tipi of Red Cloud's father. After having explained these theories Hyde thinks that there is no way to know which one of them was right.

He lived in the Fort Laramie district, in Smoke's Camp, since he was 12 and states that he was present at the Grattan Massacre. He was one the chiefs who went to Washington to meet the President, led the so-called "Red Cloud's war" that extended in time from 1866 to 1868, which consisted of the defence of the Bozeman Trail, the "Holy Road" for the Sioux. General P.E. Connor was still preparing to invade the country of the Powder River when a raid attacked the road west of Fort Laramie. Later that year, Colonel Moonlight pursued some fugitive Indians. In early June, different parties of Sioux and Cheyennes, among them Young-Man-Afraid, were preparing a large expedition. At that moment the Sioux were having their Sun Dance, after which they went up the Powder River. Among the main warriors in this expedition were Roman Nose, who signed the 1851 Treaty, Red Cloud and Young-Man-Afraid. About Roman Nose there is a certain confusion, in fact George E. Hyde says about him that he was a Brulé and later that he was an Oglala, however there is no doubt that he was a Sioux. He must not be confused with the Cheyenne warrior of the same name (ca. 1835-1868).

Near the city of Casper, in the state of Wyoming, in the Bighorn Mountains and near the Laramie Mountains, they attacked the U.S. Army on the 25th and 26th of

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July. Lieutenant Collins and four soldiers were killed. General Connor took part in this battle, settled at the head of Powder River, where he built a camp called "Camp Connor" later Fort Reno, located near Soda Springs, in 1863. In it the 3rd Regiment California Infantry was established. Connor went to Tongue River with the intention of attacking the Arapahoes who were on Medicine Man Camp as the Powder River hostiles were unaware of the danger. They became alarmed by the presence of a large wagon train going to Montana, first reported to their Indian chiefs, for which reason, Red Cloud and Dull Knife (Ca. 1810-1883) led a party and, consequently, these two chiefs negotiated with the Whites the withdrawal of the wagons, because these could disturb the buffaloes, but as soon as the Whites gave them a load of goods they retired, though another party of Indians, of which they knew nothing, attacked the Whites. In September, the Cheyennes went to the Black Hills to hunt buffalo and the Sioux remained near the estuary of the Powder River. Some days before this the Sitting Bull fight, in which this chief and 400 warriors fought the U.S. Army, took place.

In April 1864, Brigadier General Alfred Sully intended to attack Sitting Bull's band aided by Connor, but the latter lost his way and Sully only watched and planned a future attack. Meanwhile, peace was made with the Sioux and Father De Smet received the order to gather the Sioux chiefs, though he did not do it personally. These Sioux chiefs gathered in October, around the middle of the month and, after having been convinced and having signed and received presents, finished their council on the 28th, going back to their places. Unconsciously, the Whites included friendlies and hostiles in the peace treaty and said it had been established

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with all the Indians of the Plains, a copy of this treaty being sent to Fort Laramie, and its commander was instructed to make all the Indians sign. In time Big Mouth, born Bad Face, who deserted to join the Loafer band, and some Oglalas, signed the treaty.

The death of Spotted Tail's daughter at the beginning of 1866 was used by this Sioux chief to complain of the treatment the Whites had given to his people. The situation was now peculiar, for the peace commission reported that the treaty had been ratified by all the Sioux tribes and that only a few individuals had refused, when the reality was that the Whites did not dare enter Sioux territory. The news that the Montana Road was safe was absolutely false. Now Mr E. B. Taylor, an English anthropologist who adapted Darwin's theory, was appointed to deal with the Indians, but the real hostiles did not sign. Taylor deceived the Indians, telling them that no new way was going to be opened, but that the Bozeman Trail, promoted by John Bozeman, a corridor connecting Montana to the Oregon Trail to join Fort Laramie to Virginia City, was going to be used and soon a wagon train camped near Fort Laramie. He wanted to transmit the idea that most of the chiefs had signed the treaty and that Red Cloud, who had not done it, was a "nobody" among the Indian leaders, when he really was one of the main ones. On the 13th July Carrington started the construction of Fort Phil Kearney and later he sent a party to the Bighorn with the intention of building Fort C. F. Smith, but the soldiers seemed to have passed near the Tongue River, in Montana, a tributary of the Yellowstone River, which rises in the Bighorn Mountains, and the Sioux Indians now started to raid the wagons.

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Three men were employed to carry out peace negotiations: Jim Beckwith, Jim Bridges and Bill Williams. They contacted the Crows, who were in three camps: on Pryor's Fork, on Clark's Fork and near Fort C. F. Smith on the Bighorn River, but Carrington wanted Omaha and Winnebago Indians as scouts. Then the Sioux tried to make an alliance with the Crows and Red Cloud and Man Afraid visited the camps of this tribe, while in the meantime an invitation came from Fort Laramie to Young-Man-Afraid, but he did not agree to go there. Some Indian raids against the Whites took place in this period of time. In some of them, Red Cloud led the Sioux, while in others there is a difference of opinion among the informants, though some say that Crazy Horse led the party. In 1866 Captain Fetterman fought the Indians led by Crazy Horse and lost 81 men, while the Sioux lost 11, the Cheyennes 2 and the Arapahoes 1. Colonel H. W. Wessels succeeded Carrington, who invented a new version of the facts to justify himself. In 1867 Washington decided to offer the Sioux a new treaty, replacing the 1865 one. In this new treaty of 1868 the Sioux of Kansas and Nebraska were moved to Dakota, whilst the Bighorn and Powder River countries were recognized as Sioux and Cheyenne property, but the liberty to wander was not. Now the Sioux were forced to go to the Missouri Agency with the end of having them far from the Platte until the ending of the building of the railway. The friendlies of the Missouri River assembled at Grand River and Cheyenne River agencies, and others at Whetsome agency, whilst Spotted Tail and his followers were at White River. At this moment the Whites were combing the zone and chasing off the bands of Sioux and Cheyennes. Spotted Tail came to Washington, and also Red Cloud, who newly claimed that Fort Fetterman should be moved,

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leaving the country free, denounced the 1868 treaty and reaffirmed his position of not going to the Missouri, though later, after having left Washington, he agreed to live in an agency on the Big Cheyenne River, whose agent he could chose, after which he and his people drove the Crows, who had an agency of their own. In August more than 1000 Sioux and Cheyennes were reaching the Black Hills. Now the place of the agency was chosen to be at the west of Fort Laramie; it could not be otherwise, because the Whites would not permit it.

It was in the spring of the year 1871 when Mr. J. W. Wham was chosen as an agent for Red Cloud's people. He proposed to the Sioux an agency first north of the Platte, later to move to White River, where they first refused to go, but later they accepted, their territories being occupied by the Whites; later, he proposed the agency to be at Rawhide Butte, but they refused, though, after being deprived of their rations, they accepted. Wham was succeeded in 1872 by Dr. Daniels, who convinced the Oglalas to move to White River, which none of the chiefs wanted to hear about, but after having given presents to Red Dog because of the death of his son, this chief aided Dr. Daniels to remove to White River, which they were about to obtain when Red Cloud broke in and stopped the negotiations. Then the Whites were trying to take Sitting Bull and other chiefs to the agency. Dr Daniels was succeeded by J. J. Saville, who arrived when the agency was moving to a new place.

On the fourth of August the Sioux led Custer to a trap in the Rosebud, but the general attacked them and chased them off. The eighth of that month, Custer pursued the Sioux until two days later, when finally he fell into the trap and was

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defeated. The spring of 1874 was the moment in which Custer went to the Black Hills to check if there was gold, and in May of that same year the Sioux decided in a great council to let their men become farmers, which they had not permitted before. The flow of Whites to the Black Hills increased to the extent that some people of this tribe thought to sell. This matter was discussed by the Sioux of all bands and even by the council of the year 1875. The commission trying to reach an agreement with them tried to blame them for breaking the 1868 treaty, making them guilty for not self-supporting themselves by farming, though they did not know that was included in the treaty. In 1876 the Whites started to go into the Black Hills in large numbers, and demanded the protection of the government, which finally decided to threaten the Sioux. This year, they were also informed that by the 31st January they must be on their reservations. At this moment Sitting Bull was chief of the Sioux and Crazy Horse his second in command.

“Some year previous to this campaign, as it is said by the Sioux, Sitting Bull had been created head-chief or “generalissimo” of all the Tetons in a big ceremony on the Yellowstone River...Crazy Horse is said to have been present and to have been made Sitting Bull's 'second in command” (Hyde 1937 255). In May 1876 the hostiles moved to the Rosebud and, a little later, Crazy Horse and his men went to the Little Big Horn and then back to the Rosebud. When, after the 14th of June they went to the Little Bighorn there were Cheyennes and four bands of Sioux: Minniconjous, Sans-Arcs, Hunkpapas and Oglalas, though some people of the other bands were present. Gibbon, then, moved to the Yellowstone to collaborate with Terry, trying to chase Sitting Bull. At this moment the Sioux were having a Sun

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Dance, in which Sitting Bull had his famous vision of the U.S. officers falling dead. On June 16th Crook was discovered by a party of Cheyennes at the Rosebud. Crazy Horse was there as a simple warrior and Sitting Bull was also there, but badly injured because of the Sun Dance. General Terry went to the Powder River, and when in the Rosebud he received news from Major Reno about the hostiles, telling him that these had gone to the Little Bighorn. Now Terry, Custer and Gibbon held a conference; fearing that the hostiles could escape they divided their forces. Terry and Gibbon went to the Little Bighorn and would be there on June 26th. Custer, who went to the Rosebud, and from there to Little Bighorn, which he could not cross, instead of waiting, made a forced march and reached the Little Bighorn on June 24, twenty-four hours ahead of time. (Hyde 1937 267)

3 A SHORT HISTORY OF THE INDIAN FILMS

In the following sections, our methodology will be the following: we will narrate the stories told in the films, and when a film's narrative is shown to be at odds with reality, as told by verifiable sources such as reliable history books, we will point out the differences.

The first films about Indians are short documentaries (Benshoff and Griffin call them "Actualities") of short duration, showing unknown lands, such as the North Pole and its people, like *Nanook of the North* (1922), interesting events, such as the Ghost Dance, a sacred ritual of the Sioux that was the core of a new religion that caused trouble to the Whites. The Ghost Dance Religion was started by Wovoka, whose Christian name was Jack Wilson, by having being grown up by the Wilson family in a place near Pyramid Lake, in Nevada. At the time of the sun eclipse in 1889, when he was suffering a fever, fell asleep and dreamed of being taken to Heaven, where he saw God, who gave him powers:

Jack was a mild, kindly dispositioned fellow, very industrious and trustworthy, and held in high esteem by both Indians and Whites. He spoke the English language fairly well and possessed the rudiments of English education. At the time of the eclipse he claimed to have fallen asleep in the day time, and to have been taken up to heaven, where he saw God and all the people who had died long ago engaged in their old sports; all happy and forever young. It was a pleasant land and full of game. After showing him all, God told him he must go back to earth and tell his people they must be good and love one another, have no quarrelling and live in peace

with the Whites (Robinson 1967 459).

The text continues, telling that they must behave in a correct way to reunite with their friends in the other world, which will be a place of happiness, then Jack is given the instructions to fulfil the Ghost Dance and is said the times it must be made. He was also given powers over the elements, after which he returned to earth and began to preach as he was said. Soon the Paiutes obtained a great religious fervour and a little later all the tribes surrounding them. In a short time the news of the new religion went through the whole continent, reaching the Sioux in 1889. Robinson also speaks that the news of the rising religion reached the white men, but he does not say anything about how many letters Mr. W. Selwyn read, however it can be deduced that he could make an idea of the extension of the new faith.

The first knowledge of the Messiah craze reached the Sioux in the summer of 1889, by letters received at Pine Ridge from tribes in Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Dakota and Oklahoma. As these letters were sent to many Sioux who did not read, they were taken to William Selwyn to be interpreted to them, and therefore, knowledge of the movement soon came to the agency officials (Robinson 1967 460).

In the fall of this year, after this religion had had a great acceptance in the Pine Ridge Agency, a great council was celebrated to discuss the matter, in which some

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of the most prominent members of the reservation were present. The craze of the Messiah very much interested the Sioux living in the Pine Ridge Reservation, to the extent that a great council was held in order to discuss the subject. Many prominent chief warriors attended this council, among them American Horse (1840-1908), who was a shirt-wearer and the leader of the Loafer band of the Oglalas at Red Cloud Agency in 1876, who cooperated with the Army in order to disarm the hostiles, took part in Red Cloud's war and claimed he himself had killed Fetterman; also Little Wound and Man Afraid attended this council, all three of them defending the old traditions. However, it was decided to send a delegation to Pyramid Lake, so as to acquire more information about the new Messiah. In this delegation were included "Good Thunder, Flat Iron, Yellow Breast and Broken Arm from Pine Ridge, Short Bull and one other from Rosebud, and Kicking Bear from the Cheyenne River agency" (Robinson 1967 460).

It seems there is an obvious parallelism, even identification, between Jack and Jesus, his appearance as a Messiah being justified by the trying of punishing the Whites, even their extinction. All these warriors sent there as delegates believed in the existence of a man living near the Sierras who said to be the son of God and had been killed by the Whites, though there is no specific data about which race of Whites had killed him. They were also convinced that he was bearing on his body the signs of the crucifixion and that he had returned in order to punish the Whites for their evil conduct, especially against the Indians. It is to be considered that there were many men crucified by the Romans, who had this system as a habitual method to kill people: the fact of showing the scars from the crucifixion does not

mean he was the Messiah, but the account given by Robinson confirms Wovoka could believe in that possibility, for the sentence “Jesus is now upon earth” can be doubly interpreted, meaning that he knew about his presence or that he believed him to be Jesus.

The really important fact, though, was what the public listening to Wovoka thought. A part of the mission of this Wovoka seemed to be to wipe out the whites from the earth, the others being to resurrect the dead Indians, without specifying their tribe, bring the buffalo back, as well as the rest of the game and restore the supremacy of the Indian race.²⁸ Robinson qualifies this as an exaggerated report, but it is not clear which part was real and which part was invented. Supposedly, the one relating to Jack's biography is correct and the exaggeration must be that of the report the delegation of Sioux received, but the assertion is very ambiguous. Even if this is not real, it can be thought that that was what the Whites thought about the new religion. Whatever he thought, the words of Jack Wilson transmitted by Robinson assure that the former is full of gladness for the powers received and that he would send a cloud which would do the Indians feel good. He promised a new spirit and demanded they come back three months later, assuring there would be a great snow and rain, like there never had been before, demands from the Indians not to hurt anybody and always behave well. It also obliged them not to speak to the white people about it and added that Jesus, being in the earth would appear like a cloud and would revive the dead, also that sickness would end. But it also asks the Indians not to go into trouble with the Whites and not to be afraid when

²⁸ Robinson 1967 461

the new world will arrive, being also ordered to dance and have food.

After the delegates had returned and the council had been summoned, Selwyn, a Sioux warrior, reported to Major Gallagher, the Indian agent. As a consequence of that, three people, Good Thunder and two others, were arrested and imprisoned for a two-day term. Then, Red Cloud with all his followers adhered the new religion and “a great council was held on White Clay Creek, a few miles from Pine Ridge Agency, and the Ghost Dance was formally inaugurated.” (Robinson 1967 462) Robinson gives a minute account of the way the Indians felt psychologically, giving details about the shape and physical characteristics of the tipi in which the ceremony takes place. He also describes the way the dance might be celebrated until the exhaustion of the dancers, who in that state had visions and dreams. This act of falling into trances or having visions or dreams and talking with ghosts in that state must have been the reason why the Whites gave the new religion the name of Ghost Dance. It must be remarked here that many leaders desired and preached the coming of this Messiah, for they wanted the sweeping away of the Whites and the devolution of the country to the Indian race. The rituals of this religion were spied by the government and with the help of some Indian co-operators, who warned the Whites of a possible massacre, as also due to the excitement it produced among the Sioux, the Ghost Dance Religion was ended with the Wounded Knee Massacre.

The most prominent short film about this matter is *Sioux Ghost Dance* (1894) about 21 seconds long. *Buffalo Dance* (1902), lasting about 29 seconds, depicts one of the other rituals that were proper of the Indian Nations. Other films of this type are

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Indian War Council (1898), which shows Buffalo Bill addressing a group of real Sioux Indians deliberating or *Procession of Mounted Indians and Cowboys* (1898), in which a group of Indians and cowboys mounted on horseback can be seen going along the corner of Broadway and Colfax Avenue among other places. Born in Le Claire, Iowa, William Frederick Cody "Buffalo Bill", lived some years in Canada and later moved with his family to Kansas. He won his name supplying bison meat to the Kansas Pacific Railroad, but also competing with Comstock in a buffalo-shooting match for the use of the nickname. He killed 4280 bison in eighteen months, was American soldier, trapper, pony express rider, stagecoach driver and showman, with the Wild West Show, in which Sitting Bull took part. According to his representation in the films *Astre and Hoareau* (1975) affirm that he was the last hero of the West, a time before the disappearance of the frontier. They call him the conscious inheritor of the Boones and the Carsons, without specifying who those Boones and Carsons were. They also add that he had worked as a military scout, that he had been described as a legend, that his figure had travelled from the ten-cent stories to the theatre melodramas. For all those reasons, he had become a symbol. Apart from the film *The Plainsman* (1936) and the *Parade of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show* (1898) there are other low category films about him.

One of the most well-known films dealing with Indian theme and officially declared as the first one about the Indians, despite the fact that it was not, is the silent film with subtitles *Nanook of the North* (1922), which shows the customs of the Inuit people, among which one of the most cited is the hunting of a seal. Its director, Flaherty, was accused of manipulating the Inuit to make the film portray some

customs of the natives that did not exist any longer at that time. Robert Joseph Flaherty (1884-1951) was the director and producer of *Nanook of the North* (1922). He was a mining engineer, but his own boss in the exploration of iron mines told him to shoot some images of the people in that area, which made him become interested in the Inuit. He stopped his work as an engineer to devote himself to shooting the Inuit, but he was being asked more and more images. *Nanook of the North* (1922) would be very successful, which would allow him to acquire a contract with Paramount studios.²⁹

Another film was *Land of the Head Hunters* (1914), this time made by the photographer Edward Sheriff Curtis, who wrote the series of books *The North American Indian*, about the Indians of North America and Canada in 20 volumes, was born in Wisconsin in 1868 and grew in a region surrounded by Indians. He was 22 when the Wounded Knee Massacre happened. He started very soon to experiment with a camera made by himself. After his father's death, he dedicated himself to photography, settling in Seattle in the year 1891, firstly becoming known for his studio photos and also for the countryside. Princess Angeline, daughter of chief Sealth (the origin of Seattle), was one of his first Indian models. In 1899 he became the official photographer of the Harriman expedition, in which he met George Bird Grinnell. Provided with funds by J. P. Morgan, he took photographs of many Indian tribes, with which he lived, from 1900 to 1906.

²⁹ For a further reading about this theme see Everson, William K. *American Silent Film*. Da Capo Press. 1988.

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The North American Indian was a series of books in twenty volumes, with 1500 photographs. Due to his obsession with photographing the Indians he had to divorce and went to live with his daughter, Beth. Around 1922 he went to Los Angeles, where he opened a new studio, but he also worked for Cecil B. De Mille as a cameraman. He died in 1952. *Land of the Head Hunters* (1914) is a documentary about the Haida, a people of the Nadene family living in the North Pacific Coast, and is the first one about Indians, due to the fact that *Nanook of the North* dates of 1922. Both of them are silent. Many years before the Disney version Edwin Porter (1870-1941), a film director who worked for the Thomas Edison Studio and was the author of *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) directed *Pocahontas: A Child of the Forest* (1908).

The documentaries were succeeded by Narrative Films, among them a brief one, *The Great Train Robbery* (1903), considered the first Western. It tells the story of a bunch of robbers who, after having knocked out the man at the railway station and stolen the money transported by the train, are caught by a group of people who chase them through the wood. Others think the first western to be *Parade of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show* (1898), which shows a group of Indians and cowboys passing along the road. The first films show a scarce presence of Indians, but here they were not considered only as heathens, such as in *Hiawatha* (1910), based on the poem by Henry Longfellow (1807-1882), the American poet and writer, whose only interest for the Indian Studies is *The Song of Hiawatha*, which tells the story of the Ojibway Indian of the same name who is on a visit to the Dakota Nation and falls in love with Minehaha. Their love story is interrupted by a war between the two

tribes. Unfortunately the film is considered lost.

Possibly one of the best known Indians, together with Crazy Horse, Geronimo or Pocahontas is Hiawatha, the mythical leader of the Ojibway and the promoter of the Five Nations Confederacy, these being the Mohawk, Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga and Oneida. He must have lived in 1400 or 1500. He preached a new way between the tribes, but this brotherhood did not necessarily meant peace for all. Someone considers him to be a fanatic. At first the people was hostile to him, not wanting to consider his proposals, for the Indians always lived in absolute freedom in a continent where every group was independent from the other, so the ideas of Hiawatha were at first rejected, until the point that, due to insistence, he was banished of the tribe, going to live with a more tolerant one, until finally the five tribes agreed to form a federation. The system ideated by Hiawatha was an unwritten constitution, admired by the Whites, which permitted the election of a kind of parliament, in which the vote was by tribes and the disputes were arbitrated. In time the Tuscarora entered this group and the alliance became known as the "Six Nations." Concerning Representation it has to be noticed here that the legends on which the poem is based are stories of the Chippewa, contrarily to what Longfellow believed, who supposed that those stories formed part of the traditions of the Iroquois people, confounding the names, due to their coincidence.

A Squaw's Love (1911), dealing with the love story of Wild Flower and Gray Fox, and *Indian Justice* (1911) belong to a genre called Indian story. Some films of this type were written by Native Americans and, sometimes, directed as it is the case of James Young Deer (1876-1946), born in Dakota City, who in his films deals with

relations between Whites and Indians. He was a member of the Winnebago tribe, started working in the entertainment in 1890, performing as a cowboy for the Barnum and Bailey Circus and also for Miller Brothers, married Lilian St Cyr, who also was of the same tribe as him. He began acting and directing in 1909 for different companies, such as Kalem, Lubin, Vitagraph and Biograph. His films were considered as early westerns, without the later clichés of the bad Indian. His main films are: *Young Deer's Bravery* (1909), *Red Wing's Gratitude* (1909), *The True Heart of an Indian* (1909), *Young Deer's Return* (1910), *The Red Girl and the Child* (1910), *The Indian and the Cowgirl* (1910), *Young Deer's Gratitude* (1910), *Little Dove's Romance* (1911), *Red Deer's Devotion* (1911), *The Unwilling Bride* (1912) as an actor. *The Falling Arrow* (1909), *Red Wing's Gratitude* (1909), *White Fawn's Devotion* (1910), *The Red Girl and the Child* (1910), *A Cheyenne Brave* (1910), *An Indian's Gratitude* (1910), *The Yaqui Girl* (1910), *Red Deer's Devotion* (1911), *The Squaw Man's Sweetheart* (1912), *The Savage* (1913), as a director. "His films dealt with relations between Native Americans and Whites in a more complex manner than most classic Westerns". (Benshoff and Griffin 2004 101)

These first years, the Indians are not the villains of the Westerns. In fact, in some of them, such as *An Indian's Gratitude* (1910) or *Red Wing's Gratitude* (1909) the Indians impersonate a positive part. "The same Indian has certain mildness. At the beginning they appear as frequently as the white Man: less individualized, however, than the cowboy, nearer the simple symbol, he is presented in these first years of the genre impregnated of a poetic, sometimes tragic aura" (Astre and Hoarau 1975 158) (My translation). Other films that dealt with Native American

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treating them like persons and not only heathens are *Indian Justice* (1911) and *A Squaw's Love* (1911). In these years the soul of the Indian fascinates the Whites, such as in the case of *Red Man's View* (1909), which speaks about the leaving of an Indian village due to the pressure of white settlers, who make an Indian girl separate from her love. The film is very short, about 14 minutes, and shows some characteristics of Westerns: the journey of the Indians, the burial of a warrior (the chief, in this case), the tipis, the clothes. The characters are very simple and the action is minimal. Directed by D. W. Griffith, its Indian roles are played by white actors. *An Indian Wife's Devotion* (1909) is another example of this fascination.

As with the Actualities, the Indian Story genre created an exotic world, misrepresenting Indians in order to appeal to a more numerous audience, but it showed a sympathetic attitude towards them, as against the normal Hollywood Western, in which attacks by the Indians on the White camps are frequent and the soldiers are the saviours, with their horses galloping and their arms firing. The bugles of the U.S. Army are contrary to and frequently opposed to the Indian drumming. Whereas the former indicates saving of the White characters the latter is always ominous, an example of this being *Battle at Elderbush Gulch* (1913).

In the middle of the 1910's, when the formation of the Western was complete it had become so popular as to eclipse the Indian Story genre, with the action centred on white cowboys. In this way the Native Americans lost all possibility to be both writers and directors, and the only film job they could do was to play small stereotyped roles, while the Red-face characters were played by White actors, which is an obvious fault of coherence, for race was erroneously depicted. It is

here when the stereotype of the Hollywood Indian becomes fixed, and the dress the Prairie Indians use becomes generalised, being sometimes inappropriately utilized, though it is surprising the great many of occasions in which the dress used by the tribes is well represented. The customs of the Native Americans were also stereotyped, such as for instance the custom of smoking a peace pipe while the war pipe is ignored, though in the books of history about Indians are rather well attested. Another stereotyped custom, though rather well depicted, is the use of a tipi and a bow, for people as the Inuit use igloos and the Apaches wickiups. These Customs represent many of the Native American peoples, though there are films in which they are used in erroneous ways. In these years Cecil B. De Mille made two versions (he would do three of this film) of *The Squaw Man*, the one of 1914 and 1918. It is curious to think that, when in the 1914 version there is a Native American actor, Red Wing, in the 1918 version there is no one.

The Western became popular in the 1920's and 1930's, creating various subgenres. There were epic westerns, such as *The Iron Horse* (1924), which tells the Transcontinental Railroad story, which counted with 800 Indians and 1.300 Buffaloes, and *Tumbleweed* (1953), which tells the story of Jim Harvey, a guard on a train who saves the life of Tiger, a Yaquiwarrior, and is tortured by his father Aguila after the robbery of a train. In the thirties it was given little importance, until in 1939 John Ford (1894-1973), the American director and producer, gave a new life to the genre with *The Stagecoach* (1939). Though he is a reference in the related to western, he only made three films about Indians: *Fort Apache* (1948), *She wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949) and *Cheyenne Autumn* (1964).

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With the breaking in of the sound in the Cinema in 1927 the western soon became seduced by the sound and its possibilities. It was this year that a certain decrease of the genre starts, coinciding also with the deed of Lindbergh and his crossing of the ocean in the *Spirit of St Louis*. The Great Depression was another factor of the crisis of the Western genre, crisis that did not affect the Cinema industry directly, but the makings of Westerns, for more Musical Comedies were produced. However with the advance of the decade it became evident that the producers could risk making more Westerns, but the vision towards the Indians changed due to the fact that Native Americans were considered American citizens from 1924 on. In this way the figure of the Indian becomes more valued.

In the golden age of Hollywood the Western myths were not very much elaborated, being more important in them the meaning than the reality, so they were stereotypes, containing a great many of characteristics that could and were not, in fact, real, but that work out on the screen. In these years, when the Metro Goldwin Mayer was controlled by Louis Mayer and the Warner by Harry B. and Jack Warner, the films were produced with a great fastness, so in the years going from 1930 to 1939 Michael Curtiz (1888-1962), who was born in Hungary as Mihaly Kertesz and was one of the grand protagonists in the revival of the Western, made 44 films and John Ford 26, accordingly quality decreased making the films suffer. Only Paramount, a little more worried for the art, produced epic films about Indians. De Mille entered it after having made the third version of *The Squaw Man* (1931), in which he tells the story of a man who goes to the west, joins an Indian girl and the love story between them. This third version, based on the 1905 play of the

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same name, and rewritten as a novel, is sound. Besides it there are some other films such as *The Red Riders* (1934), *The Plainsman* (1936), in which the problem of selling rifles to the Indians is dealt, in this case bought by the Cheyennes. Here is Wild Bill Hickok who finds a guide dead when he is travelling with William Frederick Cody and his wife in a stagecoach. Hickok finds Custer and Buffalo Bill, while the Cheyennes kidnap Calamity Jane, the American explorer, who served in the United States Army, under Crook's command, worked as a prostitute for Dora Dufran and took part in the Wild West Show. In the 1940's there are some films such as *Geronimo* (1940), in which the role of the Apache chief is interpreted by Chief Thundercloud, or *The Valley of the Sun* (1942), in which the great Apache chief appears. The film is about the problem of favouring Indians. After having been court-martialled for having helped the Indians, Johnny Wares, escapes and finds himself in the desert, where he meets Christine Larson, who is about to marry an evil Indian agent. Other films of these years are *They Died with Their Boots On* (1941), which will be analysed later, *The Last of the Redmen* (1947) and *Fort Apache* (1948).

After the WWII the films about social problems became popular, for which reason Hollywood started to treat Indians more respectfully, producing films such as *Jim Thorpe, All American* (1951), in which the life of Jim Thorpe, (1888-1953), one of the most versatile athletes, besides earning Olympic Gold medals in Pentathlon and Decathlon and playing American Football, Baseball and Basketball, who was a member of the Sac and Fox Nation, is told. In this film Jim Thorpe was impersonated by Burt Lancaster, and his coacher "Pop" Warner by Charles

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Bickford. Of these social problem films there are two important ones *Devil's Doorway* (1950) and *Broken Arrow* (1950), both of them trying to dignify the Indian. In the first, which goes against racism, Jeff is an Indian who has been assimilated to the White culture. The second deals with the story of Tom Jefford, who falls in love with and marries an Apache girl called Morning Star, their marriage ending in tragedy. The main roles were played by white stars Jimmy Stewart, Jeff Chandler and Debra Paget, however it must be understood that the film tried to depict Apache culture correctly. Other film in which the Apache culture appears is *Indian Uprising* (1952) and another white actor impersonating an Indian was Robert Taylor, who starred *Devil's doorway* (1950), telling the story of a Shoshone who reaches the degree of Sergeant. In the 1950's and 1960's Westerns became more complex, some of them criticizing racism, as it is the case of *The Searchers* (1964), in which the character played by John Wayne is blind even to his relatives due to the hatred he feels toward Indians and for that reason he almost kills his niece.

Another important director is Bud Boetticher. Born in Chicago, Illinois, on July, 29th, 1916, at his first moments in the cinema he directed *The Wolf Hunters* (1949), dealing with the robbery of some furs and the murder of the trappers. In it the mounted police are aided by an Indian called Minnetaki. Boetticher joined the Universal, where he directed *The Cimarron Kid* (1952), telling the story of Bill Doolin", The Cimarron Kid", who after a false accusation joins the Dalton Gang, and tries to escape to South America, though he is finally caught and put into jail. *Bronco Buster* (1952), about rodeo life, tells the story of a rodeo rider who takes an apprentice; *Horizons West* (1952), speaks about two brothers who end in opposite

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bands in the civil war. In *Seminole* (1953), after having been charged with the murder of a sentry, Lieutenant Caldwell tells the story of the peace between the Seminoles and the settlers, and how Osceola, their chief, is caught and imprisoned. He also directed *The Man from the Alamo* (1953), and *Wings of the Hawk* (1953) and some years later *Seven Men from Now* (1956) for the Warner. The series he shot with Randolph Scott were started by *The Tall T* (1957). Later he made *Decision at Sundown* (1957), *Buchanan Rides Alone* (1958) and *Comanche Station* (1960), in which a man's wife is caught by the Comanches, but he frees the wife of another man. When he is taking her home, he meets three outlaws and protects the girl from them, as also from the Comanches. As author of the film called *Seminole* (1953), in which the U. S. Army is put in trouble by the Indians, he shows the military paranoia, and defends the mixture between races. It has a very similar stage to that of *Distant Drums* (1951), which is not very strange thinking that both of them speak about the Seminoles. Bud Boetticher is also director of *Comanche Station* (1960) in which Randolph Scott, surrounded by Indians, dismounts and invites them to choose for his goods. In this film a man offers a reward for the recovery of his wife, who has been kidnapped by the Comanches, a tribe of the Uto-Aztecan family, living in Oklahoma, the point being about why he has not gone in search of her.

In the 1960's the action of the American Indian Movement made Hollywood realize that the stupid Indian was not a fitting stereotype for that moment and so they displaced the violence focused on Native Americans against Mexicans and the situation continued changing, for Indian life started to be seen as harmonious,

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spiritual and full of value. This changed the image of good guys and bad guys. In 1964 John Ford shot a film called *Cheyenne Autumn* (1964), in which he tried to defend Indian rights. Here Ford deals with the problem of not delivering the due supplies to the tribes, in this case the Cheyennes. In this film, in which Dull Knife, Red Shirt and Little Wolf appear, the Cheyenne Nation escapes from the Oklahoma reservation.

Dull Knife (1810-1883) was a great Cheyenne chief, who in 1865 allied with Red Cloud and in 1866 signed the Fort Laramie Treaty. He died in Rosebud Reservation in 1883. Little Wolf (1820-1904) was a prominent chief of the Northern Cheyennes and a great strategist, who led the "Elk Horn Scrapers", a group of warriors, fought in Red Cloud's War, and signed the Fort Laramie Treaty. It is important to notice that he was not present at the battle of Little Bighorn. He was a leader, always ahead of his men, leading them, not permitting anyone to be ahead of him, consequently he always counted the first coup. One of his main characteristics was that he always made a plan for the battle, was always giving instructions and words of encouragement to his men. He always thought of the battle as a whole, having a great ability to plan a battle, trying to think about any contingency, which made him a great general and organizer. In the middle of the action reproaches were made to a warrior for having proposed another course of action, reprimanding him for having interfered with his plans.

In the 1970's the Western became more pro-Native Americans, being of the most prominent films in this period is *Little Big Man* (1970), telling the life of a white man who becomes a Cheyenne warrior after his father and mother have been wiped out

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by the Pawnees and later he and his sister kidnapped by the Cheyennes. The film shows both cultures, the White and the Cheyenne. With the excuse of the character played by Dustin Hoffman the film goes from a society to another. It is important to signal here that the film shows Chief Dan George, obviously a Native American, in a prominent role.

The other important film in this year is *A Man Called Horse* (1970), starring Richard Harris as the protagonist, which tries to be a faithful representation of the Sioux Culture. In it the English character, a lord who was spending a season in America is caught by a band of the Sioux tribe and treated as a horse, due to his difference, but in time he rebels with success, is taught the Sioux culture and learns to accept it as his own, becoming a member and after a time their chief. In the 1980's and 1990's the Western genre decreased, because of the new attitudes towards the Indians, who were not thought of an obstruction anymore with the society starting to feel respect for them, so a new figure emerged related to Native Americans: the good savage, the Indian with values of spirituality and harmony with the Earth. The most well-known of this type of films is Disney's *Pocahontas* (1995). The films of this era care a lot of History, cultural aspects and customs, however, in a film such as Disney's *Pocahontas* some Native Americans raised their voice claiming that History had been manipulated, saying that the protagonist, whose real name was not that, but Matoaka, had been mistreated.

Coming back to the films of this time the cultural reality of this time was explained through White eyes. A very significant one in this period, if not the most, is *Dances with Wolves* (1990). The film goes beyond the stereotype of the bloodthirsty

savage, even if it presents a group of Pawnees eager to kill, though it must be remembered here that this tribe was one of the most dangerous. For this reason I cannot agree with Benshoff and Griffin when they find a defect in the characterisation of the Pawnee Indians, criticizing the fact that they were depicted as one-dimensional.³⁰ Even if this tribe was represented as cruel, the word one-dimensional seems a little too strong. It seems that Benshoff and Griffin consider all the tribes existent good, which is far from being a reality.

It must be outlined here that, though the main character is portrayed by a White actor (as it cannot be otherwise, for he is a U. S. lieutenant) the supporting characters, all of them Sioux, are portrayed by Native Americans, among which Graham Greene, Oneida actor, and Floyd Red Crow Westerman, Lakota, are the most important. Wes Studi, who played a role in this film, impersonated the Indian medicine man in *Geronimo, an American Legend* (1993). The roles of the soldiers and characters associated with them appear in the last part of the film. In recent times there have been a number of films dealing with the life of Native Americans in the reservations or their problems, such as *Thunderheart* (1992), in which the story of Native American activist Leonard Peltier, who was accused of having murdered two FBI agents and jailed for it, is told. The documentary *Incident at Oglala* (1992) tells the same story, suggesting that Peltier was wrongly jailed.

³⁰ Benshoff and Griffin 2004 110

4 THE TWO GREAT CONFLICTS IN THE WESTERNS

In this part of my thesis I will make a summary of those films related to the two great conflicts between the United States and the Indians: those against the Apaches and the Sioux. I will stress those points where representation in the films contrasts with the history told in historical narratives.

For this work, the “Spaghetti Westerns”, German films, such as *Winnetou* (1963), and cartoons have been ignored, despite the fact that some of them can be interesting, such as *Pocahontas* (1995). The only films here considered are those in which the characters are represented by human people and only those of American making. Those films in which the appearance of the Sioux or Cheyennes is purely anecdotic have been left apart. There are some documentaries that, while very interesting for telling the life or customs of the Native Americans, cannot be the subject of this work, for it would be very long even for a thesis. For that reason, this study has been limited to those films in which the bulk of them have to do with the war between the Army and the Sioux or Apaches.

4.1 The Apaches

The Apaches were formed by seven tribes: Jicarilla, Mescalero, Chiricahua, Kiowa-Apache, Western Apache, Navajo and Lipan. They inhabited New Mexico, Mexico, Arizona, Oklahoma, Colorado and Texas.³¹ They lived in “wickiups”, a type of

³¹ Ortiz 1983 368

house similar to the *igloo* of the Eskimos, but built with branches and grass; however, when on the Plains they inhabited tipis.³² They were neither completely nomadic, nor wholly hunters, but depended partially on agriculture,³³ being essentially hunters and gatherers. In their religion, visions were important and their deities were personifications of natural forces.³⁴ They prepared their children for war by making them endure a hard training process.³⁵ Women were also trained in physical strength, riding a horse, hunting and using the bow, as well as fighting and escaping.³⁶ It is noticeable that among the Apaches there was a female warrior society with a priestess. Contrary to the Dakota, they believed that to kill an enemy was braver than to touch him.³⁷ It is important to notice that chiefs had no power as leaders, but only depended on their actions and persuasion.³⁸ It seems they were raiders of the Pueblo villages and agricultural tribes of Arizona, and sometimes they attacked the Spanish. In 1864 the United States and the Mexicans reached an agreement to exterminate them. In 1871 George Crook appears and in 1873 there are a great number of Apaches on reservations, from where some of them escaped and, though a certain number were caught, the band of Victorio continued free,³⁹ until in 1880 he was killed and Geronimo appears. He was raiding the United States until in 1883 General Crook came back to Arizona and, after having defeated him, made him go to a reservation, from which Geronimo escaped, but

³² Ibid. 370

³³ Wissler 1989 227

³⁴ Ortiz 1983 372

³⁵ Ibid. 373

³⁶ Robinson, S 2000 5

³⁷ Ortiz 1983 375

³⁸ Ibid. 369

³⁹ Wissler 1989 225

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finally he gave in (in 1886) and was imprisoned in Florida.

The film *Scalps!* (1987) takes its name from the different scalps the protagonists take. It deals with the story of the kidnapping of Yarine, the daughter of Chief Black Eagle, of the Apache tribe. At the beginning, Colonel Connor is presented and seen addressing his men in order to acquire the daughter of chief Black Eagle for himself. On the other side the colonel's wife's hatred, because she makes him guilty of the loss of their daughter. The soldiers reach Black Eagle camp and demand he deliver to them his daughter, Yarine, but her father refuses with the pretext that she is consecrated. A poor excuse, a small gesture makes the army destroy the village and take the girl. In the harassing, a soldier is seen with a scalp in his hand. On their way to the fort, Yarine tries to escape when they are camped near the river, but though she cannot leave this time, she will be able to leave at night, when everybody is sleeping. To chase the girl, the soldiers hire an Indian scout, Hondo. Meanwhile, she reaches a house where a white man, who at first menaces her with a gun, but later helps her, so she lives. No one trusts anyone, and there is an interchange of accusations, in which she calls the Whites "bloodthirsty savages."

When Colonel Connor arrives here the spectator discovers that Matt, the owner of the house, had been a soldier. Here Hondo dies, shot by Matt, when he is defending himself from the Indians, and the couple formed by Yarine and Matt escapes to the mountains, where they have to fight for their life against a group of Apaches who were in the harassing of the village and also against the soldiers, and it is here that she scalps a few more, but there is another important scalp here,

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the one the Colonel Connor takes when two Apaches are brought into his presence. Right now the bitterness of the film becomes sweeter when the couple fall in love and have an affair, but changes again when Matt is caught by the Army and tortured with a kind of tool used in the Sun Dance, which is a mockery of that ritual. This torture will last until the end of the film, when the wife of the colonel will give him a gun with which he kills Connor. Now it is put into evidence that Evelyn Connor, the wife of Matt, was the daughter of the colonel and that he killed her with his own hand for the hatred he felt towards her husband. After the death of the colonel a very important scalp, that of the colonel at the hands of Matt, is taken.

A Distant Trumpet (1964) deals with the story of the Apache chief War Eagle and his surrender to the American troops. The story is introduced by General Quait at West Point and occupies the first sequences of the film, after which the image shows Lieutenant Hazard, recently graduated in West Point, reaching the Arizona territory and bringing with him a scout called White Cloud, who is not well received by the soldier. It is a curious fact that White Cloud does not speak a word until the moment when General Quait arrives, and then only speaks to the general. When Lieutenant Hazard reaches Fort Delivery, his destination, he is warned that life is tedious there, but there are three facts that will interrupt the tediousness of the fort: firstly an Apache attack, secondly a wagon with whores and thirdly the appearance of Kitty Manwaring.

The love story becomes clearer and clearer, which is slightly related to the action with the Apaches, until it is resolved with the death of Lieutenant Manwaring. Then Kitty is free to marry again and General Quait arrives to solve the conflict between

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Seely Jones, the owner of the wagons that had been obliged to go, and the Apaches, on one side and Lieutenant Hazard on the other. After a mock trial, General Quait lets the Apaches leave after having recognised that they are right in their intention that they will inform War Eagle and the whole tribe and later send a man to parley with War Eagle in order to make him surrender. At first, he tries to go himself, but finally he sends Hazard, who goes accompanied by White Cloud and proposes the Apache chief surrender. War Eagle at first suspects, only to later accept, but when he surrenders, the commanding officer has been replaced by an intolerant one, Major Miller, who calls Hazard “stinking Indian lover,” so the Indians are sent to a reservation in Florida, though Matt opposes to it, due to the fact that other thing had been promised to the Apache chief, however the situation does not worsen, for Lieutenant Hazard is called to Washington, where he finds General Quait trying to combat the policy against the Indians “with negative results,” Matt is given the Congressional Medal of Honour, but refuses until White Cloud is freed and resigns, as also does General Quait. It is important to add here that Laura makes clear that she is on the side of the “Indian haters”, which leaves the way open for the marriage of Matt and Kitty. With the freeing of White Cloud and War Eagle all the conflicts are solved and the soldiers celebrate the couple’s marriage.

In *Apache Blood* (1975) the action takes place in Arizona in the year of 1866, when “the treaty with the Mescaleros has been broken”, but the reason why this has happened is unknown. The film tells the story of the chasing of an American soldier by an Apache. The first sequences show an Apache brave who follows a soldier through the desert, reaches him, kills him and scalps him without any reason.

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Some sequences showing the harassing of Apache camps by American soldiers are in the middle of the chase, after which the Apache, who is later identified as "Yellow Shirt" goes to a place in the middle of the desert where there is a woman. Meanwhile, a group of soldiers are having dinner when a man called Sam arrives with news and delivers a dispatch speaking of the breaking of the treaty. After a small incident, he leaves the camp and goes through the desert, where, though he is thirsty, he keeps on walking until the moment when, exhausted, he is found by the soldiers, who treat him badly, putting him in a hole, from where they, inexplicably, take him out only to put him in again. The film shows the whole chase of the man, Sam, by the Apache chief Yellow Shirt, who is called "She" at the end of the film in the song, which is one of the goofs of the film. The story is mixed with Sam's remembrances of a girl called Martha, to whom he had given a music box and who is also seen washing the clothes and reading Sam's letter, but also with the soldiers laughing at him. It is very strange, even remarkable, to see that the man is called Frank when he reaches the group with the dispatch to become Sam later, as it is also strange to see him in a hole, to be taken away and be put in it again by the soldiers and come out of that hole again, but this time crawling out. More strange, even, is to see him buried up to the head in a hole, appearing that he cannot leave it, and in the next sequence see him walking as if nothing had happened. Protagonists of the Apache wars and prominent members of the different groups in which the Apache Nation is divided are a series of leaders, some of which are very-well known for the public, such as Geronimo, Cochise and Victorio. However there are other ones that, while not completely unknown, have been less depicted in films, such as is the case of Taza, Naiche, Chato or Mangas

Coloradas. As their struggles were of great importance it was necessary to insert here some films about them with their corresponding biographies.

4.1.1 Victorio

Born around 1825 in New Mexico Victorio, unlike other Indian leaders, who were medicine men, he was really a chief⁴⁰ of the Chihenne Apaches. He fought together with Mangas Coloradas, sometimes abbreviated as "Mangus," and Cochise. In 1872 he was taken to Tularosa, and later, in 1877, to San Carlos. In June 1879 Victorio and his band arrived at Mescalero Reservation,⁴¹ from which they escaped in August, going to the Black Range Mountains, where he had been born. A year later they were obliged to go to Mexico and on the 15, October, 1880 he was ambushed at Tres Castillos, where he was killed and died with a part of his band, who were there resisting.⁴² S. Robinson describes his death, saying that he fell from his horse and, consequently, the old Apaches who were in the fight decided not to fight anymore, waiting for the night to escape.

In *Cry Blood Apache* (1970), though the name of the Indian protagonist is Victorio, there is no reason to think that this could be the great Apache chief, whose name has passed into History. To start with, the manner of his death is not correct and the place is also wrong; moreover, the film itself assures it is completely fictional; however, due to the coincidence of the name, this film has been included here, because there is no reason to identify him as any other person. The film shows two

⁴⁰ Robinson, S 2000 18

⁴¹ Ibid. 145

⁴² Ibid. 17

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characters, who have a clear feature, Two-Card Charlie, who is frequently shown with a pack of cards and Deacon, who is very prone to use religious ways of expression. It also has two clear parts: the first, in which Victorio searches for those responsible for some Apaches' death, and the second, in which he clearly takes revenge on them. The end is surprising, for it is not derived from the plot, but shows a twist in the chain of events.

After having crossed the desert, a man called Pitcalin stops in front of a river and remembers the things that started there when he was with a group of cowboys. They were forcing some Apache girls to dance with them, when one of them, called Billy, tries to rape one of the girls, called Cochalla, when Pitcalin shoots; however, the identity of the girls is not clear, for the events occur too fast. Soon after, this one of the cowboys finds gold in the river, one of the girls escapes and is shot. When this trouble ends, the cowboys start to quarrel among themselves, one of the girls is dragged off and Billy hits her, while another man, called Deacon, in whose mouth religious expressions used to justify his hatred against the Indians accumulate, reads a Bible. A third one asks an Apache girl, called Jemme, where the gold is and while they threaten Cochalla, the former tries to escape, being followed by Billy. Jemme is hanged by her hands, so she assures she will tell them the place of the gold.

Now Billy comes back with the other girl, who is dead, because he hit her during her escape, and Deacon says goodbye to the place where they are, and to the dead. A little later an Apache, later recognised as Victorio, arrives, sees the remains, and starts to follow the tracks. He has the characteristic of hardly saying

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a word in the whole film, the only occasion in which he speaks being the moment when he sees the Apaches dead, calls them for their names and shows his desperation by crying. Meanwhile, Deacon sings "Bringing in the sheaves here we are rejoicing," which shows his particular vision of God. At dinner, another character appears clearly, Two-Cards Charlie, who will unconsciously leave a particular trace to be followed. Despite his devotion, Deacon wakes up Billy and both go to the river to see the Apache girl bathing half naked, when Pitcalin appears by surprise and throws Billy into the river, following a fight, in which Deacon shows his particular vision of Baptism sinking the head of Billy into the river forcibly while praying "by the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost," the former declaring a little later that he is "being in the serving of the Lord".

Meanwhile, Victorio keeps following the trail of the Whites in the sand, after having crossed the river, which is difficult due to the force of the water, a card falls to the floor, and almost immediately Victorio arrives and takes it. On their way, the girl tries to escape, disappearing from the screen, though they do not realize about it until later, after having noticed the absence of Pitcalin, who is following her, catches her and brings her back and here starts the second part of the film. After the search of Victorio for the group has ended, the Apache arrives at night and takes the horses, so when they wake up they realize the horses have been stolen. Pitcalin is attacked by one of the group and at this moment Billy is shot an arrow when he is going to hurt Cochalla, however he does not die immediately, but his body becomes insensitive and he is left alone, for the other ones follow walking, so he tries to commit suicide when Victorio arrives, stops him and drops the water of

his water bag.

Deacon prays for Billy, and Benji goes to see him. After having heard from his mouth an expression like "My blessing on you all, brothers" Deacon goes to see Billy, too when, after a drumming is heard, Billy is found almost dead and Victorio hangs Benji by the hands over the river in a position in which is difficult for him not to be drowned, until he is so tired that it finally happens that his head goes into the water and he cannot take it out, in which process also Billy dies. Two-Card Charlie is hit and tied, after which Victorio takes a snake in a sack and puts both on the head of him. Deacon finds Victorio, is laced by him and confuses the Indian with God so he is taken with him, while singing a religious song. Now Victorio meets Pitcalin and the girl, who is in love with him, but she does not let him kill the other, because he is her brother. When both are sleeping Victorio saves the girl and fights Pitcalin, who also wakes up, but she finally shoots and kills his brother.

Apache Drums (1951) deals with the story of Victorio and his death. Though his menace is always present in the shadows, he only appears for a brief time and his face is not seen, though the Apaches, present in a good part of the film, appear in small groups. Only in the last sequences do they appear one by one, but always in an unidentified way. Intermingled with this is the story of Sam Leeds, a gambler who is in love with Sally, the girl of the canteen. Due to the killing in self-defence of a man, Sam has to leave the town of Spanish Boot, the same as the whores, but these ones due to the demands of the reverend, however when Sam leaves the town after some doubts he finds the girls killed by the Apaches. Back to town he advises the sheriff, though he is not believed and is even hit by the people, but the

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situation changes with the arrival of a stagecoach with clear signs of Apache attack. Due to it one boy is sent to investigate, being later found dead in the well, which makes a group of people go in search of water and also gives Sam an excuse to invite to a beer an Indian scout, which will provoke that Sam will be later arrested for having given liquor to an Indian.

On their way, they find Lieutenant Glidden, who warns them that Victorio has crossed the border, after which they are attacked by a group of Indians. In the skirmish Sam hurts one of them and the rest of the Apaches retreat. The soldier comes back and informs Sam and the reverend that the man shot was Victorio. Here the lieutenant, who is accompanied by the sheriff, has to arrest Sam, after which the people celebrating a funeral, supposedly by the death of the boy, are attacked by the Apaches and refuge in the church, where they will be until the end of the film. Then the Apache drums are heard and the Whites are informed that if Victorio dies all the people in the church will be killed, so they ask for a doctor to heal him. Finally Victorio dies, which provokes the start of a new attack with fire from which they are saved by the Cavalry, which arrives at the precise moment.

The film *Hondo* (1953) tells the story of a man called Hondo Lane, a gunfighter, who reaches a house in the middle of the desert, in Apache territory, inhabited by a woman, Mrs Low, and her little son. For a time he lives there with them, helping them in the different works of the ranch, such as sharpen an axe or put shoes to a horse. One day he discovers that her husband is not going back to the ranch and warns her that Victorio, the Apache leader, has convoked a council and is in the path of war. A little later she discovers his real identity as a gunfighter and also that

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he has been living with the Mescaleros and has had an Apache wife. At this point of the film some signs of love appear between them, but she refuses, telling she is a married woman, consequently he leaves. Suddenly, when Mrs Low is taking water out of a well, a group of Apaches stand on their horses, looking at her, led by Victorio. He tells them that they must abandon that land and then one of the braves menaces her, but the boy opposes the Indian, for which reason Victorio makes him an Apache boy granting them the possibility of living there, while she takes care of the new Apache boy.

Meanwhile, Hondo meets another cowboy and later, in the saloon, he fights a man, whose surname is Low, the husband of Mrs Low. At this moment Johnny, the boy, is playing with Victorio in the fort, with the knowledge of his mother. The Apaches leave and a little later come back, moment when Victorio proposes the woman to marry one of his warriors if her husband is not back at the time of the rains. Now Hondo arrives at a lake, but he cannot rest, being attacked by some Indians and later two cowboys, consequently Hondo has to kill one of them to survive. After this, he discovers the photo of Johnny in one of his pockets, from which he deduces that he was the father of the boy. Hondo is taken by the Apache and recognizes Victorio, when he is being tortured, though miraculously he is freed to fight in a person to person fight with an Apache defeating his opponent. The Apaches return the man, Hondo, to the ranch of Mrs Low and asks her if he is her husband. The answer, being positive, provoke the opportunity of marriage to be clear, so at night, when they are speaking near the river, after Victorio appearance to warn them about a near battle, they kiss, and their feelings are clearer even than

before.

With the arrival at the ranch of two men, Buffalo Baker and another one, whose identity is unknown, Mrs Low discovers that the man who killed her husband was Hondo, but later, when he tries to tell Johnny about it, she discovers him that he was a bad man, and his death seems not to be important. At the battle, some soldiers are injured and Victorio is said to have died, for which reason the Apache escaped. As a consequence of that a caravan composed of, among others, Hondo, Mrs Low and her son leaves.

4.1.2 Cochise

Cochise (1812-1874) was born in the territory between Mexico, New Mexico and Arizona, worked as a woodcutter until 1861, when he and five of his comrades were accused and condemned of having stolen cattle, being imprisoned, but he could escape, though he was shot. Then Cochise joined Mangas Coloradas, his father in law, and when they were starting to triumph, the U.S. Army took part sending a military expedition against them. In 1862 Cochise and Mangas Coloradas faced the U.S. Army at Apache Pass. In 1863, with the imprisonment and killing of Mangas Coloradas, he remained alone in the fight against the Whites. The next year they were guaranteed a new reservation, but the Apaches refused to leave their ancestor's lands and Cochise escaped and continued fighting. In 1872 General Howard made an agreement with him, who died in 1874, due to natural causes. Cochise married twice, had two sons, Taza and Naiche, with Dos-teh-seh,

and two daughters,⁴³ Dash-dan-shoos and Naithlotoonz, with a Chiricahua woman whose name is unknown.

The story of *40 Guns to Apache Pass* (1966) starts in the summer of 1869, when a soldier called Bruce, who comes from Apache Wells, goes at the front of a column of soldiers to see his girlfriend, Ellen, and warns her and her family that Cochise is in the path of war, for which reason he is observing them. When Bruce and Ellen kiss each other the suspicion that they are a couple is confirmed. On their way to Apache Wells there is trouble with a soldier called Bodeen, who drinks from the water rations. The column reaches Apache Wells, commanded by Colonel Reid, which will be attacked by the Indians. When one member of the family is dead the boys, Mike and Doug, make the decision to enrol in the Army, who do not have enough ammunition, but there are forty rifles coming through the Apache Mountains the following day at Hatchet Rock, so Bruce takes ten men, among whom are Mike and Doug, also Bodeen, and goes on a mission to bring the rifles, directing themselves at night to the Chiricahua Mountains. When they reach the place, Mike tries to kill an Indian, is caught by them and killed, while the other one is terrified. On their way Bodeen is allowed to drive the wagon with rifles, jumping on the captain and tying him and the sergeant up, and leaving with the complete number of soldiers and rifles. Though they are tied to a wagon loaded with gunpowder ready to explode, they become free and safe and reach a small cave where they are safe when the Apache pass by. Finally they reach the fort, after having stolen a horse from one of the Apaches, with whom Bruce fought. The latter

⁴³ Ibid. 62

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tries to go back on a mission to recover the rifles, but the colonel denies him leave, so he leaves without permission. There are differences between Ellen and Bruce for she says his brother would never desert. Now the captain, Bruce, follows the trail of the deserters, while these rest and prepare to sell the rifles to Cochise. Bruce has defeated the soldiers and recovered the rifles, and stays to defend his positions while Doug takes the rifles to the fort. Bodeen meets an Apache, who takes him to Cochise, shows the Indian one of the rifles and offers him the whole amount, but the Apache chief demands to see them all, Bodeen takes him with him, after having proposed to him the sale of the rifles, but when they arrive there the rifles have disappeared and the soldiers are dead. The film ends after Doug and the soldiers go back to Bruce, to rescue him while Bodeen is killed by the captain.

Broken Arrow (1950) tells the story of Tom Jefford, a man who, after having graduated from the Army became a gold seeker and later tried to make peace between the Apaches and the Whites. The story starts when he finds an Apache boy injured in the desert and helps him to be cured while he continues seeking gold, but the Apaches find them, warning him through arrows that they can kill him. When they are going to let him go a group of cowboys appear passing by, so Tom is tied, for the Apaches see a cause-effect relationship. A part of this group is dead and the other is caught and tortured, but Jefford is released for having saved the boy. When he goes back to Tucson, where he is told that the Army is ordered to throw the Apaches away from the mountains, the Colonel, who wants to make war on Cochise and defeat him, asks him to explore for the Army. At the same time

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there are problems in Tucson with the mail, because the Indians do not let the mailmen pass, consequently Jefford speaks to a man called Juan and asks him to teach him the Apache language and customs, so as he can speak to Cochise and explain him the situation. Juan agrees and teaches him, after which they send smoke signals and Jefford goes to the Apache Mountains to speak to the chief, meet him and negotiate with him.

The day after the ceremony of the "Lady Painted in White" (female puberty) is taking place, Jefford is shaving near the river when the girl of the ceremony goes down to the river, they speak and fall in love. On the other side, Cochise grants the petition of Jefford and lets the mail pass without attacking them, but back in Tucson the cowboys do not trust Cochise's words, demanding as a proof five mail-sendings without incidents. On the fourth, a caravan of soldiers is attacked, though finally the five of them come back safe and sound; however, Jefford is accused of being a traitor, being saved from hanging due to the interest of Grant in speaking to the Apache chief and making a treaty with him. So he goes back to the Indian camp, where he meets his girlfriend, Morning Star, and right after that Cochise arrives from the victory over the caravan. In the Indian public dancing at night, Morning Star chooses him and later the lovers meet, being caught by Cochise who, after having warned them of the problems, agrees to be their intermediary and also accepts the possibility of a treaty. At night Jefford is attacked by one of the Apaches and soon after, there is an assembly of Apache chiefs, in which Cochise breaks the arrow, symbolising that he will walk on the path of peace. However, some chiefs leave this council, among them Geronimo, nonetheless a truce is declared. In the

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meantime there is an attack from the part of Geronimo, but even so, Jefford and Morning Star marry. A cowboy arrives and accuses the Apaches of having stolen some horses, so Cochise and Jefford go with the intention of checking this when they are assaulted by a group of cowboys, Jefford is injured and Morning Star dies, but the truce is respected, peace is maintained and an voice off says it becomes a treaty.

The Battle at Apache Pass (1952) shows a *tour de force* between Geronimo and Cochise for the power, in which, finally, the latter wins and the former is declared outcast by the Army and the Apaches. The film develops during a period of time of nine months, approximately, from the moment at which Nona tells her husband, Cochise, that she is pregnant, until the moment in which the baby is born. After the presentation of the cowboys and the Apaches, Geronimo, who is seen on a hill, speaks to Little Elk, brother of Cochise, and tells him to ride with him and a little later, the wife of Cochise tells her husband that she is pregnant, for which reason she is building a new wickiup. At this time Little Elk appears telling Cochise that he has been riding with Geronimo, Cochise arrives at the fort with a group of Apaches and later a troop coming from Fort Apache and with him a character called Mescal Jack, whose appearance provokes the anger of the sergeant for the theme of liquor, which will be dealt later in the film. In this caravan another man comes, the new Indian Advisor, a man called Balor, who wants to send the Apaches to the reservation, and in this way leaves the Apache Pass free, assuring that to be the best solution.

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At this point in the action, a group of Indians attacks a group of cowboys after observing them. When Balor and Major Colton, the commanding officer, are speaking, a soldier enters announcing this attack, so both men pay a visit to Cochise and the Indian Advisor proposes him to go to the reservation, which the chief refuses. While the chiefs are in council, Geronimo breaks in and conflict between him and Cochise breaks out. After a fight between them both, Geronimo is obliged to leave and Cochise goes to the fort assuring us that Geronimo was the author of the attack. A little later, Balor is trying to sell arms and whisky to the Indians, for which reason he will be arrested. When Cochise again comes to the fort to parley he is accused by Major Colton, and has to escape, but his wife, who is a prisoner, is released in order to talk to her husband and tell him to come with a white flag, which he will do. As a response to the kidnapping of a cowboy under the protection of the Army and kill him, the soldiers hang three Apaches. The final sequences show the fight of the Army and the Indians, in which the tribe of Apaches is winning the battle when the soldiers bring some canons and start to shoot them, hurting Nona, for which reason Cochise and his men cease fire, though Geronimo still fights on. After a fight between the two, Geronimo is defeated and has to leave, just when Cochise baby is born. The film ends with Geronimo and Nona leaving.

Fort Apache (1948) tells the story of Owen Thursday and his daughter Philadelphia in Fort Apache, as well as her falling in love with Lieutenant Michael O'Rourke, but the main action is the fight of Colonel Thursday against this tribe. The film is full of comic moments, among them the decoration of the house by Mrs Collingwood or

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the training of the recruits, the moment at which the father of Philadelphia sits on the sofa and it breaks, or the moment at which the soldiers drink the whisky in order to destroy it. It starts with the arrival of Owen Thursday and his daughter at Fort Apache and their meeting with Lieutenant Michael O'Rourke, son of Sergeant O'Rourke, also living in it. Colonel Thursday, who replaces Collingwood in the commanding position, thinks Fort Apache to be a place without action against the Indians and a place that does not permit any kind of promotion, but in an excursion that Philadelphia and lieutenant O'Rourke do, they discover a wagon attacked, and some people dead because of the Apaches of the Diablo Band and his opinion seems to change, so Colonel Thursday forbids lieutenant O'Rourke to go out with his daughter, Philadelphia.

At this moment the Army contact a trader called Meacham, who illegally sells arms as well as whisky to the Indians, transported hidden in boxes labelled as "Bibles." It is amusing to see the four soldiers under the orders of Captain York and Sergeant Beaufort drink the whisky, instead of destroying it, as commanded, for which reason they are imprisoned. The presence of Meacham is the pretext to speak about the treaty that Cochise had with the Army for two years and that was broken for the fact of the existence of men like Meacham. After this, York and Beaufort are sent to talk to Cochise and convince him to parley with the Army. The Indian chief accepts, but back at the fort York realizes he has been used to trick Cochise. When they are leaving to battle Collingwood's transfer arrives, but his wife does not call him, so he will fall on the battlefield. Despite the fact that the troop goes to war with the Apaches, Colonel Thursday seems to desire parley and agrees to talk to him.

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In this encounter, Cochise complains about Meacham, but Colonel Thursday does not want to speak about anything and orders Cochise to go back to the reservation, so war breaks out, a war in which almost all the soldiers lose their lives; only Captain York, who has been relieved of his charge, Lieutenant O'Rourke and a handful of men in the rearguard, save their lives. Captain York is named new commander in chief of Fort Apache, Lieutenant O'Rourke and Philadelphia marry and have a son.

4.1.3 Taza

Taza, elder son of Cochise and grandson of Mangas Coloradas, became chief of the Cochise band in 1874, following his father peace policy with the Whites, however he could not join all the Apache tribes under his orders, contrary to what his father had done. In 1876 he agreed to take his people to San Carlos Reservation, however he could not have the command over all the tribes his father had, with the opposition of Geronimo. That year he also joined the delegation going to Washington D.C, dying of pneumonia while he was travelling.

Taza, son of Cochise (1953) tells the story of the older son of Cochise, who is in love with Oona, the daughter of a warrior called Grey Eagle, who defends the positions of Geronimo against the way of thinking of Cochise's first son, Taza. The story starts three years after the treaty between the Army, represented by General Howard, and Cochise, was signed. The film starts when Cochise is on his deathbed, and gives his first born, Taza, (loved by Oona, who corresponds him) the

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power of the tribe. Just after Cochise has died the news arrive to Geronimo, while Naiche tries to obtain the girl, Oona. Naiche, the same as other members of the band, wants to join Geronimo, however Taza follows his father's way of behaving. When Naiche tries to kill Taza, he is defeated by his brother, caught and put underguard, but some of his men free him and all of them escape together.

The killing of some soldiers by the men of Naiche makes the problems start and the Army arrive at the Apache camp, where Captain Burnett tries to take the guilty men with him, though Taza shows him that he is punishing them, but Burnett does not accept it, and takes the men, making the whole tribe go to San Carlos Reservation. Neither Taza nor his men agree, so they take Fort Apache and make the commanding officers prisoners, though the Indians will later open the gates to General Crook and parley with him. Crook accepts Taza's demands and the Indian chief releases the captain, one of whom is the Apache to be made a police officer for their own people and respected, but the promised tools, seeds and sheep do not arrive and the Apaches become nervous. At this time news arrive that Geronimo has been caught and when this arrives the Army as well as Taza want "to walk in peace."

Now Oona wants to escape, but Taza does not agree, for he claims that the tradition must be respected, while Grey Eagle, his father, who was listening to their conversation, hits the girl, a fact that Taza will discover the next day, when she will be swimming in the river and he will arrive unexpectedly. In the meantime, Grey Eagle, Geronimo and others are planning to kill Captain Burnett and, in this way, break the peace. The next day, Taza communicates to Grey Eagle his intention to

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marry Oona and he answers that his daughter will marry the one who will bring him arms and bullets, while the Army are looking for another warrior called Lobo, who is trying to kill Captain Burnett, but Taza kills Lobo just after he shoots Burnett.

The day of the proposal, Taza asks Grey Eagle for his daughter, but the warrior refuses the presents of the chief. However, he accepts the money Naiche offers him, 300 dollars, with which he intends to buy arms. The action now goes to Fort Apache, where Taza and his lieutenant decipher the drums of the different bands of Apaches, advising that there is going to be war, so after being consulted, the Apache police are confined, while Geronimo and his men go to buy rifles. As the traders ask them too high a price for six old rifles, Geronimo and his group kill the traders, at the same time as the Army goes after Geronimo, and when they find each other there is a fight and in the middle of it, Taza and the Indian police, who had escaped from Fort Apache for not agreeing with the dispositions of Crook, help the United States Army, who have lost a great number of soldiers in the confrontation. There is a ceasefire promoted by the Apache chief, which produces a fight between both brothers in which the older kills the younger. The Army takes Geronimo to the reservation and Taza and Oona marry.

4.1.4 Chato

Chato was one of the captains of Cochise who met General Howard at the Dragoon Springs Treaty and later was called to Washington to receive a medal from the President, worked under General Crook orders making Geronimo surrender, was arrested by the Army and stayed in prison longer than any other

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prisoner in U.S. Army History. There is one film about Chato, the Mescalero Apache who was captain of Cochise and later became a U. S. Army Scout.

The story of *Duel at Diablo* (1966) starts with Jess Remsberg in the desert where, after a short fight, he saves a woman and takes her to town, here being recognized as Mrs. Grange, a woman who had been kidnapped by the Apaches and living among them, due to which she is despised by her husband, raises murmurs and is about to be raped. In town, Jess Remsberg sends, through Corporal Harrington, news to McAllister, a lieutenant of the Army, who meets him in the saloon. They both speak about the coming of Chata, the Apache chief, and McAllister shows Jess a scalp, which an old sergeant, called Toller wants to buy, starting a conflict between them both because the scalp belonged to Jess wife, a Comanche girl. McAllister tells Remsberg that the man who acquires the scalp was a man called Clay Dean, a sheriff, at Fort Concho and they both (Remsberg and Toller) have to ally later when they have to go to it. One of them, Jess Remsberg, is hired as a scout, while the other one is obliged to go there if he wants to receive the complete amount of money for the horses he gave to the Army, for the conditions of the contract said the horses had to be tamed, and only half of the horses delivered fulfilled that condition. On the other side, Jess wants to revenge the man who killed his wife, the aforesaid Clay Dean.

After Helen Grange has escaped from Fort Creel and joined the Apache, where she found her son, is accused of having been guilty of the death of Chata's son, Natchez, for which reason he sentences her to death, which will take place when the Apache reach the Yellow Mountains, but she is allowed to take care of her son

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until the moment of her death. A little later, McAllister sends a message to Colonel Foster in Fort Concho. On the journey, when the Apache women beat Mrs Grange, Jess saves her and takes her with him, while Toller keeps taming horses. While going through the desert the Army are observed by the Apaches, who are hidden on the hills and under the sands and starts a battle with them, in which they steal the food and water to the Army, for which reason they have to go to Diablo Canyon, while Harrington, who had been sent to Fort Concho in search of help, is found dead.

Also, in their journey through the desert, the couple formed by the Grangers is reconciled. With a distracting manoeuvre, the soldiers divide the forces into two groups, one of which is formed by the best four men, among which are Toller and Remsberg. This group attacks the Apaches and, after a time, Jess continues his way to Fort Concho, while the others join the other group, who had deviated from the main way to distract the Apaches and all together they reach Diablo Canyon, where they are attacked by the Apaches. Meanwhile, Jess travels through the desert, is seen exhausted and has to kill his horse, appearing almost dead. The Army defends against the Apaches until a group of soldiers comes from Fort Concho. Also Jess Remsberg reaches Fort Concho, inexplicably in a very good condition. Jess meets Clay Dean and asks him who gave him the scalp, being informed that he had won it from Willard Granger, who dies tortured by the Apache while the Army reaches Diablo Canyon and the Apache surrender to the great number of soldiers.

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Chato's Land (1972), like *Major Dundee* (1964), which deals with a group of soldiers who are on an expedition against the chief Sierra Chariba and the obsession of one man to kill him, and other films, deals with the chase of the Indian, and contrary to *Major Dundee* (1964), the hatred of the cowboys act against themselves, because the fact of Chato being in his own land, his intelligence and his ability gives them occasion to defeat them all killing most of them one by one, while the rest of them kill among themselves. The film starts at the saloon, when the sheriff of the city tells Chato, a half-breed Apache, to go away and tries to kill him, so the Indian kills the sheriff in self-defence, which becomes intolerable for Quincy, an old confederate soldier, who goes in the search of other ten cowboys, among who the main ones are the Hookers (Jubal, Elias and Earl), Joshua Everett, who has been robbed by the Mimbrenño Apaches, and Gavin Mallechie.

The expedition also shows the presence of a Mexican scout, a Yaqui Indian, whose main duty is to follow the trail of Chato, however not all the men proposed to go accept, such as is the case of a man called Ezra, who after having refused the offer, is threatened by some members of the group. In the course of the film the eleven cowboys are defeated, and among them some of them die at the hands of the Apaches, others fighting between themselves and killing each other. Chato uses different ways to defeat them: he cuts their water bags, shoots them from the hills without being seen, kills two horses or steals from them when necessary. However, contrary to the cowboys, Chato can rest a little with a woman, supposedly his wife, a boy and another Apache, though the relation between Chato and these two characters is unknown, but the action of the film requires them to be

present, for this girl will be raped by the cowboys, and the other Apache man will help Chato in his revenge. One after another the cowboys fall at the hands of Chato, but also at their own comrades' hands, like in the case of Jubal who is killed by Gavin and Elias, or the case of Quincey, who is killed by another member of the group. The film ends with the shooting of the last cowboy.

4.1.5 Geronimo

The famous medicine man of the Apaches and most feared by his enemies was born in 1829 in Arizona, more concretely in Southern Arizona, home of the Chiricaua, whose most prominent leader he was. He took part in many raids, being a fierce warrior, even fiercer than others, because it is said that the Apache God, Ussen, had told him he would not be wounded by bullets. After the setting on reservations by General Crook and later death of Victorio at Tres Castillos, where he was fighting together with his band, Geronimo was elected chief of his tribe. "At last, in 1880, Victorio was killed in a fight with the Mexican troops. Now the famous Geronimo comes upon the scene, as the new leader of the hostiles" (Wissler 1989 225). Together with Juh, he agreed to take Loco and his Warm Spring band out of the San Carlos Reservation, for they were being exposed to malaria and starvation.⁴⁴ For this reason they raided the reservation, being caught after a troublesome escape, in a trap set by Colonel García, who pretended to withdraw from the combat after a day of fighting, only to later surprise the Apache (this *Arroyo Fight*, as it is called, was one of the battles the Apaches reproached to

⁴⁴ Ibid. 35

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Geronimo). In 1883, having being caught by Crook and taken to a reservation, where he spent some years, he escaped being chased by General Miles, until in 1886 he finally surrendered by his own will. What happens at that moment can only be qualified as a shame, for Geronimo and his men were invited to Washington, where the former was given a silver medal to then immediately imprison them, first in Florida, and later in Oklahoma, where he was treated like an outlaw. He became a Christian, joining the Dutch Reformed Church in 1903 and died at the age of eighty.⁴⁵

There are two films with the title *Geronimo* (1962, 1993). The 1962 version of the life of this great chief focuses on his family life and problems, since the moment of his first meeting with Teela, the girl he will marry, to the moment in which his son is born, through the kidnapping of Teela with the permission of Porica, who the spectator seems to guess to be her grandmother, despite the fact that nothing is said about it. The film opposes the wisdom of war to that of books, reaching its highest point when the protagonist shoots an arrow and pierces a book, pinning it to a tree. The result of this conflict arrives when Geronimo, speaking about his son, admits “he’ll be a fine warrior because of his father. He has to be, but maybe he should read, too.” The version of 1993 focuses on the protection the Army gives the Apaches, underlined in sentences like “The Apaches will be under the protection of the United States Army” and the opening sequences, at the moment of the surrender, in which almost the same sentence is uttered. It also focuses on the magical aspects of Apache life, like visions, the appearance of “The Dreamer”,

⁴⁵ Wissler 1989 226

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as it will be later called by Geronimo, or the visions of Geronimo, which allow him to see the future.

Geronimo (1962) starts in 1881 when, after some years of fighting and a year of starving, Geronimo surrenders with the remains of his tribe, arriving at the border of the United States, but he makes the U. S. Army, represented by Captain Maynard and Lieutenant Delahay, wait, for he is keeping a promise, no more no less than the teaching of taming a horse to his son. At sundown he arrives, assuring that the treaty starts to take place at that time and, after Captain Maynard reads the treaty aloud, the Apaches are escorted to San Carlos Reservation. The first thing seen in San Carlos by the spectator is a deaf Apache who runs like a little dog to inform Jeremiah Burns, the Indian Agent, who is portrayed as inflexible and a religious fanatic, later shown as a mean man, whose main interest is money. Burns treats the Apache as if he were rubbish when he tells him “take off the moccasins, my child. Fine rich carpeting”, meaning that he can dirty it with his moccasins.

Then the Apache, whose name is unknown, and whose only appearance is this, will nod when Burns asks him if Geronimo is coming and immediately leaves. The Indian Agent makes his wife give him the Bible and speaking to her he says: “It’ll (sic) take more than a child of the devil (meaning Geronimo) to beat the Lord”, and he goes out of the house waiting for the Apache braves to arrive. When he receives them, he orders them to dismount, and tells them the conditions of the treaty, but Geronimo does not seem to agree, and as a response the soldier takes their rifles. At this moment, the Apache chief realizes the difficulties surrounding

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him. Now Geronimo has to obtain food, and so has to go to the shop, at whose queue the chief finds an Apache woman called Porica. When he receives the food, the shop owner makes the sign of the cross with his hand, which makes him become angry, but the reaction of the captain, menacing, makes him keep quiet. On the reservation he finds Mangas Coloradas, who is growing corn, a kind of life that Geronimo does not accept, for which reason he throws the paper with the treaty into the river in the presence of Captain Maynard, being answered by this with the doubling of the patrols.

Just after that, Henry, the owner of the shop, and Maynard, who wants to become rich, are discovered waiting for a man called Kincaide, a rich landowner who wants to buy part of the reservation territory from them. Then Teela, whose relation to Porica is clear, though not specified, is found teaching a class, while a group of Apaches are planning their escape, starting here the discussion that lasts all the rest of the film about the pre-eminence of education or fighting, which here takes the form of a class that Teela is teaching, and the response in the form of an arrow piercing a book, given by Geronimo. The business between Burns and Maynard on one side and Kincaide on the other, makes the Indian Agent use the excuse of "moral obligation" to raise the price of a second offer that Kincaide accepts. Geronimo and the other realize (the film does not explain how) that fact, which makes them go to ask him at night, but the latter tries to deviate the conversation, twisting the meanings and tells Geronimo that he is a heathen, while Mangas, who has been looking for the paper of the agreement, finds it. As a consequence of that, a group of Apaches escapes, for which reason the Army prevents Crook.

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Geronimo distracts the Mexicans so that the rest can escape, and when they regroup Mangas tells Geronimo he is crazy to face up to the whole of the United States, but Geronimo answers him that he wants a new treaty. Now the Army receives permission to cross the border into Mexico, and General Crook wants “unconditional surrender,” while the Apaches realize the truth about the agreement between the U. S. and Mexico. Meanwhile, the son of Mangas is presented, offering Geronimo his cousin Nitah, but the warrior does not accept her, because he considers her “a pig.” In the following sequence the Apaches are seen eating raw oats, but they are caught by the owner of the farm, who after having been disarmed by Geronimo, invites them to eat chicken. Just after having ended Geronimo goes to the reservation and kidnaps Teela, while Porica observes. In their escape he is wounded and tells her he wants a son.

A caravan of soldiers is assaulted and the food and arms taken, moreover Geronimo takes a book for Teela, though he does not know what the contents are, this being strange for the girl, for those contents are the Army regulations, however this means a turning point in the theme of education. A little later, the Army realizes about the fact of the caravan, while Geronimo arrives at the camp, Teela tries to heal him and tells him that she is pregnant. It is now when Geronimo says: “maybe he should read too,” which confirms that the attitude of the medicine man has changed. Now Crook receives the help of the Mexican Army through Colonel Morales, who reduces the area where the Apaches must be, despite the fact of that area being very big, meanwhile Geronimo is taken to a doctor in Mexico. When they are being attended, Teela has to go out for some whisky and is recognized by

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Captain Maynard, who has just arrived with some soldiers.

After their escape, the soldiers arrive where the Indians are and shoot through the bushes without looking and wound Mangas, who dies without saying a word. Also in the Indian camp, Mangas's ex-wife, who has just suffered his death, tells Teela not to let his son be born. Meanwhile, the Army finds the group of Apaches, shooting them first with guns, but later bringing a cannon, which is observed by a boy sent by Geronimo. The soldiers first shoot to make them feel fear, but when they are going to shoot on target Lieutenant Delahay refuses to obey, the conflict being solved with the shooting from the part of Geronimo of a fire arrow, which destroys the cannon. At this moment Crook receives a telegram from Washington and together with Senator Conrad they go to negotiate with the Apaches. A little after Geronimo and Teela argue for staying in the mountains or surrendering, Senator Conrad and General Crook arrive with the proposal of a new treaty which will respect the dignity of the Apache Nation.

In *Geronimo* (1993), the story is told by Lieutenant Britton Davis, who is under the direct orders of Lieutenant Gatewood. Contrary to what happens in many films in which the Indian attack disorderly and confusedly at the beginning, the film starts with the Apaches walking and a little later the Army attacking them. The presentation of the two lieutenants is followed by the appearance of a character called *The Dreamer*, a medicine-man, who arrives playing a drum and singing what lieutenant Gatewood translates as the prediction that Geronimo will come the following day riding on a white horse, a prediction that lieutenant Davis, the other partner, does not believe, and that will be finally accomplished. Lieutenant

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Gatewood is accompanied, among others, by the Apache scout Chato, a warrior who had previously fought against the Whites, starting the conflict between Geronimo and Chato, clearly seen.

After this, Geronimo surrenders with his men, all of them being escorted to San Carlos Reservation, where they find Mangas Coloradas, which shows the conflict between the way of the warrior and the growing of corn. In these first sequences two different streams of thought appear: the one that thinks that the Apaches must be respected and the one that despises them and treats them as savages, with sequences such as the one in which Geronimo and other two Apaches are in the tavern with the Army, when a small group of cowboys, led by the marshal of Tombstone, arrives with the intention of arresting and hanging Geronimo, but is stopped by the Army. Also, in the Army there are soldiers who feel no respect for Geronimo, even despise him, and try to kill him without any reason, such as can be seen in the sequence in which the Indians are dancing with the intention of bringing the dead chiefs back to life. This moment is used by one of the soldiers to kill some Apaches more with the accusation that the dance is illegal, which provokes the immediate reaction of the Army against a small rite of the Apache.

When the Army reaches the place there is a duel between one warrior of each side, and after the death of an Apache at the hands of Lieutenant Gatewood, Chato is asked: "Chato, is there anything that should be done?" Following this the Apache goes near the dead warrior, takes a little dust, raises his hand and says a few words, but rebellion also has a bitter side, with the death of three Indians on the gallows and a fresh negotiation between the Indian chief, Geronimo, and George

C. Crook. In the final part of the film, a new vision of Geronimo shows a train crossing the land they possessed, a train in which at the end of the film he and his 35 Apache who surrendered are taken to Florida, and in which Chato recognizes his error in having trusted the white men, but previously, at the moment of the surrender, the conflict between Chato and Geronimo was once more evident, when the latter says: "Why did you bring him? He's an enemy to his people."

4.1.6 Massai

Massai (1847-1906), a Mimbrenño Chiricahua, son of White Cloud and Little Star, was born at Mescal Mountain,⁴⁶ near what is nowadays Globe, in Arizona, where he lived until he was nine. Together with Gray Lizard he joined Geronimo, which happened in rather awkward way, for he went to Mescal Mountain to adhere to his band, when these were surprised and taken away, so he had to follow the trail thinking that Geronimo's people were not in danger, but as they were prisoners of the Army, at the moment of joining them they were caught. When he realized that he was going to be hanged when arriving in Florida he planned to escape from the train and so he did.⁴⁷ He was later arrested and put into prison, as also was Gray Lizard, the friend he had met in their childhood when he was making his way running to the top of the mountain near his village and with whom he usually

⁴⁶ Robinson, S. 2000 87

⁴⁷ Ibid. 90

hunted and went after wild horses.⁴⁸ Both escaped and joined the Mescalero Apache; they both separated, the former raiding the frontier Arizona-Mexico, while the latter made his way to Mescal Mountain. He first married a Chiricahua girl and later Zan-a-go-li-che, with whom he had six children.

The film *Apache* (1954) counts on the presence of several Apache chiefs: firstly Massai, who is the protagonist of the film, secondly Chato, the father of the girl to be married, and thirdly Geronimo, who appears in the train. This allows the spectator to observe the coincidence in time of three of the major Apache chiefs and to establish a chronology in the course of events in the Apache wars. It is also important to notice the change of customs in the Apache way of life, from the warrior and hunters that they were until the moment they become farmers, which is exemplified in this film.

The film tells the story of the warrior Massai, who, after being caught and taken as a prisoner, is put with Geronimo in the same train, at the moment of Geronimo's final surrender in 1866, but Massai is not ready to give in, and escapes from the train that is transporting them all to the reservation in Florida. The first moments of his freedom he can be seen eating corn. There are two points leading the spectator through the whole film: the theme of corn and the girl, Milendi, who wants to marry Massai, thus they can be seen for the first time at the beginning of the film, before Massai's first surrender. Having hidden in a wagon, he arrives at a city, and here everyday life is presented in a succession of sequences, after which he is discovered, starting a new escape, going back to the country, where he meets a

⁴⁸ Ibid. 88

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Cherokee who has become a farmer and delivers Massai a little bag with a handful of corn seeds, but this does not want to stay with the Cherokee and continues his escape. On his way he has to eat, and for it takes some of the seeds given to him, but repents and leaves them in the bag, showing the spectator that he has considered the idea of growing corn.

He reaches the Apache camp when the Indians are working, finds Chato, who is represented as blind and a drunkard, and tries to convince him that corn growing is the solution, showing him the seeds received from the Cherokee but, being betrayed by Chato, Massai is caught while sleeping. And here the girl, who is the daughter of Chato, appears defending him before the commanding officer of the reservation. Notwithstanding he will be transported by a man called Waller and another three, who are longing to kill him without any kind of reason, but Massai newly escapes, continues fighting and kidnaps the daughter of Chato. At first he treats her as a traitor, but after being pregnant he falls in love with her and in the mountains they both start to grow corn, while the Army continues searching for them. After finding them, the Army starts the chase, but when Massai's baby is born and the commanding officer realizes that the Indian warrior has made an effort to grow corn and live in the American way the chase is stopped.

4.1.7 Mangas Coloradas

Mangas Coloradas, the only chief that had looked for the confederation of the different Apache tribes, had married Cochise daughter. Intelligent and cruel, he was a master in person to person combat and, after having suffered the traps of

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the white man, searched for revenge, and joining Cochise both warriors ambushed the army and killed around a hundred soldiers near Cooke's Peak. He was in the battle at Apache Pass, won by the U. S. thanks to the cannons the Army had and where the Army would build "Fort Bowie", he was there together with Cochise and Geronimo, who was still a warrior. This battle was the start of the extermination policy in the Apaches' case. In January 1863 he was framed by the gold seekers, when they offered food and later made him a prisoner and tortured him until the death. He was buried by them and later unburied by the Army.

War Drums (1957) deals with some themes, the first and most important of which is the love of chief Mangas Coloradas with Riva, a white girl. The former is presented at the beginning of the film accompanied by some of his warriors while they are travelling through the desert, the latter appears, first bathing in the middle of the river and later living with a man who treats her bad, being saved from him by Mangas. The second theme is the friendship of the great Apache chief Mangas Coloradas and a man called Luke Fargo, who is camped with other people, among who there is a man who is the representative of the government and warns the chief not to break the treaty with the U. S, something that he does without any apparent reason. For some moments Fargo tries to have an affair with Riva, but Mangas does not let them and interrupts when they are about to kiss.

The intentions of the Apache chief are specified at the moment he arrives at the camp with the girl and even more when he declares his intention of marrying her, which makes the tribe live a tense situation, solved with a combat in which Mangas defeats his opponent. Signs of tension in the camp are the fight between two girls,

one of whom is Riva, and the way the other women of the camp treat her, but this situation is solved when Mangas says he will make her a warrior wife, followed by some sequences in which the training of the girl can be seen. The theme of love reaches its highest point in the wedding, preceded by the preparations and followed by the arrival to the couple wickiup, however happiness is followed by misfortune with the coming of gold seekers, who want to know where the metal is, and though they are informed by Mangas, they do not believe him. For that reason they whip him, which makes the Apache chief take revenge and this revenge is the cause that the representative of the government justifies an attack to the Apache camp, without having considered the circumstances, however Fargo defends the tribe. Now the representative of the government makes the Apache fall in a trap in which Mangas is injured by an arrow of one of his men. Later he is taken to a white medicine-man to be cured by him and when he is recovering his friend Fargo arrives with the news that the Army offers him the possibility of a truce if he drops the weapons and accepts going to live on a reservation.

4.2 Sioux

The film *Dances with Wolves* (1990) deals with the mission requested by Lieutenant John Dunbar himself and his adventures in a garrison. After having been seriously wounded, he goes back to the line of fire, where he tries to commit suicide advancing at a gallop between both armies, Northern and Southern. He is granted by the commanding officer to serve in the frontier, where he starts a diary with all of his observations, from his arrival at the fort, which he discovers to be an old hut

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with scarce provisions that he has to ration. The relatively short distance that separates the fort from the Sioux village means that he can be observed by them as well as by a group of Pawnees and by a wolf usually walking around his hut and observing him, consequently he adopts it. The relationship between the Sioux and Lieutenant Dunbar go between the mere observations to the establishing of contact with the tribe. His later friendship starts with the finding of a woman called Stands-with-a-Fist, who is dying, crying for her husband dead, to whom he saves and takes to the village. She will be later discovered to be a white woman, for which reason she will be the connection between the two peoples. The film also shows two important themes: first the hunger the Sioux were suffering due to the lack of buffaloes, though the help of the lieutenant makes the Indians know that these animals are arriving; and the second the theme of buffalo killing. Through some impressive images the film shows a flock of these animals dead and skinned, however, despite the circumstances the Indians can find a flock and hunt. The sequences in which the hunting is told and the meeting of the tribe in the tipi at night, with the telling of John Dunbar's deed of saving a Sioux girl to die by the action of a buffalo, introduce the affair of the protagonist with Stands-with-a-Fist through a small number of sequences in which she is seen with a face of admiration. This theme, which will be later developed, is interrupted by the presentation of the sequences in which Dunbar is seen with the wolf, mainly the one in which he dances with it while the Sioux look, causing the Sioux give John Dunbar his name.

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The love of the couple becomes clear when he writes it in his diary, and later with the kiss and love, as later at night, but these moments are interrupted by the menace of the Pawnee, great enemies of the Sioux, who are represented as sinister, entering the Sioux camp in a menacing way, though as they are waited, the surprise element becomes against them, being attacked with rifles. The paintings of war and the arms used by both sides can be discovered here. These sequences are succeeded by the moment in which Kicking Bird is said that John Dunbar and Stands-with-a-Fist are in love, for which reason he tells her that she is no more in mourning. The fact that the Sioux leave their place to go to the winter camps and that the diary is in the fort make John Dunbar go back with the intention of recovering it and so not to leave any trace of him and his life among the Indians, but he is intercepted by the Army, who tries to kill him, being tortured for betrayal and also under the accusation of dressing like an Indian.

Trying to excuse himself he talks about the diary, but this cannot be found because it has been stolen by a man called Spidy, fact that will be later discovered by the spectator, when John Dunbar will be washing his face in the river. Dunbar is demanded to cooperate with the U. S. Army leading them to the Sioux camp. With his refusal the Army starts their way to Fort Hayes, where they seem to have the intention of hanging him, but he is freed by his Sioux friends, going back to the Sioux camp, where the couple reunites and John Dunbar warns his friends that the Army can have an excuse for attacking them because of him, for which reason they leave the place where they are living, avoiding the soldiers and while the tribe takes one way the couple takes another.

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The trilogy *A Man Called Horse* formed by the films *A Man Called Horse* (1970), *The Return of A Man Called Horse* (1976) and *The Triumphs of A Man Called Horse* (1983) narrates the story of John Morgan, an English lord who is spending a time in the States when he is attacked by a group of Yellow Hands, to whom he will join at last, after having passed a number of adventures. The first part tells the encounter of John Morgan with the Yellow Hands, a band of the Sioux tribe, and the changing of role of the protagonist from English Lord to a Sioux brave. The second one narrates the story of his coming back from England, where he had lived some years, to Dakota, and his revenge of the Whites, who had harassed the Yellow Hands village and, after the purification, he is newly accepted in the tribe. In the third part, which starts thirty years after the second, the film tells the invasion of the Black Hills by the miners and his defence of that sacred place, ending with the leaving of the Black Hills by the Whites. The three films are based upon the pictographs engraved in stone, and have taken as a help the pictures of George Catlin, and Carl Bodmer.

The main theme of this first film, *A Man Called Horse* (1970), is the Sun Dance, here called Sun Vow. The first sequences show a group of Sioux warriors running through the field. The story of John Morgan starts when he is spending a time in North America, hunting and feeling the uselessness of life. ("I've travelled halfway around the world at a great expense simply to kill a different kind of bird" he confesses), however the contrast is clearly seen compared to the three activities of the three men who are at his service, using their leisure time to become drunk. The protagonist is shown having a bathe, while the animals show a reaction to an

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unknown danger, escaping, at the same time the Sioux, unseen, communicate through whistling. John Morgan, surprised in his bathe, is laced as an animal, treated like horse, and transported to the Sioux village as if he were a horse. When the group is near the camp a runner is sent to this and the *witko* (the crazy man), who will be later much more present, appears briefly and an old woman shows her pain for her dead son cutting a finger.

After having tried to escape and being caught, a new figure, who had appeared before, is seen now in more detail: the *witko*. He presents himself as Batise, son of a Flat-Head mother and a French father, a prisoner for five years, who had saved his life for having pretended to be a crazy man, for the *witko* was considered *Wakan* (sacred) for the Sioux. He is the one who is going to translate what the Sioux say in Lakota and informs John Morgan of the Sioux ways of life and this is important at this moment, because it is when Black Eagle wants to marry Running Deer, the sister of the chief, for which reason he offers him horses. The refusal of chief Yellow Hand makes John Morgan decide he wants to marry the girl, so he demands Batise to teach him the Sioux ways of living, and mingles with the other members of the tribe until the moment when he kills two Shoshones who were trying to attack the camp, so he is granted a feather, but he cannot even marry the girl, for he lacks the Sun Dance, developed in the following sequences, after which the marriage takes place and the couple is accompanied to the wedding tipi. And now the rhythm of the film is more peaceful, though this peace will be interrupted by the attack of the Shoshones, one of the traditional enemies of the Sioux. In this fight, despite having defeated their enemies, there is not happiness due to the

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number of dead people and the fact that Running Deer has died, after which John Morgan and the tribe separate.

This second part of the trilogy, *The Return of a Man Called Horse* (1976), deals with the revenge of John Morgan for the massacre of the Yellow Hands by the Whites. The film starts with the Indian village in peace, which is represented by the barks of a dog, the singing of the birds and a boy leading a horse, but this idyllic moment is interrupted by the attack of the Ricks, a band of Indians at the service of the Whites living in a fort in the proximity of the village. As a consequence of this some girls are taken as captives and used as slaves, while the Yellow Hands retreat to the Badlands after having left their story engraved in a stone. On the other side fox hunting in England and immediately after it the room of John Morgan with a paint showing the buffalo hunting by an Indian, the Sioux arms and dress as well as other regalia, followed by John Morgan feeling solitude in an enormous house, with huge rooms crowded with portraits of nobles. The shots showing the church increase the sense of being out of that reality and belonging to other place, consequently he decides to go back to Dakota, which is shown by his travel on a horse with other horses carrying things unknown to the spectator. When he arrives he finds that the tribe has been harassed by the Ricks, so he intends to know the truth playing the role of an eccentric pompous English lord and discovers that a woman is being forced, consequently he helps her pretending it was accidental, though he cannot stop the death of another Sioux girl.

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After having gone out he realizes that the Yellow Hands are in the Badlands, setting off for them, when he reaches that place the spectator can discover that in the saddle bags he bore presents for his friends, which the medicine man does not allow them to accept. It is at this moment that the problem of the band is presented by Elk Woman, who tells John Morgan that their misfortune is caused by the Evil Spirit, against which Morgan shows a great dose of optimism, even when the medicine man, Raven, tells him the Evil Spirit "wants more." While Elk Woman accepts the fate, he rebels against it and assures it is possible to fight the white men with guns, but to be allowed to do this he must deliver himself to a new Sun Dance. All this part of the film is minutely developed, starting with the amazing Sweat Lodge ceremony, this one including the development of the vision in which he is seen as a young English lord and an old Sioux brave, but the situation reverses after having been face to face his two appearances and in this way the Englishman becomes old and the Sioux brave becomes young.

Then the Sun Dance takes place, which marks the turning point of the film, and so Morgan, having been purified, is permitted to go hunting with his friends. This is followed by some images in which the women skin the animal and cut it into pieces and some others developing the training of the Sioux in the use of the firearms and the *boleadoras*. To attack the fort they use the device of introducing a girl in the fort and when the Sioux girls who live in it are picking up wood, one of them is substituted by a friend of her who steals gunpowder, going out of there freely with other comrades. At this moment the Sioux attack the fort and after a long fight Morgan blows it off. As a result of this the Sioux go back to their land and there is a

celebration.

Though *Triumphs of a Man Called Horse* (1983) is included in the trilogy *A Man Called Horse* the real protagonist of the film is his son Koda, though the influence of John Morgan is felt until the end of the film. Despite the decision of John Morgan not to stay in the Black Hills for more than a year, he had remained there for more than thirty when this third part starts, with the travel of a man dressing in the cowboy way, who will be later discovered to be Koda, the son of Sunka Wakan (John Morgan). The placid life on the prairies is presented just there, first with a series of remembrances of John Morgan, the Man Called Horse, who is seen sitting on a tree trunk; later with the man on horse going into the woods, the river and some images of the buffalo flocks. This serenity is broken when a family arrives at a place in the middle of the desert, where there is a couple of cowboys selling water from a natural well and various articles, among them tools for gold seeking, some food and scalps. This conflict is solved when Koda reaches the place, kills one of them and scares the other, who escapes, after having warned the pilgrims that the Yellow Hands are on the warpath.

Now the theme of gold seeking is introduced through the pilgrims, who are searching for it, and immediately after, while John Morgan appears facing the U. S. Army. One of the soldiers introduces him to Captain Cummings, telling Morgan is "the legend himself," but he introduces himself as Sunka Wakan, renouncing to his Christian name. And now a group of characters without a clear personality, but with a great importance, appear. They are the trouble makers, their main feature being the use of violence in order to start a war with the Indians. The first thing that they

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do is try to rape a Crow girl, Red Wind, who is saved by Koda and will be helped by him taking her to a Sioux medicine woman, called Elk Woman, however the girl at the beginning complains adducing that the Sioux are enemies. The trouble makers continue trying to provoke war between the Whites and the Sioux, this time trying to make believe the Whites that the Sioux have provoked the killing of the Crows. Morgan defends his people before the Army and assures he can keep the peace, but is shot by a white man and before dying he demands of his son to defend peace, counselling him not to give them an excuse for war.

When the soldiers arrive there to express their condolences Koda is requested to go with them for having killed three white men. On their way, one of the soldiers throws him to the ground and after a small trouble with them he takes the horse, so two of the soldiers have to go to the fort on foot, complaining, searching excuses and arguing between them both. The conflict between Red Wind and Koda starts to diminish now and, in fact, disappears when they agree to fight the Whites, after which there is a succession of skirmishes of the couple against the Americans and finally disappears when they fall in love. One of the problems to keep peace is one brave that wants to attack all the white men to save Koda, who had fallen in the hands of them, but he is finally saved by a little group, after which they destroy Whisky Flats, from which the people living there escape. The film ends with the devolution of the Black Hills to the Sioux and the couple embracing.

Stolen Women (1997) belongs to that kind of films which show the integration of Whites in an Indian tribe through the story of two women, friends, both kidnapped by the Sioux, both of them on the road to marriage, but the similitude ends here, for

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while one of them, Anna, becomes accustomed to Sioux life, the other one refuses, even making of her dress a symbol of resistance. Though the story is around the love of two women, their kidnapping by the Sioux gives the director the perfect excuse to represent the Sioux life in a minute way, for which reason this film has been included here with sequences such as the discovery of the map showing the representation of Indian pictographs or the washing of the horse and the making of a war shirt as other features involving the Sioux way of life. The film is developed in a great part in the Sioux village, though it shows a great part of the life between the cowboys and the Army.

The film starts with a Sioux attack on a group of soldiers and after having let the women go, the Whites arrive at the fort, where Sara, the other protagonist, appears trying on her wedding dress, for she intends to marry. On the other hand, a pastor finds Anna a fast marriage with a man called Daniel Morgan, after which the two friends are kidnapped by the Sioux, consequently the Army starts their search, while both women are taken to the village, where everyday life can be seen. At a certain moment Tokala, the chief, wants to learn the white language (English) and for it he asks the help of a Sioux warrior who knows it. The following sequences show the way she is learning how to become a Sioux woman, taught by the women of the village and Tokala, who demands different things of her, such as make him a war-shirt or to be with him. Though she refuses to be with him the signs reveal that she is falling in love, such as can it be seen when she is washing his horse, however the other girl, Sara, refuses to adapt to her new life, refusing to dress in the Sioux way and doing it in her old way.

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Meanwhile Custer appears interested in the case of Mistress Morgan and starts the chase of the Sioux, at the same time that Sarah discovers a map painted on a skin. In the following sequences, Custer appears in the middle of the town and Anna's husband and Sara's mother in his company, all of them involved in the search of both girls (this is another of the coincidences in the story: both women searched by their families). And here the story of both girls differs a little, because when trying to escape one of them fights a Sioux woman, for which reason she becomes respected, but though it seems she is going to consent to be with Tokala reality differs. The girls finally escape and are searched for at the same time by the Sioux and the Army, the first commanded by Tokala, the second by Custer; here a new difference appears in the story of the girls, because when the Sioux find the girls, Sara is obliged to go back to the village, where her dresses are burned and she is obliged to dress in the Indian way, however Anna, after having refused, makes love with Tokala and goes back to the village voluntarily.

A little later, Custer meets the Sioux in the middle of the prairie and proposes they go to his tent and negotiate. What follows cannot be called exactly a negotiation, for his proposal is to release the girls in exchange for not making war on them, which Tokala rejects, and for this reason both *wives* have a minor quarrel. When the Sioux leave Custer's tent, Luta, one of the warriors, is caught in guarantee for the women or, in other words, kidnapped. The Sioux start a battle against the soldiers, in which Tokala is wounded and now he speaks of the vision he had of a white woman with a Bible. Then Anna returns to the Whites and in exchange Luta is released and later goes back to the town. Back in the fort, Sara is

congratulated for having been strong in the middle of the Sioux, resisting so as not to behave like them, while Anna is criticized, though there are only a couple sequences in which it happens. A little later, Sara marries and Anna spends a night with her husband, after which she escapes to meet his Indian lover. When she arrives at the camp, this has been destroyed, but Tokala is alive and the lovers embrace.

4.2.1 Red Cloud

Born in 1822, in the country of the Black Hills, he was an Oglala, a Brulé of the Lone Man band.⁴⁹In spite of several stories about it, the origin of his name is unknown, being qualified by Freedman, who gives some theories about it, as “a mystery.”⁵⁰ One of them speaks about a meteorite appeared over Sioux land the year Red Cloud was born, another one about his change of name when he was nineteen and his going to a war party, where the braves were covered with scarlet blankets,⁵¹ for which reason they resembled a red cloud, which made the enemies scared.⁵² Hyde thinks this story to be a “poor choice.” He also thinks nonsense the story that his was a family name, due to the vision “of a buffalo and a red cloud” supposing that the Sioux had forgotten his origin and assuming as good the story of the meteorite crossing Sioux land in the winter of 1822 and “observed at Fort Snelling at the mouth of Minnesota River on the night of September 20, 1822.” His

⁴⁹ Hyde 1967 34

⁵⁰ Freedman 13

⁵¹ Freedman 1987 13

⁵² Ibid. 14

parents died when he was a young boy, around 1825,⁵³ for which reason he was educated by his sisters and an uncle.⁵⁴ When he was around fifteen he went in war parties against the enemies of the tribe and also became a medicine man, having attempted to devise a remedy for cholera⁵⁵ (Hyde 1967 64). In the 1860s he had become popular as a leader.⁵⁶

In 1862 the U. S. had built a way to enter the Indian Territory, the Bozeman Trail, which menaced the Indian hunting grounds. Despite the real menace would arrive later with the building of several forts along the trail, for which reason the Sioux under Red Cloud started to attack "...every wagon and pack train that dared travel over the disputed trail." (Freedman 1987 16). This chain of events was known as "Red Cloud's War" and covers the period of time between 1866 and 1868. On 24 July, 1865, 3000 Indian warriors, led by Red Cloud and other chiefs coming from the hills attacked a U. S. fort on the North Platte River. The soldiers could not be ambushed, so the Indians waited until the morning of the 26th, when a wagon went near the fort, attacked the wagon and after fighting they had a victory over them.⁵⁷ In 1866 the followers of Red Cloud and Man-Afraid-of-His-Horse had about 500 lodges.⁵⁸ The following year Red Cloud and his men pressed the Whites attacking frequently the Wagon trains on the Montana Road and blocking the three forts.⁵⁹ As the Bozeman Trail had become dangerous, the 1866 council was called. In the

⁵³ Hyde 1967 316

⁵⁴ Freedman 1987 14

⁵⁵ Hyde 1967 64

⁵⁶ Freedman 1987 15

⁵⁷ Freedman 1987 12

⁵⁸ Hyde 1967 145

⁵⁹ Ibid. 158

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middle of the council, Colonel Carrington broke in and said “he had been ordered to build a chain of forts along the Bozeman Trail.”⁶⁰ Many of the chiefs left the council, among them Red Cloud, but some of them stayed and continued the negotiations. The next months he and his men, among which there were Sioux, Cheyennes and Arapahoes, continued raiding the forts along the Bozeman Trail.

In 1868 a new commission travelled to Fort Laramie,⁶¹ with the intention of proposing a new treaty to the Indians, in which the Powder River country would be considered unceded Indian Territory,⁶² but he did not want to attend, which made the treaty useless. He did not want to sign until every soldier had abandoned the Powder River country, so the government decided to leave their forts. Red Cloud and his men burned them to make sure of it and on November 6 he signed, after which he never made war again. “During the next few years, he made several trips to Washington to negotiate with government officials, met twice with President Ulysses S. Grant, visited the Senate while it was in session, saw the sights and wonders of the great city, and witnessed at first hand the vast riches and power of the Whites” (Freedman 1987 24). The Treaty of 1868 did not last much, for it was broken by the invasion of the Black Hills by Custer in 1874, which provoked the battle of Little Bighorn in 1876, in which Red Cloud was not present. In 1909 he died, after having seen the great Sioux Reservation become divided into five smaller reservations.

⁶⁰ Freedman 1987 18

⁶¹ Hyde 1967 8

⁶² Freedman 1987 22

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Run of the Arrow (1957) deals with those events which occurred in Red Cloud's War, starting just the day the War Between the States had finished. The protagonist, whose name is O'Meara, is one of the soldiers taking part in it, and more concretely the one who shot the last bullet and failed. The man to whom he shot is a such Driscoll, which is one of the points of the film. After Lee surrendering to Grant, O'Meara goes back home, where a friend of him arrives later, bringing him the bullet. O'Meara decides that he wants to keep on warring against the Northern States, for which reason he goes west, discovering on his way some vultures hovering over a man, unconscious on the floor, a Sioux called Walking Coyote, who was working for the U. S. as a scout, for which reason he is called betrayer by the Sioux, and who teaches O'Meara the divisions and traditions of the Sioux.

When they are riding, they find a group of Sioux who are destroying a wagon, both of them being caught by their chief, Crazy Wolf, who ties them to a post, where they are facing death, but Walking Coyote invokes the "Run of the Arrow" a Sioux tradition in which the prisoners are released and after that an arrow is thrown. When the prisoners reach the place where the arrow fell they start to run for their life and if they can escape free they have the right to live, and no Sioux can kill them. In his escape, O'Meara is found by a Sioux woman, Yellow Moccasin, impersonated by Sara Montiel, who takes him to the village and takes care of him. And at this point of the film a new element is introduced: the discussion if he can become a Sioux Indian or if he will always be an American, discussion that starts when he wants to marry the girl. It is important to notice that both terms are

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exclusive, that is to say one cannot be Indian and American at the same time. The chief of the village, Blue Buffalo, and he reach an agreement in the relative to religion and other customs, but related to war Blue Buffalo is not sure and also O'Meara seems to doubt.

After the marriage, the theme of Red Cloud Wars starts, with the appearance of the great chief and his conversation with General Allen, conversation in which they agree to let the U. S. build a fort in a place where it does not disturb the buffalo hunt. Once agreed O'Meara, now a Sioux warrior, goes with the expedition to make sure that they fulfil the conditions. On the other side Crazy Wolf, who is considered a betrayer among theirs, attacks the caravan, is caught by O'Meara and offered the possibility of a "Run of the Arrow," but he is killed by Driscoll, who violates the "run," for which reason he is punished with death by O'Meara. After the death of Captain Clark, who is the chief of the expedition, Lieutenant Driscoll, becomes the new chief, and changes the location of the fort. As the agreement between Red Cloud and the U. S. Army has been violated the Sioux attack the fort and the camp. At the end of the film *Yellow Moccasin* offers O'Meara an American flag, which he accepts, coming back with the soldiers.

In *The Indian Fighter* (1956) there are a number of themes interesting for the relations between Indians and Whites and, more concretely, for this thesis, for they are directly linked to the conflict of the Black Hills: gold and whisky smuggle. But there is also another theme present that, despite the fact that it is not directly related to this thesis has a certain importance in the consistence of the film and also in the relations between Whites and Indians: love. In fact love and enmity are

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the first themes in this film, for it starts with a girl going into the river at the same time a cowboy, which will be later known as Johnny Hawks, who is found by a Sioux brave called Grey Wolf, brother of Red Cloud, which makes this film to be among those that tell about Red Cloud's War. And here the conflict between Whites and Indians is presented with a sentence of Grey Wolf summarizing the whole problem: "there is no friendship between Redman and White." This relationship seems to change when both of them go into the Sioux camp, Johnny Hawks meets Red Cloud and this one assures that there is trade of gold and whisky between some Sioux and some Whites in which the former gives the iron metal and the latter the drink. He is invited to stay in the camp and eat with his Indian friends. Though at the beginning Johnny Hawks does not accept, he changes his mind when he sees Onahti, Red Cloud's daughter, and after having had their meal Onahti goes to the river and he follows her, trying to kiss her in a forced way.

The next theme appearing is the presence of whisky. The following morning, when the camp is deserted, the hooting of an owl is heard and two Sioux wake up and meet Wes Todd and Chivington, two cowboys ready to sell them whisky in exchange for gold. When the Sioux realize what is happening, Todd escapes, but Chivington is caught, so Johnny Hawks has to fight for his life in a duel resembling the medieval ones. The two Whites go to the fort and Red Cloud promises he will go there the following day to parley with the new commanding officer and check the way of making justice of the white men, but when Johnny Hawks and Chivington arrive there Todd is showing off, having come to give news that Chivington had been killed and scalped, which is solved when the latter goes into

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the room and is seen by the captain and himself. In this way the battle that was to be started is cancelled, both men, Chivington and Todd, are locked up and Johnny Hawks is invited to dinner. When the Sioux appear the next day, there is a treaty between the people of the fort and the Indians and later a celebration, where some photos are shown.

After the Indians leave, both men are released and love newly appears, this time in two different ways: first when Susan, one of the girls in the fort, tries to flirt Johnny Hawks, and is "saved" by Will, who will try to marry her and a little later when the Sioux girls are going into the wood to pick up something that is not shown. In this way she is kissed by Johnny Hawks, forcedly, at the beginning, but later she accepts to be kissed and both laugh, and now the theme of trade is clearly seen, when the Sioux arrive with their goods. Chivington and Todd are there and one of the Indians, Crazy Bear, who has the same name as a Sioux chief who was in the council which made Crazy Horse a chief, is attracted by these two characters in order to be informed of the place where gold is, for which reason they drive him drunk, and he finally he reveals it. They are discovered by the Sioux led by Grey Wolf, who is killed by Chivington. The sequences of the fort, which is not named, introduce Johnny Hawks coming into it and, after some words accusing him of "working with the Indians" he is attacked, this quarrel being stopped by the captain. After a long attack of the Sioux with fire Johnny Hawk proposes to deliver Chivington and Todd to the Indians, for which reason he goes to find Onhati in the Sioux camp and convinces her to trust him. This leads her to the mine, where both men are. Todd dies in the fight, but Chivington is given to the Sioux and Johnny

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Hawks and Onahti are seen together, laughing in the river.

A third film dealing with Red Cloud's war, *Tomahawk* (1951), is the story of a discovery, the discovery of the truth about lieutenant Dancy, an officer with a dark past, and Jim Bridger, a man in search of revenge. The film starts with the Laramie Conference taking place, with all the soldiers on horse on one side of the screen and the Sioux warriors on horse on the other one. The following sequences happen in front of a tent, where the chiefs of both parts are present as well as a man called Jim Bridger, who defends the Indian rights. Now Monaseetah appears, which introduces a theme that will be later developed: the marriage between Indians and Whites, with a surprising end. In this conference the leader of the Sioux, Red Cloud, accuses the U. S. that "this conference is a fake" and, consequently they leave the place, so Jim Bridger reacts warning the colonel that "Red Cloud has the whole Sioux nation under him." A little later he accepts to become a scout and is seen in Sioux camp speaking to Red Cloud about the war matter, in which conversation the Sioux warrior informs Bridger that if the Bozeman Trail is shed with blood there will be war. Though it is not the cause of the problems, the appearance of a wagon with a man, Old Dan Castellus and his niece Julie, in the show business, will have a certain importance.

The theme of gold also appears here, when they are resting at night beside the fire and the girl says: "Uncle Dan thinks that gold in Virginia City is melting away like butter," however this theme will not be developed until later. What is developed now is the theme of the relationships between Whites and Indians as well as the breaking of the treaty for, having listened to a noise when speaking, lieutenant

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Dancy stands up and goes to see what happens, finding two Sioux boys near the horses and, without thinking, he kills one of them and warns the sergeant not to say anything. After having arrived at the fort, there are some sequences showing life among soldiers, but the important matter is the conversation between Julie and Dancy, in which the latter assures he has been under the orders of a man called Chivington.

In their journey to the fort the Sioux attack and Uncle Dan is shot by an arrow. Suspicion about Rob Dancy appears in the face of Jim Bridger, related to the attack of the Sioux, and he decides to make the sergeant speak, so the latter confesses the acts of Rob Dancy and the incident is explained as revenge. As the doctor does not dare operate on Uncle Dan, Jim does so and he recovers. And here appears the concept of “squaw man” (a man married to an Indian girl) in the mouth of the lieutenant, who accuses the scout of being one, which is used as meaning betrayal to the United States, since in the whole film, like in many others, the United States and the Indians are shown as enemies. The sentence uttered by Dancy a little later, assuring that “Bridger is a spy for Red Cloud” lets the spectator see the position of the lieutenant and many other members of that regiment, for Dancy's words, even though the most significant, are not the only ones. After a couple of sequences in which buffalo hunting can be seen, Monaseetah is discovered dressing in the American way and learning English, while a Christian woman says she does not want to listen about her as the wife of Jim Bridger. In the country a Sioux dressed as a soldier shoots a soldier and kills him. The next images are in Fort Phil Kearny, where Dancy declares he accepts Fetterman, who

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the spectator will discover is one of his comrades, while the colonel complains that there is not enough neither ammunition nor troops to defend the fort, consequently Jim Bridger is sent to speak to Red Cloud, and his loyalty is put in doubt.

As Julie, Dan's niece, leaves the fort in a very delicate moment, she is attacked by the Sioux, being saved by Jim Bridger, who knew about it through Monaseetah, but all this will be explained later in the film, when they are taking refuge in a place to be saved of the Indians. She is also informed of the story of Monaseetah, Black Kettle and Chivington's volunteers. The story goes in this way: Monaseetah was the youngest daughter of Chief Black Kettle, who also had another daughter, Nantah, married to Jim Bridger and with whom she had a son. This band was vandalized by Chivington and his volunteers until one day they killed the group in which Nantah and her son were, dying both. And now all the data appear clear to the spectator, who knows that Dancy belonged to that group led by Chivington, however the whole truth will be revealed later when Julie realizes.

After having seen his loyalty doubted again, some soldiers are sent on a short mission with the advice that they must not go far from a certain point. At their head, Fetterman and Dancy, who convinces the other to attack, due to which all the men are killed except one, confesses who gave the order, the terrible truth being found by the other soldiers arriving there. Jim now goes in search of Dancy, who is by the river, and in the fight he confesses he killed Nantah, but excuses himself, saying he followed orders. The film ends with a fight between Red Cloud's men, in which most of the men of the Sioux chief die, however Washington recognizes the Sioux have a right to the lands and abandons the fort, which is burned by the Indians.

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Bugles in the Afternoon (1952) tells the story of two men mingled in a conflict, of which the spectator does not know the real cause, though a secondary cause is known. This conflict starts with the quarrel of both men, Shafter, an officer who has been degraded for having quarrelled with Garnett, after which he goes to Bismarck and on his way he meets the girl, Josephine Russell. Most of the film deals with the conflict of these two men, between whom Josephine Russell is found, but it is mixed in with the conflict of the Indians when the soldiers go out and reach the Black Hills, and the conflict with the Sioux, led by Red Owl, Dakota warrior, is shown, but this conflict, which will last until the end of the film, does not burst now.

And here appears a sentence that summarizes the war with the Sioux in a very good way: "They are right now in the rest of their hunting lands. The last buffalo is here. The last freedom is here." After this Josephine and Shafter speak, and he enters her house, where Garnett is, so Shafter suddenly disappears, taking the mail to Fort Ricethe following day. Now, in the fort, his friend Moylan writes the minister explaining him the Shafter case, after having been taken under Garnett's command. In this way, the conflict between the two men is aggravated with the appearance of the girl and is also taken to the battlefield, starting again when the ball takes place and Shafter plays the role of a porter, being relieved of his duty. A new meeting between Shafter and Garnett, in the house of the girl, informs the spectator that the latter had had an affair with the former's girlfriend.

Again in the fort, General Terry and Reno appear, and also General Custer, who goes to Little Bighorn, and this involves the two men in the conflict which is the subject of this thesis. They reach Tongue River, and here the spectator discovers

the Arikara scouts, portrayed in their usual dress. When Shafter reaches the fort he is told that Garnett went to Little Bighorn, so he goes there to give him a note to Reno, and discovers when he watches from a hill that Custer has lost almost all of his men. In this place there is a fight between the two protagonists of the film, but this conflict is solved by a Indian, who kills Garnett, it being suggested that Shafter and Josephine marry.

4.3 The Cheyennes

In *The Yellow Tomahawk* (1954) the plot is about a man called Adam Reed, who is an acquaintance of a warrior called Fire Knife, of the Cheyenne tribe. When they meet at the beginning of the film, Adam is given two presents, one a yellow tomahawk, a sign of warning for the commanding officer of the fort, Major Ives, who is called "The Butcher" by the Cheyennes Indians, for having taken part in the Sand Creek Massacre, with which the Cheyennes send him a message: "leave the fort or suffer war". The other present, a bow, is for him and is a sign of friendship. Adam gives the commanding officer the gift, adding the warning that Fire Knife had said, that they must leave the fort or they would be attacked.

When in the fort, peace is interrupted by the arrival of a man wounded by a Cheyenne arrow. Major Ives, a bloodthirsty man, goes out of the fort in search of Indians, while Reed tells Fire Knife that the commander is not going to leave and a man looks in his saddlebags for the gold he had kept, making his intentions clear. This will become even clearer when Adam will discover the gold and faces a man, who disappears after a fight with him. The film ends with the defeat of the Indians.

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Soldier Blue (1970) deals with the Sand Creek Massacre, one of the most famous of the Indians, together with Washita River, or Wounded Knee, through the eyes of the two protagonists, Cresta Maribel Lee, a white woman kidnapped by the Cheyennes, who, after having been recovered by the Whites, is escorted by the other protagonist, Private Honus Gant. It tells the travel from the moment they are at a farm to Fort Reunion, where they meet Colonel Iverson, who will take the decision of attacking the Cheyenne village in which Cresta had lived. In the trip they find some adventures, starting with the robbery of the wagon with the pay of the soldiers. The whole film is filled with discussions about the wildness of the soldiers of the U. S. A. and the Indians, among them when they are both near the river and she assures them that the U. S. have come to a territory that is not theirs and build some forts while he is for the Americans adducing that the Indians scalp.

Cresta demonstrates a very good knowledge of the Indians' customs when she advises him not to take a certain way if he does not want to be killed "you take that road, soldier blue, and you get (sic) your father coming up here to bury," but also at other moments, such as when they are in trouble with the Kiowa and he has to fight or when they are in the cave and she prepares a cure and a meal for him. And here sexual tension appears at the moment in which, being a cold night, she goes near him and sleeps under his jacket, but there is also a point of humour when he tries to kill a goat and shoots a rabbit, which provokes an expression in her face that can only be qualified as indescribable. These are two moments in the film that relax the tension, but also show the problems of living on the prairie. And just now the film continues its action with the finding of a man with a wagon. Since the

beginning of the sequence Cresta Maribel Lee is pretending not to know the man and he also feels that something is wrong, but the man says: "I've got (sic) the feeling we met." The situation starts to be resolved when Private Gant checks the wagon and realizes that the rifles he was looking for are in the false bottom, moment at which they are caught and made prisoners, but they can escape and find a cave, where they hide.

It is here where there is an affair between them both and it is also here where she shows her ability to erase the trail and hide as well as other abilities related to heal and cook, however she is caught by an Indian scout of the Army when going for water, and taken to the fort, where she is recognized by her old boyfriend. When she realizes that the Army is going to attack her Cheyenne friends she distracts a soldier and, stealing a horse, goes and warns them. Iverson, the commandant of the fort, attacks the village, despite the attempts of the lieutenant and Spotted Wolf, one of the warriors who took part in the battle of Little Bighorn and was father of White Shield, whom he painted with yellow paint before the battle and had another son, called White Elk, and was made a chief the day after the battle of Little Bighorn. The film ends with the whole village harassed, two soldiers chained up, one of which is Honus Gant, and a group of Cheyennes taken going with the soldiers, among which is Cresta Maribel Lee.

4.4 Little Bighorn.

Custer of the West (1967) summarizes the first campaigns of General Custer, starting in 1861, following with 1863, where he meets Philip Sheridan, who gives

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him to choose among several possibilities, one of which is to go to the Dakotas to pacify that territory. Here, Custer is presented with a double morality for, while in the words of Sheridan he looks for a "holy war," which provokes in the spectator the sensations that Custer is a pacifier, when at last he accepts the mission in Dakota, where he has to kill the Indians it is clear that he is an Indian killer. He joins Libbie at the station and together they go to their destination, where Benteen is presented as defending the Indians. This is first seen at the door of the fort office and later inside it, when Custer accuses him of being a crusader and Reno of being a drunkard. What follows is a situation in which the soldiers simulate to be sick all of them in order not to attack the Cheyennes, so Custer makes them suffer a long hard training. He tells a group of Indians to go back to the reservation and, as they refuse, there is a punishment operation, which ends with the death of a bird the Cheyennes believed to be their chief. Right now there is confirmation that Custer was not seeking a holy war when he is seen using cannons to respond an Indian attack (curiously, later, when he will be offered a contract to promote a tank he will reject the idea). This operation is followed by an attack of the Indians to the village the fourth of July, when the dance is taking place.

As it is election time, Sheridan demands a great killing of Indians, to which Custer refuses, but finally he grants it and accomplishes the task. It is the moment of the Massacre of the Washita River. Also in this film, the theme of gold appears, here introduced by the miners, who come to the fort, and by a soldier called Paddy Mulligan who deserted to go in its search. The interview with a Cheyenne brave is eloquent of Custer's character, when, after insulting him he calls them "a military

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defeated people.” Newly the theme of gold appears, this time Mulligan is seen seeking gold and a little later arrested by a group of soldiers, taken into prison, where he says to General Custer “you got (sic) no feelings, general, you got (sic) just empty places” in a conversation in which Custer accuses him of not fulfilling his duty and he rejects all kind of rules and regulations, so Mulligan will be later executed by shooting.

The Great Duke Alexis of Russia appears at the fort, though nothing else is known about him, which is followed by the building of the railway, represented by the cutting of some trees and a little later a train going across a bridge, in which some people speak, and the imminent attack of the Indian. For his behaviour with the Indians Custer is accused and has to go to Washington to explain his conduct. He is destituted, for which reason he is offered the possibility of cooperating in the publicity of a tank, which he refuses. Later, after having written several letters to the President, he will be reinstated to his charge and plans his attack to the Little Bighorn, where they find, first a great many of Sioux, and later Cheyennes. After a battle in which the Indian superiority is seen, Custer dies with all his men, in a scene showing an impressive deployment of the Indian army.

In *The Great Sioux Massacre* (1965), though the main of the story is the battle of Little Bighorn, this time the conflict is seen from the point of view of Benton, who strangely is a non-existent officer in that battle. The names of those who were leading the columns were Reno and Benteen, for which reason it must be assumed that Benton is this last one, but the really important thing in this film is that it shows that Reno was not dead at that point of History, but that he survived the massacre

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and was submitted to a trial in which he was rehabilitated and his fame was restored. The book *The official record of a court of Inquiry convened at Chicago, Illinois, January 13, 1879, by the President of the United States upon the request of Major Marcus A. Reno, 7th U. S. Cavalry, to investigate his conduct at the Battle of Little Bighorn, June 25-6, 1876* tells the whole story.

The film starts at the moment in which the officer enters the room of the tribunal to have Reno judged, which means that the whole film is the telling before a tribunal what had happened in battle and is supposedly real. The story begins when Benton meets Dakota for the first time and, on his way to the fort, the Indians attack, which surprises them, then the Indians retire and the soldiers follow them. Though they cannot find the trail of the Cheyennes they realize that Mistress Turner has disappeared with her children. In the fort, Benton meets Caroline, an ex-fiancée, the daughter of an ex-Confederate soldier. Here Benton meets Custer, to whom he gives the report, and who defends him from the hard words of Mr. Turner, husband of the woman kidnapped. As a result of the Cheyenne actions Custer goes in search of the Indian chief and finds four of the most important and well-known of them all: Sitting Bull, Red Cloud, Brave Bear and Crazy Horse, who want to see his men free, while the Seventh Cavalry wants to liberate Mistress Turner.

Though in his first appearance he had been a moderate man, now his intention is to hang the four Indian chiefs unless they free Mistress Turner, so the Indians accept and Custer takes them to Black Canyon Fort, where Benton sees how the Indians are treated. At night, when Benton and Dakota are speaking about Dakota

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life, the Indians, armed with fire arrows, escape. Custer is accused of having made serious accusations to high charges of the administration, among which the brother of the President, for which reason he has to respond in Washington, so he leaves Reno as the officer in command. A senator, Roger Blane, arrives and offers Custer the possibility of aspiring to the charge of president of the United States, but for it he has to organize a hunt against the Indians, consequently he goes back to the service and after a series of chases to the Cheyennes he appears in the papers as a hero. Blane again visits Custer, who is sent to Little Bighorn, after having assured the senator he will reach the place the first, being congratulated in advance. On his way he passes through the Rosebud and when they reach the Little Bighorn he is warned by Benton that there is "the greatest military concentration in history." After the disaster, the action of the film goes back to the courtroom and Reno is declared innocent.

The story of *Son of the Morning Star* (1991) is narrated by two women, alternating their voices, supplementing the story of one what the other says, the first of them being that of Libbie Custer, the other a Cheyenne woman, named Kate Bighead, a girl at the beginning of the film. It tells the story of the two major figures of the battle of Little Bighorn, George Armstrong Custer on the side of the United States and Crazy Horse on the side of the Indian alliance, however neither Reno nor Benteen have a major implication in the development of the film. The action starts in Montana in June 1876, just after the battle, when Benteen, one of the times that he appears, has no news of Custer, who a little later will be found on the ground. The whole film is a flashback that starts telling the life in Kansas of Custer and his wife,

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the troop preparing for the Kansas Campaign and, in the middle of the public, the girl who tells the story and the later departs to battle. It is now that Kate Bighead states that Custer is called "Son of the Morning Star" by the Crows, an expression giving name to the film. The images of Crazy Horse and his vision take up a small part of the film, comforting and full of colour, being followed by the Fetterman Massacre. When after this he goes in an operation of punishment and the Indians escape he complains, asking for "an enemy that can fight with the rules." The fact of the deserters escaping makes Custer become angry and kill them, after which they come back to Fort Wallace, where he meets Libbie again and is later arrested, for which reason he has to travel to Washington, where he will have to defend for not having taken good care of his men and the killing of the deserters.

The film now goes to the Indian side and tells the story of Black Buffalo Woman, who had been flirted with by Crazy Horse, but the images showing this are not many and the story is practically insinuated, with the coming into Crazy Horse tipi of No Water, the offended husband, and the shooting of Crazy Horse by him. After the trial of Custer, the couple returns to Monroe, where their daughter asks for an autograph from the President, immediately followed by the dinner in which the Washita River Massacre is being planned and Grant is complaining of Custer. The sequence moves from the President not understanding the popularity of Custer, to having to admit that he leads the mission, succeeded by the narration of the massacre at the Washita River and the death of Black Kettle, justified by the voice of Elizabeth Custer assuring us that the Washita was a great victory for her husband, after which the film tells the uncertain story of the affair, suggested by her

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smile (while the voice off tells the rest), between the General and a Cheyenne woman, who had been kidnapped, whose fruit seems to have been a child called Yellow Bird.

At this moment, Custer wants to send the Cheyennes to the reservation; later, there will be a meeting between him and his wife, remembering the old times in which she calls him "Custer boy". Here, Red Cloud's story about his being in Washington is included, showing the images of Red Cloud shaking hands with the President, as well as him given a medal and sitting on the floor, meeting with the President and the others in order to speak about peace. In this conversation, the Sioux chief demands from President Grant the removal of the soldiers from Fort Fetterman, which Grant obviously rejects, followed by the images showing the entering of the soldiers into the Black Hills in 1874, accompanied by the voice of Elizabeth Custer, who justifies it, for according to her the occupation of the Black Hills was not an invasion, due to the necessity that the nation had to expand into the west.

The following images show Custer in distress, though they show a curious scene, for he shoots Bloody Knife, one of the Arikara scouts, only to later call him "friend". Crazy horse, who now appears on a hill, will be later seen preparing for war before the scaffold of his daughter, following the whole ritual that had been given to him by the medicine man of the tribe, told later, after which he attacks the gold seekers. At this moment, Custer is required to present battle to the Indians and the image goes to Dakota, where some children, Sioux as well as Whites, are at school, singing, as are also the Indians living in the reservation. Now Custer has to go to Washington

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again to face impeachment, where he attacks the Indian Policy, after which he is substituted by Reno, even though he complains to his superior, but he is not reinstated; on the contrary he will be obliged to go under Terry's command. The next sequences take place in the summer of 1876, at the ball, and in it a dialogue between Reno and Benteen speak about Custer's luck.

After Custer going to the tipi of the Arikara scouts, the images of the Custers sleeping lead the spectator to watch Elizabeth's bad dream, a premonition of the battle. The last part of the film is the introduction to the battle, and the preparation on both sides; on the part of the Sioux, Sitting Bull in council and the Sun Dance, so many times referred to, which will be performed by Sitting Bull on a fur, while on the other side Grant and others plan the battle of Little Bighorn, led by Custer. The preparation for the march is minutely shown, with the delivery of rations for the horses and the ammunition and shows the soldiers riding on horses and Custer following the trail until they find the Indians, which makes Custer become very excited. The development of the battle itself takes some minutes, after which Benteen arrives, while on the other side the alliance of Sioux and Cheyennes collect scalps and other things at the battlefield. Just after it the voice of Libbie Custer introduces the surrender of Crazy Horse: "Six months after the battle Crazy Horse...surrendered," followed by the sequences of his imprisonment and later death. The film ends with the voice of Elizabeth Custer telling about the surrender of Sitting Bull in 1881 and his death in 1890, as well as the tragedy of Wounded Knee.

5 FILM REPRESENTATION OF THE BATTLE OF LITTLE BIGHORN

In this part of my thesis I shall analyse the films concerning the battle of Little Bighorn in relation, not only to the action of the battle itself, but also the characters. Four were the tribes involved in the battle of Little Bighorn: the Sioux, the Cheyennes, the Crow and the Arikara. This thesis is centred on the Sioux, for it would be too laborious and extensive a work to develop the life and customs of the four tribes involved in the battle of Little Bighorn, as well as the life of all the chiefs having a certain role in it. In the same way the soldiers of the United States have also been left apart.

The first reference to the Cheyennes is of the year 1680. In 1806 they travelled from their new home in the Black Hills to the Missouri and they seem to have come from the Mississippi headwaters,⁶³ though Wissler assures the Cheyenne come from Minnesota.⁶⁴ The Cheyenne tribe was composed of five bands: 1) Hevists-unipahis. 2) Hevhaitaneo. 3) Hotamitaneo. 4) Masikota. 5) Ohmisis. Though it was often supposed that their name was derived from the French word *chien* it really was an abbreviation of the Sioux words *Sha hi ye na* or *Sha hi e la*, by which the Cheyennes were named.⁶⁵

For years during our first knowledge the name Cheyenne was supposed to be derived from the French word *chien*, 'dog', and this appeared to receive confirmation from the fact that an important soldier society of the tribe was called Dog Soldiers. The tribal name is now known to be an abbreviation of

⁶³ Ibid. 87

⁶⁴ Wissler 1989 108

⁶⁵ Grinell 1962 2

the Sioux terms *Sha hi ye na*, or *Sha hi e la*'red talkers,' meaning 'people of alien speech'-those who talk a language which is not intelligible...They call themselves Tsistsistas, which the books commonly give as meaning 'people'⁶⁶ (Grinnell 1962 2-3).

They were Plains Indians who lived in tipis and used *travois*,⁶⁷ a kind of stretcher used by several tribes of Indians to transport things and people, seem to have planted squashes, beans and corn before having become buffalo hunters, made bead work and worshipped two bundles with arrows, which were guarded by a keeper. Curtis assures that the sacred palladium of the Cheyennes consists of four arrows⁶⁸ and Wissler adds that besides the arrows there were other sacred objects, mentioning a "kind of hat."⁶⁹ The Cheyenne chiefs were chosen due to their qualities. Originally there were four warrior societies: Dog Men, Lances, Red Shields and Kit-Fox Men,⁷⁰ but later two more societies appeared: the Bow Strings and the Crazy Dogs.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Ibid. 1962 3

⁶⁷ Wissler 1989 124

⁶⁸ Curtis 1911 113

⁶⁹ Wissler 1989 109

⁷⁰ Curtis 1911 103

⁷¹ Ibid. 105

5.1 LITTLE BIG MAN (1970)

Of the films about the battle of Little Bighorn, there is one that analyses in certain depth the figure of George Armstrong Custer, offering a detailed characterisation of his personality as well as his appearance and his particular way of dressing: *Little Big Man* (1970). It tells the life of a Cheyenne warrior, whose name is similar to a Sioux warrior who took part in the battle of Little Bighorn. The main character, Jack Crabb, later called Little Big Man by the Cheyennes, is interpreted by Dustin Hoffman. The film, through the character of Jack Crabb, Little Big Man for the Cheyennes, narrates the story of almost a hundred years of the Wild West, presenting to the eyes of the spectator the most relevant events in both worlds, the Indian and the United States, such as, for instance, the Washita River Massacre and the battle of Little Bighorn.

Among the most important characters appearing through the whole film are General George Armstrong Custer, Wild Bill Hickok and Buffalo Bill, but there are a number of characters that represent professions, like the prostitute, represented by Lulu Kane, the gambler, one of the jobs Jack develops, or the charlatan, represented by Mr. Merryweather. Two of the most important tribes of the north appear here: the Cheyennes and the Pawnees. The whole film is the story of an interview between a reporter and Jack Crabb, in which the former looks for the way of life of the Native Americans. The story starts when Jack Crabb and his sister are attacked by a group of Pawnees and later rescued by a Cheyenne warrior called "Shadow-that-Comes-in-Sight," many times abbreviated to Shadow. They are taken to the tipi of the chief "Old Lodge Skin," where Caroline is discovered to be a

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girl. The mind of the Whites is clear here, with the words of Caroline: “that explains why they didn't rape me off,” so in accordance with this thought she escapes at night, while from the next day on, Jack is instructed in the Cheyenne way of life. And here two new characters appear who are important for the Cheyenne way of life: the man who follows the way of the women, represented by Little Horse, equivalent to the *winkte* in the Sioux tradition, and Younger Bear, who becomes an enemy of Jack.

Now the battle against the Whites will make Jack change from one side to another and go back to the white man's side, where he is delivered to Pastor Silas Pendrake, in whose house Jack will learn religion by the hand of Mrs Pendrake, who will teach him a great many things. Mrs. Pendrake is a curious character, for at the same time she teaches him the principles of religion, she is seen visibly excited in a sexual way, which will be clearer later, being unequivocal the moment she takes him with her when shopping, and makes love to the clerk of the shop. For this reason Jack, when he realises what is happening, leaves that kind of life and joins Mr Merryweather, a charlatan who sells a drink to cure all, but they are discovered by a group of people who tar and feather them, until Caroline, his sister, who forms part of the group, discovers that he is her brother, which makes him become a gunman, another of the institutions of the Wild West, appearing now one of the most important characters of his life, Wild Bill Hickok, to whom he finds in the saloon and after some moments of tension in which Hickok kills one of the presents after Jack had bragged with the gunman, Jack is discovered not to have killed anyone and so retires from that life to become a businessman and marry

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Olga, which he will have to leave due to their ruin in the next sequence.

So, counselled by Custer, who has just appeared, they go west, being attacked by a group of Indians, who kidnap Olga. The fact of her search will give an excuse for a great part of the film from now on. In it he finds some Indians ready to change a squaw for a bottle of whisky. When he is back in the Cheyenne camp the characters of Little Horse and Younger Bear, who has become a contrary, (the warrior that does everything in the opposite way) appear again, but he leaves the camp very soon and goes to Custer's, where he applies for a job, being hired as a mule-skinner, but will have to escape when in battle against the Pawnees he is shot by a soldier. Later attacked by his friend Shadow, who dies at the hands of a soldier, he will discover a woman, Sunshine, giving birth to child, to whom he will marry and with whom will live in the Washita River, where his wife will make him to be with her sisters, and where he discovers that Younger Bear has married Olga.

They are attacked by the soldiers, who kill his wives and children, thus he will change side again and will go back to Custer camp disguised as a soldier, being discovered by the captain, his life being saved by Custer himself to whom he will try to kill. Just now he becomes a drunkard and meets Wild Bill again, who asks him the favour of giving a widow a certain amount of money and almost immediately dies. The lady is none other than the widow of Pastor Pendrake, who now lives in a brothel under the name of Lulu Kane and confesses Jack that she desired him. Drunk again he finds Mr Merryweather and Buffalo Bill, whose pass and a heap of furs show another important fact in the reality of the west: the trade of buffalo furs. After some moments living as a hermit he sees the Seventh Cavalry

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going to Little Bighorn and offers his services as a scout being accepted. The battle is shown and after it he is saved by Younger Bear, who is glad to have saved him in exchange for having saved his life first, for now he can kill him when he will meet him again. Right now he will visit chief Old Lodge Skin, who wants to die, so he goes to the mountain accompanied by Jack, but as he does not acquire it, will be back to the village. The film ends when the reporter excuses and leaves the hospital in which Jack is.

The first mention of Custer and his meeting with Little Big Man is at the beginning of the film, in the images that offer the spectator the moment of the interview in which the reporter becomes interested in the Indian way of life. Then Jack Crabb, very old, shows anger for the lack of knowledge of the journalist, making him turn the tape on and record the whole interview and starting to speak, telling the whole story of the film. First the camera shows his face, wrinkled, smoking a cigarette, occupying the whole screen, then a voice is heard and a little later the reporter is discovered by the spectator. Then Jack lets the cigarette fall and the reporter takes it and gives it to him again, after which he takes a notebook, while shaking a pen, with a proud attitude, which makes Jack become angry. The following dialogue develops the conversation between them:

Jack: My name is Jack Crabb and I am the sole white survivor⁷² of the Battle of Little Bighorn, popularly known as Custer's Last Stand.

⁷² The discussion about this theme will be seen later in the part concerning the film *They Died with Boots On* (1941), but it is important to say that the consideration of Jack Crabb as belonging to the white army is doubtful, due to the fact that he has lived among Cheyennes and taken part in battles with them.

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Reporter: Well, Mr. Crabb, I'm more interested in the primitive lifestyle of the Plains Indians that I am in tall tales (sic) about Custer.

Jack: Tall tales? (sic) Are you calling me a liar?

Reporter: No, no. It's just that I'm interested in the way of life of the Indian, rather than, shall we say, adventure.

Jack: You think the Battle of Little Bighorn was an adventure?

The interview continues, with the reporter saying that "Little Bighorn was not representative of encounters between Whites and Indians" and trying to explain that it was for this reason that the behaviour of the Whites resulted in "the near genocide of the Indian." As Jack does not understand the word the reporter explains the meaning as "extermination, the killing off of an entire people." Then Jack starts to tell his story. After the killing of their parents by the Pawnees, which is shown by the desolation of the scene, with Caroline and Jack coming from under the wagon, they are rescued by a Cheyenne warrior called Shadow-that-Comes-in-Sight, who transports them to the tipi of the chief, where they are invited to smoke. The dialogue between Jack and his sister Caroline expresses very well her thought of Indians: "It's plain what they want" she says. "What?" answers Jack. "Me." Then at the coughing of Caroline, the women of the tribe suspect that she is a girl, so one of the women makes the men leave, making a gesture rubbing both hands one against the other in order to check the girl by looking if she has breasts. The sequence when everybody leaves the tipi is followed by another image of a tipi at

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night, beside which Caroline is sitting with a blanket on her head and a little later escaping, only seen by her brother.

The next sequence shows the next day with some sequences summarizing the cooking life of the Cheyennes: meat drying on a stick, a pot with something in it, a woman giving Jack something to eat, while the voice off says it is “dog boiled” and the woman trying the meal from the pot. Some images show Jack learning how to use an arch and the arrows, how to hunt or protect from the sun, followed by the news that there will be war against the Pawnees, becoming obvious when the boys are speaking about it, and Jack is insulted by Younger Bear, to whom he responds by beating him, thus winning him an enemy. The following sequences are dedicated to a story told by Old Lodge Skins about a warrior called Little Man, who had fought the Pawnees, and had been killed by them, but his head had continued speaking! The commentary of Old Lodge Skins related to the small size of his body, but the greatness of his spirit, seems to introduce the clue to understand the name that the old chief is going to give Jack a little later.

A new character, Little Horse, the man who does not want to make war and, consequently, follows the way of women, appears here stroking a dog in a very childish, even feminine way. After having decided to go and fight the Pawnees, Little Big Man, in the middle of the battle, is going to be killed by a Pawnee warrior when the latter realizes that Jack is a white man and forgives his life, the Pawnee warrior being immediately killed by a Cheyenne brave. A little later, when the warriors go back to the village the chief gives Jack his Indian name, Little Big Man. Now the tribe moves, when they find an Indian camp devastated, for which reason

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the chief decides to make war on the Whites, the following sequence showing Little Big Man in the tipi of Old Lodge Skins and there the former tells the latter that he wants to take part in the battle, though it is only a skirmish in which conflict a soldier follows him and charges. After evading the attack he defends himself, blessing George Washington and his mother, but as the soldier seems not to have heard those two sentences Jack claims the attention of him, complaining for having being attacked.

And now one of the most important points can be observed here: the adaptation of Indians to cowboy life through force in the exchanging of Jack's clothes and customs by the Americans. From their kidnapping to this point in the film, the main character, whose Christian name was Jack Crabb, appeared dressed in the Indian way, except only a couple of sequences at the very beginning, but when he is caught by the soldiers he changes his house and bed, his dress abruptly as he also does his hair. The first of the changes Luther Standing Bear speaks about are all those things related to the house, like the bed, telling that for some time they continued sleeping on the floor, which was not soft, like their beds in the tipis. He assures that one day they were called by the interpreter, who gave them their mattresses, which were nothing but a bag that might be filled with straw, so the interpreter indicated them to go to the haystack to fill the mattresses, a task performed by the children as soon as they could; then they went up to the second floor, where they were lined up, a situation qualified by Standing Bear as amusing. He goes on to say that that night they had their first good sleep for a long time, and makes reference to the way the mattress was filled with straw, and had to be

sewed though it was not, due to the lack of someone to perform the task. He also speaks about the lack of sleeping sheets, which obviously supposes the fact of sleeping directly on the mattress. In this section of the adaptation is also included all that related to the clothes, whose change Luther Standing Bear reflects with different reactions, from the first curiosity, when they heard they had to use the white men clothes and the excitement that that provoked in them to the strangeness they felt dressed in trousers buttoning at the back.⁷³

One of the usual practices in the integration of the Native Americans in U. S. society, in what was called “normal life” was the cutting of their hair, which makes Indians become more integrated in the American society and in this way makes the Indian appearance dissolve in the conjunct of the people. It is important to notice here the feelings of the Indians, and the change observed in them from the moment their hair had been cut, reflecting sadness and loss of identity. Firstly Standing Bear qualifies the fact of having his hair cut, which had been made with a machine, as amusing, but later he tells about it assuring that he had felt strange until the point of shedding tears, whether the barber noticed it or did not, not caring about that fact, adding that he was only thinking of his hair missing, which made him felt as he were not an Indian anymore, but a poor imitation of a White.⁷⁴ Now Jack is delivered to Pastor Pendrake, a brutal man, who despises him and says he had lived in spiritual abandonment, addressing him at the moment he receives him in his wagon, accusing him of being a liar and assuring that the Indians are “minions of the devil.” The attitude of Mrs. Pendrake, however, contrasts with the

⁷³ Standing Bear 1975 142

⁷⁴ Ibid. 141

attitude of his husband, who being tender, caresses him and at a certain moment takes his hand and even kisses him and after she has given him a bath, which she does slowly, enjoying it, his face, and also hers, showing pleasure, but her excitement is really seen in the moment of the kiss.

Another usual practice in the integration of the Indians in American civilization was the training in religion, for Native Americans, when they were being civilized by the colonizers, were forced to acquire a new one. What underlies the matter here is, obviously, that the Indian religions were not considered as such, but only superstitions, and, for this reason, suppressed. In contrast to this, the respect of Luther Standing Bear's father, told by the writer, to western religion can be observed, saying that this father was invited to a service in their church. Luther's father asked what it was, being told that he was in the place where the White Man's religion was being discussed. Standing Bear does not add any details about the denomination of his church or the existence of any other religious ones, only that his father sat respectfully and listened with attention, even if he did not understand anything.

Though the choice of the new Christian religion was forced, the boys and girls had a certain freedom, it being possible to decide the church to which they wanted to belong, a liberty that granted them the possibility of going to Sunday school. Most of the boys chose the Episcopalian Church, where this man was Christianised with the name of Luther, as expected. This has nothing to do with what happened in the film, in which Little Big man is forced to choose the only denomination he is offered, delivered to a pastor, whose denomination is unknown, without having

been specified the existence of any other one in the town.

In this film, the presence of religion has three different forms: First, an amusing one, in which Jack is instructed with some important data when he is being bathed by the wife of the pastor. In this sequence, though she is telling him he must be pure, Mrs Pendrake is visibly excited, although, at the same time, she assures us that Pastor Pendrake is not wrong, asking him if he realizes it. The words of Jack reveal that he does not know what she is speaking about, while Mrs Pendrake continues speaking about Jesus, preaching that he is Jack's Saviour, and asks him if he realizes it. Jack's answer is clear, because when he says "lordly" he does not seem to know what he is doing and it does not seem to be important for him. The conversation ends in the following way:

Mrs Pendrake: Are you thinking of Jesus, Jack?

Jack: Yes, ma'am (Sic). Yes, ma'am (sic). Yes, ma'am. (Sic)

Mrs pendrake: You mustn't fib (Sic) to me

Jack: Oh, no! I love Jesus and Moses and all of them.

Mrs Pendrake: There's quite a difference. Moses was a Hebrew.

When she adds that Jesus was a gentile, the reverend enters the room and she tells him she is giving the child important religious instruction, which in all this sequence is mixed with sex. Since the moment in which she tells Jack that she is going to give him a bath until the moment in which she gives him the towel, the Jack' expression of delight can be seen together with the attitude of desire of Mrs Pendrake. The little kisses she gives him on the cheek and the mouth, the way of

touching him and bathing him allow the spectator to see it clearly. Now Jack is seen learning to read and write with the books and notebooks on a chair and just after that having fun with a girl in the barnyard, for which reason he is beaten by the Pastor, who opens the door abruptly, catches them, and whips him, after which actions Mrs Pendrake cures him and advises him of the benefits of not falling into sin. People in church sing "Amazing Grace", followed by a humorous and cruel scene of the baptism of Jack, in which the Pastor retains him under the water for too long, causing him almost to be drowned, represented by his legs flailing in the air. Jack goes back home when he is observed by two girls with an expression of desire and covering his ears with books when at home. The sequence in which Mrs Pendrake says she is going shopping after telling his husband, and in which Jack asks her to take him with her lead the spectator to that scene in which she enters the shop and asks the owner to serve Jack a soft drink. After that, the owner and Mrs Pendrake disappear and Jack discovers that they are making love, which is suggested by her way of moving the legs and the voice of Mistress Pendrake. The action was in the following way: when Jack is alone in the shop he takes a great quantity of soda from a machine with a form of an elephant, until he decides to investigate and reaches a staircase, where some voices are heard and the legs of them both together are seen, so he goes back, looks at himself in a mirror and his period of religion ends. The second sequence, a serious one, is that of the church: in it, the people can be seen chanting hymns, followed by a third sequence in which some girls are seen looking at him and later he resists temptation, pressing books on his ears.

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The third way of integrating the Indian was through education, obviously in western values, in which, besides learning the subjects of their study they had to learn new manners, for instance the way of behaving at meal time, starting by those things so elemental for a white man, such as the way of sitting at a table, unnecessary for Indians, for tables did not exist for the Plains tribes. This learning was made through English, which meant the prohibition of using their own language, a fact that occasioned several communication problems, even between relatives. In this film, no consideration about language appears, because the Cheyenne language is not used, but only English, and there is no discussion about the fact of whether English can be used or not. In fact, the existence of the Cheyenne language is not even mentioned.

When I got (sic) downstairs, my father was in the center of a large crowd of the boys, who were all shaking hands with him. I had to fight my way through to reach him. He was so glad to see me, and I was so delighted to see him. But our rules were that we were not to speak the Indian language under any consideration. And here was my father, and he could not talk English! (Standing Bear 1975 149).

In this film, he does not complain about it, not letting us know what Jack's opinion was about that matter, but in reality the Indians suffered as a humiliation the imposition of English as their only language. Neither is anything known about the use of both languages, or whether he had forgotten his native tongue. Jack also has to change his manners and behave like a white person, learning some things

so simple for the white men as how to be sitting at a table or eating with a knife and fork, while a little after the arrival at the Cheyenne camp Jack can be seen eating a piece of meat that is qualified as dog with the hands, and can also be seen drinking soup from a bowl directly, without a spoon.

After having looked at him in a mirror and leaving his religious life, Jack joins Mr. Merryweather, a charlatan who sells a kind of liquor supposed to heal miraculously. This man is teaching him the way of speaking to fool the buyers, when suddenly a group of people arrives complaining about the death of some men and, as a consequence of that, demanding the ingredients of the pseudo-medicine. After that, they tar and feather them until the moment when one of the group asks Jack his name and from the answer she realizes that Jack is her brother and consequently helps him, but now she teaches him how to shoot a gun, Jack's life as a gunman starting at this point. In the first sequences of his apprenticeship he is seen in some silly attitudes, such as when his sister tells him to be "snake-eyed," but the film becomes serious when he tells Caroline: "throw up three" meaning three plates to shoot at and he has three targets, to which Caroline answers: "natural born gunfighter."

After this, he is seen dressed in black from head to foot and going into a saloon, where he scares a man who is at the bar, saying to him "you're crowding (sic) me," so the man retreats. Then a laugh is heard, he is ready to shoot and becomes very serious now, while the man sitting, who had laughed, is shut but sure, but the situation changes completely when he asks the man on the chair who he is and he answers that he is Wild Bill Hickok, so he relaxes and sits at his invitation. At this

moment, they speak about how many men each one of them has killed, and Hickok tells Jack that he does not resemble a murderer. Following a cry from an unknown place Hickok goes for a beer and then someone tries to kill him, so Hickok shoots and kills the man, to which Jack reacts saying "Mister Hickok, that man is really dead." And in this way the life of Jack as a gunman ends, with the anger of Caroline, who loads her things in the chariot and leaves.

Jack marries, and this is depicted by a photo in bridal dress and the carrying of the bride in his arms to the inside of their new house, after which he takes care of the business, not understanding what is happening, letting the spectator suspect that he was robbed by the suppliers. Just now a man can be seen passing in front of his business, the men carrying things out of their house and Olga crying, representing the ruin of both. After having lost all they had in the business and having been thrown out of their house Jack and his wife Olga can be seen before their house, while she is crying when Custer and two soldiers appear. The U. S. General is represented as proud, blond, with a beard and a moustache, his hair golden-yellow and dressed in skin jacket. In the first meeting between him and Jack Crabb the former appears accompanied by two of his men, occupying almost the whole of the screen. The General's opinion is that the scene is pathetic, while the lieutenant only answers "Yes, sir," which Custer completes, qualifying the marriage of Jack and Olga as "a ruined and desolate family wiped out by economic misfortune."

Then the voice of the narrator, Jack Crabb himself, says he will never forget the first time he set eyes on General George Armstrong Custer. Now Jack is seen and

later the face of Custer with the sun dazzling, and even later the conversation of Jack and his wife, Olga, which exemplifies the pride of the U.S. General, who asks Jack if he has a trade. Then this is seen putting his arm around the back of his wife, as she cries and puts a scared face and Jack answers the General that he does not exactly have a job. Custer gives him the advice to go west, while to this counsel Olga replies, weeping, repeating the word "west" with a mixture of certain fear and surprise. To justify her, Jack tells that his wife is scared of Indians, the reply from Custer being restrictive, showing self-confidence, assuring that she has nothing to fear from Indians, giving her his personal guarantee, a guarantee that does not seem to be very reliable, for in the following sequence there is a ferocious attack by the Indians on the stagecoach. A redskin goes up to the door of the stagecoach with a knife in his mouth, putting his face into the coach, then he is thrown out of the wagon to the ground, the Indians kill the pastor, who is reading the Bible to console the occupants, and Jack drives the coach, riding a horse, while an Indian rides the one beside. Despite this, the wagon falls into the water, some occupants escape, but not Olga, who is kidnapped by an Indian, while Jack can only look on.

And here the search for Olga starts, Jack seen riding on a horse, followed by some Indians begging while a cowboy tells him to give them some whisky in exchange for a woman. After this he goes into Cheyenne territory, where he is not recognized, but finally he gives the braves some data that he could not know, unless he had been living among them, so one of them says "Little Big Man was my brother, but you're not him," but when he is asked what happened to him the

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Cheyenne warrior answers that Little Big Man “turned into a little swallow and flew away” and, as the Cheyennes do not know what is happening, they take him to chief Old Lodge Skins, who receives him gladly who, after taking the present Jack brings for him, and smoking together, decides that the newcomer is Little Big Man. In this conversation there is an important fact, the description of Old Lodge Skin’s dream, which the spectator can discover to be coincidental with what happened when Jack was shopping with Mrs Pendrake and had a soda pop.

Now, in the Cheyenne village, Little Horse puts a blanket on his shoulders and dances as a woman and Younger Bear appears riding the horse on the contrary way and walking towards the back. The following sequence shows Old Lodge Skins and Jack speaking about women, and the chief says that American women do not enjoy with sex, in answering Jack, who assures that they do. They also speak about Custer, whose name Jack translates as Long Hair, saying that the general is not crazy. After this, Jack and the tribe separate, not before the Cheyenne chief tells him that he will return to the Human Beings, meaning the Cheyennes, but he also tells Jack that he will have three or four wives, which will be fulfilled later. A soldier crosses the scene from side to side, two men and two soldiers with horses going on foot at the right of the screen, while two men appear and go to a shelter. Custer appears little by little, accompanied by three men, while Jack looks and speaks to the General, telling him he wants to be a scout in order to find his wife and reminding the General that he advised him to go west, but Custer does not recognize Jack. After a general view of the camp the General, the lieutenant and another soldier can be seen:

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Custer: Furthermore, you don't look like a scout to me. Not a bit. A scout has a certain appearance, Kit Carson, for example. But you don't have it. You look like... a mule skinner.

Jack: I know nothing about mules.

Custer: I can tell the occupation of a man by looking at him. Notice the bandy legs, the strong arms. This man has spent years with mules. Isn't that correct?

Jack: Well, eh, yes, sir.

Custer: Hire the mule-skinner

Voice: Yes, sir.

Another of the features of Custer's personality represented here is the fact that he tries to make the others believe that he knows people at first sight; however, he reveals a great lack of attention, or at least, a certain lack of memory, when not both, not recognizing Jack, to whom he had warned to go west, which is followed by the moment in which Jack, who only wants to find Olga, speaks to a soldier. Now the soldiers, among whom Jack is, turn on the Cheyennes and, in the middle of the confusion, Jack tries to convince the soldiers not to kill everyone, but the response of one of them is to go after him, provoking him to cross the river to save his life, being attacked by Shadow, who will be killed by the soldier who went after him, which provokes in him a state of mind he is not able to explain. Then he finds himself in the woods, where in the middle of the bushes he discovers a girl giving

birth, and when he is speaking to her he discovers her identity, first asking her if she is Shadow's wife and this possibility being denied with her shaking her head, he again asks if she is his daughter.

As she nods Jack asks her where her husband is, being answered in a low voice that he was killed. Meanwhile the soldiers are seen behind the scene, a little later the Cheyenne village and, immediately, Jack and the girl, identified as Sunshine, go to speak to Old Lodge Skins, who informs him of the great number of people who had been wiped out by the Whites and here one more piece of Indian wisdom is shown, when the chief says: "the Human Beings (the Cheyennes) believe everything is alive...but the white man believes everything is dead," opposing both ways of thinking, which is also supported by the parallel structure. The following is the camp at the Washita, with everything snowy and Sunshine with her husband, where she suggests he take her three sisters as wives, "I believe my sisters are here," she says, and later "they have no husbands and they cry," so when he asks her what she wants him to do, she answers him that she knew that he would understand and come with them; all four of them are smiling, suggesting that they are going to have sex and immediately go away from the tipi, while Jack walks angry and Little Horse embraces him on his way.

The *winkte* calls Younger Bear, who is not a contrary (a type of warrior, qualified in the film as very dangerous for doing everything in a contrary way, that is to say "to say hello instead of goodbye, to dry oneself with sand and so on) anymore and is showing off with his wife, assures he has "a wife and four horses" and when he is invited to eat, Jack discovers that Younger Bear's wife is Olga, so he refuses the

invitation, ending in this way the search for Olga. Another of the themes that join all the elements of the film appears here: the dream, for the chief tells them he has dreamed of horses the previous night and just then that the ponies are trying to tell him something. With the village in silence and Jack out of the tipi, Sunshine pokes her head out of it and asks Jack why he hates her sisters and goes to have the baby out of the village. So Jack goes into the tipi and satisfies the three of them sexually, and when Sunshine returns and asks him if he has made love to all of them and he says it was so, she recognizes him as a good man. Then he takes his new son in his hands and both smile, both of them going into the tipi, when he, suddenly, repents, runs and sees the horses whinnying, while the soldiers are coming in the mist, so Jack goes to Old Lodge Skins and tries to save him, but this one refuses, saying that he is blind and cannot fight, but that he will not run.

Jack tries to convince him, and takes advantage of the dream that the old chief had, assuring that if he could not see the soldiers in the dream, they cannot see him in return, making the old chief feel invisible, which seems to work out, for they both leave the tipi safely, which is surprising, given the imprudent attitude of Old Lodge Skins. Now the band of music is standing up playing "Garry Owen" while the carnage is taking place and Old Lodge Skins and Jack are safe. At this moment of the action a new example of Custer's pride and arrogance is shown when he decides to kill the ponies and put in question the worth of the lieutenant, saying that he is beginning to annoy him. Moreover, the order concerning what to do about the women is confused: "The men are under strict orders not to shoot the women, unless, of course, they refuse to surrender," which leaves the soldiers an ample

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space of decision, if they want to justify the killing of a certain woman or a group of them. Jack, in his escape, sees the way his wife is killed and then the calm after the killing, the desolation of the village as the soldiers are riding their horses around and "Garry Owen" sounds.

From the view of the desolate Indian camp the camera jumps to the U. S. camp, where another proof of the self-confidence and pride of Custer can be seen. After having escaped from the carnage, the camera shows a camp of soldiers going from side to side, some of them on horses, but most of them on foot, when Jack arrives dressed in furs and is stopped by a captain, who asks him where he is going. To this, Jack answers that he has a message for the general, when the captain sees something on the face of Jack and wants to observe it more clearly, recognizing it as Indian paint, though Jack assures it to be mud, and being also accused of bearing an Indian knife. In order to clarify the affair, the captain asks Jack the name of his company and his commanding officer, when Custer intervenes asking what is happening.

After having been told that a renegade has entered the camp the answer of Custer is only "take him away and hang him," but Jack quickly interrupts Custer's decision, trying to make him remember, while Jack's face shows an expression of desperation when he is trying to save himself from death. When asked by Custer the way he became a renegade he answers he did not, but that he resisted the tortures when captured by the Cheyennes. As a consequence of this, when Custer seems that he is going to recognize the error, he reacts by reproaching the captain to have been wrong in his judgement, though the spectator knows that the one

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misjudging the situation is General Custer, who shows here an attitude of selfishness, not being able to admit a mistake. However, it is the ability of Jack that allows him to solve the problem, as it is also worthy to be noticed here that the twisting of words made by Custer reverses the situation, when he passes from the appearance of having recognized his mistake, first to guilt the captain and later to finish the sequence asking the captain to be more careful.

The expression and feelings of Custer change from the beginning of the sequence to the end. The moment he hears that Jack is a renegade, his decision is to hang him, showing no mercy; however, when Jack says he is the mule-skinner the General shows an expression that something sounds familiar to him and he seems to be remembering, when he states he remembers that, but the change of his feelings does not end here. When Jack tells him he has been tortured, the U. S. General seems not to believe, so he asks if he laughed and changes his expression, becoming more pretentiously modest when he seems to recognize the wrong judgement. Later, he becomes angry with the Captain while he assures that his judgement had been completely mistaken, asking him if he is not glad that he had interrogated Jack more deeply.

At night, a shelter is seen with pots and a fire burning, from which smoke rises and near it wood piled up and, under the shelter there are three men when Jack goes near it, while a fourth is coming from it. In the camp there are two soldiers on horseback and a man acting as sentinel. Jack is served something in a pot and immediately he enters Custer's tent, where a view of his robes can be observed, and immediately the general is seen half-naked, writing at the table, with papers

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written on, a lamp, an inkwell and some other things. When Jack takes the knife he will try to kill him, while he has a tea-pot in the other hand! Custer asks him for tea, which Jack serves him, and then the General realizes the intentions of the protagonist and accuses him of trying to kill him, considering him a renegade, but “no Cheyenne brave.” The dialogue ends with the rhetorical question of Custer about the possibility of hanging Jack, and answering himself saying that he is not going to do it, for the matter “is not worth a reversal of a Custer decision.” And he takes a hand mirror, a pair of scissors and starts to arrange his moustache and beard while the spectator sees Jack in the mirror going out of the tent. In this way Custer despises his visitor again, showing himself to be more powerful, which means Jack will live no more among the soldiers. The next sequence is that in which he is very drunk and his clothes full of mud, dancing before a stagecoach, then falling to the floor. Suddenly he meets Wild Bill Hickok, who gives him twenty dollars and tells him to become “gloriously” drunk, but he also asks him to have a bath first, obtain some clothes and go to see him in the saloon. Some horses are seen in the street in the rain and the ground full of mud, when Jack enters the saloon, meets Hickok and they both speak. The latter gives Jack a bag with money and tells him to deliver it to a widow, adding “she's quite a widow.” When Jack leaves the saloon a shot is heard and a boy shouting that he had killed his daddy while two men seize the boy. Hickok, agonizing, tells Jack not to tell anything of the widow affair to his wife. The following sequence develops the encounter between Jack and Mrs Pendrake, now Lulu Kane, in a brothel. Jack rings, and when she opens the door he recognizes the widow as soon as he sees her:

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Jack: Mrs Pendrake!

Mrs Pendrake: You're mistaking me (sic) someone else. My name is Lulu.

Jack: You're name ain't (sic) Lulu. You're Louise Pendrake.

Mrs Pendrake: Who are you?

Jack: I'm Jack Crabb.

During the whole sequence Jack shows a self-confident attitude and even laughs at times, while the widow is confused, as if trapped; however she maintains a defiant attitude and tries to defend herself, trying to react, even when the *madame* arrives and shouts at her, but when the *madame* leaves, Louise Pendrake sits and tries to justify and minimize the importance of having been caught in a brothel. "This is an ill house and I'm a fallen flower" she affirms with a certain dignity, and complains, weeping falsely. After which she goes near him, starts to undress and goes to bed, where she waits for him, but Jack decides not to make love with her and only puts the money that Hickok gave him on her belly, going away. Then he is drunk again, fallen, the mud covering the street, when Mr Merryweather finds him again. Some men are loading hides on a wagon, and Merryweather says that a man passing by is Buffalo Bill, all this suggesting the commerce of hides, after which Jack becomes a hermit.

After having lived as a hermit for a time, Jack Crabb, who is dressed in furs, with a long beard, a moustache and dirty, has decided to commit suicide. The voice of the narrator, Jack himself, comments that he had become crazy, but the moment he is

just before the cliff with the intention of throwing himself to the void, he sees the Seventh Cavalry, who are on their way to Little Bighorn, and recovers. Then he decides to shave and go to see Custer, thinking that the time has come to look the devil in the eye, as he himself comments as a voiceoff, meaning to go and find General Custer, who is dressed in an immaculate way as if he were going to a celebration, with a perfectly neat, completely clear yellow clothes. Jack presents himself before him, who judges him, twisting his moustache, as he tells the sergeant to take Jack with him and give him some clothes.

The sergeant takes Jack Crabb away with him, while Custer continues saying that he will be invaluable to him. The Major, surprised, asks Custer how it is that and the General answers him that, after having considered hanging him for having become a renegade. Jack demanded to become a scout for the Army, which, according to him, reveals a very obvious game: to separate the General from his Indian friends, but the Major assures he does not understand. The answer of Custer is, at least, surprising, when he assures that all that Jack says will be a lie, so he considers him "a perfect reverse barometer" and asks the Major for confirmation, and the latter suddenly responds that is correct, but in his face the answer seems not to be so clear. When Custer finishes speaking, he looks at himself in three mirrors, showing once more his good opinion about himself and, even more, as selfish and self-conceited in a single image. In this sequence Custer meditates, but he also shows a twisted mind, while he assures that Jack "will be a perfect reverse barometer", however as that does not seem to be sufficient he seeks the support of the soldier, who does not believe what he can hear, however

the soldier does not dare contradict these words.

After having heard the bugle, the Army column is seen at different times, and at a certain moment also Custer is seen from nearby, as well as another officer of the U. S. and some Indians, supposedly scouts. Jack speaks in off voice: "In my belief Custer's hate (sic) for the Indians and his ambition had combined on him. He figured he needed one more victory over the Indians to be nominated for President of the United States. That is a true historical fact." This is followed by an unknown voice, supposedly of an officer, commanding the soldiers to hold, and the voice of Custer permitting the soldiers to have "brief refreshment. Water only," so the soldiers are allowed to dismount. The following sequence shows Custer at the moment of drinking water and after gargling he spits it on the boot of a lieutenant, this act becoming a demonstration of power and selfishness. In this case, he wants to make the others believe he has a great knowledge in the field of anatomy with the exhibition of a term referring to a sickness, when what he is doing is only showing off. In this conversation between him, a lieutenant and a soldier, the general asks the lieutenant to excuse him, adducing that "it's the celibacy of the saddle", which provokes muscle spasms during all the night and assures the cause to be "poison from the goonads." The lieutenant becomes surprised for this term, so he repeats the expression, with a certain incredulity on his face, to which Custer replies saying that it is medical terminology: all this said with an expression of self-sufficiency that is clearly seen in his entire attitude. The lieutenant tries to interrupt Custer, in order to do his duty, but the General pretends not to hear him, continuing with his speech about the goonads.

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The scorn towards people, even of those who are on his side, is another characteristic of Custer in this film, which shows that even those who help them are despised by him in order to increase his self-esteem, which he does in two different ways. Firstly, when the Major tries to tell him something he resumes his gargling, and secondly, when he ignores what another soldier is trying to tell him about the Crows, even at the price of his life as well as the lives of all the soldiers and scouts coming with him:

Soldier: The Crows want to know if you're going down to Medicine Tail Coulee.

Custer: Oh. They do, do they?

Soldier: Yes, sir, they do. They claim they want time to sing their death song.⁷⁵

Custer: Tell the Crows they're women.

Lieutenant: But if the hostiles come in behind us, and if they're waiting for us below, we'll never get (sic) out of there.

Custer: Hostiles behind us? I see no hostiles behind us. Do you see any hostile behind us?

The soldier assures them that there are no hostiles behind them at the moment, meaning that the fact that they are not seen does not mean they are not there, but

⁷⁵ The Crow death song can be found in Curtis, Edward Sheriff. *The North American Indian*. 1909 IV 99

Custer ignores the possibility that the Sioux and Cheyennes are camped out of sight, as they really are, answering the soldier that he must not provoke a reversal of a Custer's decision. This implies that Custer is the chief of all the soldiers at that moment and the only one who gives the orders, admitting no opposition at all. Here the tone of Custer's voice becomes menacing when he becomes angry with the soldier, speaking to him at the moment the latter tells him something contrary to his opinion. The soldier warns him about the presence of hostiles, which he simply ignores because he does not see them, when there is the possibility that they are hidden, but the general does not consider it real because he has not thought about it or does not want to. What he simply does is to show his authority through imposition showing that he is the only one who commands and, even more, the only one who thinks.

The Crows, who inhabit Montana, dressing in a Plains Style costumes, seem to have lived in earth-covered houses, but they now live in tipis.⁷⁶ According to their religion, they believe in the power of dreams and visions and use the sweat-lodge, having as their most important ceremonies the Sun Dance and the tobacco planting. The whole tribe was formed by two bands: the Mountain Crows and the Many Lodges, who were the most powerful;⁷⁷ the Biriesupede, a third band of the tribe, was considered inferior in rank, their chief being elected by his honours. There were four military societies: Lumpwood, Fox, Big Dog and Muddy Hand. The difficult life made their women become as brave as the male warriors, and as strong as them. A proud race, they did not ally with any other tribe, having the rest

⁷⁶ Wissler 1989 196

⁷⁷ Curtis 1909 8

of them as enemies, among which the Sioux were their bitterest foes, with whom they negotiated some truces⁷⁸ from time to time. They lived in a land where there was abundant buffalo and elk⁷⁹ and were on good terms with the government. Among the Crows, the chief decided when to move camp.⁸⁰

In the sequence in which Custer and the Major are speaking about the Crows, when marching towards Little Bighorn and the Crows say they needed time to chant their war songs, the Major continues speaking, asking Custer if it wouldn't be best to send a squadron down Medicine Tail Coulee, the place where the battle of Little Bighorn took place, but Custer does not want to hear about it. The Major asks him why and Custer responds that it would cost the element of surprise, which he qualifies as vital, but as the Major assures and also the spectator knows, that the Indians know the Army is there, which Custer does not want to recognize, adding that his intention is a ruthless attack. The Major assures that not to be a surprise, but Custer does not wish to admit that his idea is not correct, assuring that an attack without mercy is very surprising. When the Major protests, qualifying his decision as impetuous, the general becomes angry, telling him that Grant also called him impetuous and qualifying the President as a drunkard. The Major begs him to reconsider the decision but, of course, Custer does not change his mind.

Custer is seen here as a man who does not know the danger before him and who does not want to listen to anybody. During all this time, he is shown defending his position without considering the other's alternatives, showing disrespect for the

⁷⁸ Ibid. 3

⁷⁹ Ibid. 4

⁸⁰ Ibid. 6

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Major's opinion, while the latter shows his preoccupation and his fear for his life and his comrades'. From now on there is a twisting of Custer's mind when addressing Jack Crabb. The conversation between Custer, the Major and Jack Crabb is significant, the most meaningful moment being that in which the General asks Jack what he must do and the Major interrupts the answer, saying that Jack does not know anything about it, though Custer insists on asking Jack his opinion:

Jack: General, you go down there.

Custer: You're advising me to go into the Coulee.

Jack: Yes, sir.

Custer: There are no Indians there, I suppose.

Jack: I didn't say that. There are thousands of Indians down there.

The film continues saying that there are thousands of Indian waiting for him in the Greasy Grass (Little Bighorn) and that when they finish with him there will be nothing "but a greasy spot." Jack compares the future battle with the one at the Washita River, telling the General that those who are waiting for him are not helpless women and children, but Cheyenne and Sioux braves, and challenges Custer to go into Medicine Tail Coulee. The latter, in answer to this, responds with the accusation that Jack is trying to discourage him, so he convinces himself and tries to convince the Major that he is right and encourages his men to go to Little Bighorn and to glory. The decision he makes is only to listen apparently to Jack, but he really twists his arguments to do what he wants without considering Jack's

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opinion, who clearly says he is going to face thousands of warriors ready to fight, contrary to what happened at the Washita, where he surprised a great many Cheyennes. Custer seems to be the only one who does not know he is going to death with all the people in his army, so he cheers his Cavalry and they all start their way to Little Bighorn while "Garry Owen" sounds.

In the representation of the battle of Little Bighorn there are certain inaccuracies, the clearest being the attack of the Seventh Cavalry from the top of a hill, while the Indians are in the river, when History says that the Indians (Sioux and Cheyennes) were high on a bluff, while the Cavalry came beside the river and had to go uphill, while the well-represented thing is that the Seventh Cavalry was the first to attack. Red Horse says: "The day of the attack I and four women were a short distance from the camp digging wild turnips. Suddenly one of the women attracted my attention to a cloud of dust rising a short distance from camp. I soon saw the soldiers were charging the Indian camp" (Capps 1976 226). This information was drawn and also translated from the Universal Indian Sign Language.

At this point of the battle Custer still believes he is going to win, encouraging his men to take no prisoners when a little later a crowd of Indians surrounds them, while he shouts at the soldiers of the Seventh to disperse, finding himself alone in the middle of the Indians. In the battle, Custer can be seen becoming crazy, crying here and there "arrest them, arrest them" and later assuring that they are running out of ammunition, which he assured would happen, being ignored by the President, who sat in the White House and laughed at him. Now Custer starts speaking, addressing the President of the United States, as if he were present in

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the battlefield: the reality is that he is speaking to himself, only interrupted by the voice of Jack, who is wounded, making this a curious monologue with interruptions, rather than a dialogue:

Custer: Mr President, distinguished visitors, honoured members of the Senate, taking the Indian as we find him waiting...

Jack: Why don't you shut up?

Custer: Mr President you are drunk. We can't have a man like you in the White House! Get (sic) on your feet and face the enemy.

Jack: Go away, General.

Custer: All right. The sentence is death.

It must be noted here that the death sentence that seemed to have been for Jack Crabb is applied to General Custer himself, then after an Indian arrow kills him without the man who shot it being seen, a medicine-man, dressed as an Arikara, but who will be later identified as Younger Bear, kills a soldier who is hidden under a blanket and saves Jack, taking him to his tipi.

After Younger Bear has left the tipi, only Old Lodge Skins and Jack remain. The old chief wants to die, because he is exhausted of the white men, assuring that "you cannot get (sic) rid of them." In accordance with his desires, he asks his wife to bring him the dying dress, which she does, and invites Jack to go with him to the top of the mountain; they leave, but the wife of the old chief remains at the village, with an expression of sadness. On top of the mountain, Old Lodge Skins thanks

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Wakan Tanka, the supreme god of the Sioux, for all the things he has received, and lies on the floor waiting for death, but when it starts to rain Jack calls him, Old Lodge Skins asks Jack if he is still alive and to the nodding of Jack he answers that he was afraid of that and refuses to keep on with the process, so both of them go down the valley and disappear from the sight of the spectator, leaving the valley alone, the narration of Jack's adventures ending here. Back to the interview Jack tells the reporter to put the tape recorder off and makes him go away of the old people hospital.

5.2 THEY DIED WITH THEIR BOOTS ON

5.2.1 Custer

As with previous movies, we will narrate sequences of this film, indicating those points at which they are at variance with history as told by other sources. The opening sequence shows the title, indicating that the place is West Point and the date the year 1857, a group of cadets parading and, just after this, a group of young men arriving at the doors of West Point Academy, where they are received by a sergeant and a cadet called Sharp, while some cadets are looking at what happens. They are led to the office by a Mister Brown and confused by a very important character in the film, Sharp, who speaks to the sergeant about the way that discipline must be maintained in the Army, and his way of behaving. They are interrupted by the arrival of Custer, appearing on a donkey, surrounded by his dogs and accompanied by a black boy, bringing his suitcase. Then the sergeant orders to “turn out the guard,” meaning that he is an officer and when he dismounts he is directed to the “commandant,” but when Custer presents himself, the sergeant discovers that he is not any officer, consequently, the guard is dismissed.

At this moment, Sharp welcomes the newcomer, takes his suitcases and accompanies him to his quarters, while the sergeant protests about the dogs. The future general says he does not have to worry and gives a dollar to the black boy, being accompanied to his quarters by Sharp, who flatters Custer about the way of dressing and inquires about the reason that made him join the Army, being answered that the main one was glory. Sharp leads him to a room, where he

settles in; Sharp disorders the things that were in it and takes most of them out. In the conversation about the uniform Custer is wearing and its singularity, he says that it was made by a tailor in Monroe, based upon the design of the one Marshal Murat used, after which Sharp leaves smiling and Custer hangs a picture of this French marshal on the wall. At this moment, a new character breaks in, Major Romulus Taipe, who finds all his belongings out of his quarters and surprised at the sight of this he immediately enters the room, and finds Custer's dogs resting on the floor, one of them scratching itself, and the newcomer resting on the bed, which makes the major become angry and demand an explanation from Custer, who answers that he has been taken to there by a cadet with a fictitious name and is sent to the inspection by Taipe, who throws the dogs out of the room.

The arrival of George Armstrong Custer on a donkey, as well as the other details of this first sequences are not confirmed by other historical accounts, and, even more, it is doubtful that they could have happened, due to the fact, however, what is really confirmed by other historical accounts is the date of Custer's arrival at West Point: "Finally in February, 1857, a letter came addressed to George A. Custer, Esq., on the stationery of the House of Representatives. It was from Representative Bingham and told him when to present himself for preliminary examinations at the Military Academy." (Merington 1987 8)

From the point of view of Representation the sequence in which Custer quarrels with Sharp is very interesting, due to the fact that it properly reflects the personality of the former, the sequence being developed as follows: Romulus Taipe, master of cadets, Sharp and the sergeant arrive in front of the ranks. As the voice of Taipe is

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heard ordering the new cadets to fall in, Custer arrives and the Sergeant again orders the cadets to line up. A voice off orders them to prepare for inspection, while the other cadets, who are properly dressed, look curiously at Custer. When the cadets are in their ranks, Taipe and Sharp are seen from the point of view of the newcomers. The first face to be seen is that of Taipe, later Sharp, who smiles, then Custer, whose face is shown by the camera. He realizes the presence of Sharp and shows an expression of anger:

Taipe: Adjust your chin strap.

Soldier: Yes, sir.

Taipe: What kind of sloppiness (sic) you call that? Fix your belt. Take his name, sergeant. See that these men are instructed in the proper way to wear their uniforms.

Here a close-up can be seen, in which Taipe, followed by Sharp can be seen a little angry, followed by a close-up that shows Custer, as the voice of Taipe is heard saying: "Extra drill, if necessary," to which the sergeant answer with "Yes, sir." Now Romulus Taipe and, after him, Sharp, appear on the screen, while Taipe is heard to demand of some newcomer to look front. Sharp faces Custer, Taipe again demands to look front, then Sharp provokes the newcomer, calling him Marshal Murat and Custer reacts throwing himself on him and hitting him. Taipe adds that Custer's undoing is going to be still faster than he thought and orders the sergeant to arrest Custer, qualifying him as a maniac. Though the reality of the scene is

uncertain, according to other accounts, there is no doubt about the aggressiveness and impulsiveness of George Armstrong Custer:

Autie had a fierce temper and was astonishingly impetuous. He was a good speller. On one occasion a truant rival stood outside the school house window as Autie was struggling with a difficult word. The rival made faces and ornery gestures at Autie. Angrily beyond endurance, Autie sprang to the window, smashed his fist through the glass, and blooded his tormentor's nose (Ambrose 1975 83).

Now Taipe puts Custer under arrest, while the latter looks angrily, immediately after which he is taken to Colonel Sheridan, who transmits to the newcomer the accusations and consequences, and tells him he has to be dismissed from the Army, asking him his enrolment data. The ignorance of Custer in this respect, due to his failure to enrol, leads him to the impossibility of his being dismissed, for which reason he is given an opportunity to join the Army. The sequence, though very amusing, is not real due to the fact that according to all other accounts, he had made a formal application, following the whole procedure through a representative in Congress, the Hon. John A. Bingham, having being admitted to West Point Academy in February, 1857.

Now a conversation between Sheridan and Custer takes place, in which the colonel is glad about the way events had turned out, while Taipe still does not like the future general, thinking that he will be a very bad cadet. The following sequences show a written record of his faults, and his distraction in class,

nonetheless the film adds certain details, illustrating them with images, the same as the different transgressions of class rules: not paying attention in class, arriving late, or fighting with other students. Merington, who is not to be suspected of mocking Custer, says he was the bottom of his class, composed of thirty four students.⁸¹ At the graduation, all the students are sitting on their chairs, Custer commenting with his comrade on the chair beside the events that are happening in the politics of the country, as the teachers are delivering the diplomas, given to all of them but him.

When war breaks out, the West Point cadets receive the visit of Senator Smith, who comes with the mission of telling them that they must choose a side on the civil war. After the oath, the senator reads, and Sheridan gives the cadets the opportunity to take different ways. As the result is not according to his expectations the senator becomes angry for having found so many soldiers from the South, whom he calls traitors, after which Sheridan greets the soldiers and lets them go peacefully, while the band plays "Dixie". Inscribed in the outbreak of war there are some images of battle mixed with the first pages of the newspapers.

In the meeting to choose a new officer to be sent, two names arise, one of them unknown for the public. Two different opinions are maintained about him: the first by Taipe, who assures that he was a good cadet, with an immaculate record, the second by Sheridan, whose opinion is that he could have been avoiding problems. The other name is Custer, who also raises two opinions: the first by Taipe, affirming that he had had the worst results in West Point, the other by Sheridan, who thinks

⁸¹ Merington 1987 10

he deserved an opportunity. A third voice arises unexpectedly, the one of the sergeant, who impulsively breaks in the conversation saying that “a squadron would follow him to Hell.”

In the following sequence, Custer is on duty with the rifle held in an improper way, scratching himself and walking indolently, so he is reprimanded by another cadet, while in one of his walks he finds Libbie, who asks him how to go to the office of Colonel Sheridan, but he does not answer, though he wants to, for fear of the other cadet. As he is being continually distracted, he collides with the sergeant, who comes to look for him, following orders of the chiefs. Advised that he is called he goes after Libbie as a lightning and apologizes, explaining the situation to her and declaring his love in a very strange way.

The sequence in which Libbie Bacon and George Armstrong Custer meet for the first time is not a faithful representation, because in the film Libbie Custer goes to West Point to pay a visit to Philip Henry Sheridan and on her way she finds him, on his guard duty, then she addresses him and he does not speak due to the rules, which forbid it. Later they have an appointment to which he cannot go, for he had been sent but, in the letter of Libbie Bacon to his husband, dated on Thanksgiving Day, 1863, it can be read that that day was the anniversary of their first meeting, their first and formal introduction being in a party,⁸² which was celebrated by Principal Boyd and his wife. Custer and Libbie did not know each other by name; however, Elizabeth Bacon was something of a local beauty, and Custer had a certain degree of fame. Nonetheless, that does not mean they know each other, on

⁸² Ibid. 46

the contrary it is to be believed that they were unknown to each other in a personal way, though as neighbours that they were there could have been some kind of relationship. "The families had not been acquainted, even though they were near neighbors on the same street, because of social life and church affiliation" (Merington 1987 46). The fact that Custer and Libbie were neighbours makes us think that they could have spoken to and treated each other in a casual way one or several times, even contrary to the strict control of her father, but that is something that cannot be proved. What is really difficult to accept is the sequence of the meeting between Libbie with Custer at West Point, because of the letter previously quoted.

Custer enters the office where the chiefs are, and, after having being reprimanded by Sheridan, who asks explanations for a brawl he had had with a civilian, he also asks about his future plans when he graduates. Then he is informed that he has the opportunity to join active service when he is delivered his diploma, and though he says he will have to wait until the laundry is ready, a poor excuse that hides the fact of meeting Libbie again, he is entrusted to take the first train. It is not known if there was a meeting to discuss the decision of sending George Custer to war, as can be seen in the film. What can be affirmed is the way the decision was taken, because the Adjutant General considered the name that was recommended, and then the man before him, whose complexion and figure he expected, as well as the military visage the occasion demanded and, without giving importance to his qualifications, asked him to present to General Winfield Scott.⁸³

⁸³ Ibid. 11

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Libbie is waiting at the veranda of her house, desperately waiting for the coming of Custer, when her father appears and inquires her about the reason of not having gone for her usual walk and the possibility that she is falling in love. Immediately after it, some cavalry men are seen coming on horseback in Washington D. C, while Custer buys a paper and reads in it that the rebels are near Washington. In an office with a great many of people working, Custer goes in and walks along to the table of the corporal, asks him if there are orders for him. When he is told that there are not, he takes a lamp and throws it onto the fire, after having complained, so he obliges the Adjutant General to go out of his office. The Adjutant General is no more no less than Taipe, and who thinks that Custer is responsible for the "sabotage" as he himself says, and consequently the Adjutant General refuses to give him an assignment.

Custer is then shown to be in a restaurant, being served, when he discovers General Winfield Scott, who is entering, sits at the table beside him and, after having told the waiter that he only wants a snack, asks for more than half a dozen dishes, among them the Cream Bermuda Onions, which Custer had been offered just a minute before and were still on his table. Taking advantage that he is not hungry, he goes near the table of the General and offers him the onions, for which reason he is invited to eat with the General, but the latter also suspects that something is wrong with Custer and, so the General asks Custer and the cadet explains the situation to him. They both cross the street among a group of people and men on horses together and meet Taipe, who has just arrived on horseback, and leaves his horse to a soldier so that he can take care of it. Winfield Scott tells

Taipe to give Custer an assignment and he is assigned to the second Cavalry, but the Adjutant General puts as a new objection the lack of horses. In the building, General Scott orders to solve the problem as soon as possible, and after having said goodbye each other, Custer runs out of the building and steals Taipe's horse, even against the resistance of the soldier.

The fact that Custer found a horse so quickly is finely told, though it cannot be known if this really happened the way the film portrayed it, by stealing the horse. Merington does not tell us the way Custer found it and does not assert that it was stolen, so that hypothesis cannot be denied: "It was not easy to find a mount in horseless Washington; but he found one before the day was old." (Merington 1987 11) Whatever the way he used to acquire it, it seems that Joseph Fought had some doubts about it, for it can be read in his account: "I remember especially seeing him (Custer) walking around the stables. Then, later, in the city I was holding his horse for him" (Merington 1987 11). Neither Merington with her own words, nor Joseph Fought in his account, say what happened in the middle, which means that the hypothesis of the robbery cannot be either confirmed or denied.

The next sequence shows the headquarters of the 2nd Cavalry, in which Custer is seen opening the door, and immediately reporting, after which he is given a drink and all of them propose a toast. Just then the commanding officer enters saying that the regiment will move to Manassas Junction at 4 p.m., when Sharp, who was in the room, appears, but soon he becomes angry at Custer's answer. At the appointed time, there is a series of sequences showing war in its different ways: the regiment attacking, some soldiers carrying a cannon, the Southerners coming,

Custer acting as an officer, commanding. In one of those attacks Sharp, who is the commanding officer, demands Custer retire and when he sees he cannot order the troops, he makes Sharp fall from the horse and the fight continues until Custer is injured when, miraculously, Sheridan appears and congratulates him.

The fact that his first destination was the Second Cavalry is an event that has been correctly depicted, as is confirmed by Merington when she says that it happened three days after having left West Point, the moment at which the then Lieutenant Custer joined the aforesaid regiment, receiving his baptism of fire at Bull Run.⁸⁴ It is doubtful if the moment of his joining the regiment was in such an informal way or if it happened in a more official one, but the fact of his joining the Second Cavalry was real. Custer is in hospital, being cared for by four nurses with the intention of arranging him in order to receive a medal, when Sheridan arrives and after a short speech delivers him the medal, being asked by the patient for a letter of recommendation for Mr Bacon. Sheridan tells him that he has a beautiful daughter, who is no other than Libbie. After Sheridan's departure, the future general flatters the nurses and tries to leave, after which they protest, but Custer ignores them, discharging himself from the hospital.

The next sequence shows Custer arriving at Monroe in a train, getting out of it and passing before a tavern, where he can hear a group of men singing, which attracts his attention, so he goes into it and speaks to the men, introducing himself, but his fame and the events of Bull Run had gone before him, so he is invited to sit down with them. Then Butler, who had previously introduced himself, speaks to him

⁸⁴ Ibid. 12

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about the song that will become the hymn of the 7th Cavalry, "Garry Owen". It is strange to see Custer, who is invited to drink, eating an onion, while the rest of the soldiers are drinking while singing. On the street, Mister Bacon, who comes to collect the rent, passes and stops before the tavern, where he meets the parson and expresses his disappointment at having a tavern on one of his properties and assures he wants to rent it to other people in order to change the business. He enters the tavern, where Custer and the others are singing, addresses the barman, telling him what he has come to do, but the bartender answers him in a rude way. Consequently he goes to Custer and the others and reprimands them for being a shame to the Army, but the soldiers insult him and mock him, even playing the "Dead March".

Libbie is then seen in the kitchen with Callie, the black servant, who is serving a cup of tea to Mr. Bacon's daughter, when Libbie protests, for she has to drink another one, but the servant assures that if she wants to know her future she has to do it. Then Libbie turns the cup upside down, turns it three times, the servant takes it, passes it round her head three times and reads what is written in the tea leaves, saying that there is a bird, meaning news, and a man with a doorbell in his hand, just when the doorbell rings. Both women are afraid, for which reason Callie asks for help from her rabbit's foot and uses it as an amulet, while she is going to open the door and Libbie is behind another door, looking. The servant opens, Custer goes in and the servant announces him gladly, but Libbie receives him coldly, while he tells he comes with a letter from Sheridan to her father. As Libbie reprimands Custer a little, Callie does not believe what she is listening to and while

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this leads Custer to the sitting room, the soldier newly declares her his love, which makes her change first to happiness from this to indifference, but in the sitting room he excuses and she recognizes not to be really angry.

Now he remembers his infancy in Monroe, when he was passing in front of her door. At this moment Libbie smells onions and shows a bad expression, while Custer says he does not recognize the smell, for which reason she apologises, but he says he really likes onions and as a consequence of that she asks Callie to bring them some. Callie shows surprise on her face, for she knows, as was suggested before in the film, that Libbie does not like onions. Now Libbie tells Custer how to behave with her father, when Mr Bacon enters. Libbie receives him and at first he becomes very interested when listens to the news that a Mr Custer is in his house with a letter from Sheridan. The recognition between the owner of the saloon and the man who insulted him is amazing, for Bacon reprimands the Lieutenant after Custer had put down a photo viewer and tells him to leave the house. Callie takes Custer out of the house, pretending to be angry, following the orders of her boss, but at the door she gives him an appointment with Libbie, who will be waiting for him at the appointed time. Now the servant and the soldier agree, in case there is danger, on the song of an owl as a signal. The lovers stay together, even in the moment when her father attempts to see if he is around, but they are warned by Callie and tranquillity thus follows the fear, after which the lovers go on together until an owl sings, when Custer runs away and Callie awakes from her sleep, realizing that there was a real owl.

Taipe goes to the corporal, who is at his table in the office, and tells him to send an order to the commanding officer of the Sixteenth Ohio Infantry, when a soldier enters, reports to Taipe, and the latter makes him take an order to Lieutenant George Armstrong Custer. There is a certain degree of confusion at the office and while the chiefs are locating the Michigan Brigade, General Winfield Scott orders Taipe to send a new commanding officer to it. The corporal and the sergeant change places and the first takes a new order to name a new Brigadier General, without putting his name on it. In the camp an officer shows his tent to Lieutenant Custer, when a tailor arrives and speaks to him, flattering him in order to have a new client, making publicity of what they do and showing him a sample of his dresses. Custer shouts at him and the tailor becomes scared, but the soldier reaches the shelter where the officers are, being greeted by all of them, one by one, until he says he is in no mood to accept those jokes, but at a certain moment Sharp arrives with an order for General Custer, signed by Taipe himself. Sharp tells him to ask for verification, he refuses, going after the tailor in order to require his services, but the latter escapes runningscared.

In the film, the fact of Romulus Taipe dictating different orders for different reasons, among them one to George Armstrong Custer to make him give a horse back and later telling the corporal to write an order to promote someone (as yet unknown) to the rank of brigadier general, creates confusion, a confusion that gives rise to the promotion of Custer to the rank of brigadier general, while actually this promotion was due to his merits as a soldier, as has been seen before. In fact, he was very well considered and, also, recommended for the position, though it was not

expected by all. Fought did not believe this promotion at first, but later when he was shown the paper he congratulated Custer, confessing it to have been a great surprise.

Custer presents himself in the Michigan Brigade Headquarters, where the officers are planning the attack, intending to go to Gettysburg, but he changes the orders and makes them go East. In the meanwhile, at his office, General Winfield Scott and Taipe are speaking about the different commanding officers of both sides and the way the United States had lost some places. After having consulted on the map the moves of the different officers, and having reported about them, Winfield Scott sits and says he is worried about General Stuart's moves. When he is informed that Stuart attacked Hanover, he considers everything a disaster and asks for information about the Brigadier, being informed that the Michigan Brigade, which is defending the position, has been told to retreat. Then General Winfield Scott asks Taipe who is the officer commanding it, Taipe asks the corporal and the latter informs him that Custer is and answers the General. Then Taipe, who had been informed just some moments before, wonders how this had happened.

After the images showing Custer commanding the 7th Cavalry and attacking an unseen enemy, General Winfield Scott can be seen in his office with a paper in his hand, thanking God for Custer's insubordination, while showing the paper to Taipe. What follows is a series of battle sequences, the first of which is the retreat of the Michigan Brigade due to the failure of the charge, immediately followed by Custer commanding the 5th and 6th Cavalry, charging. Taipe is dictating an order to revoke the nomination of Custer and later complaining about his failure, when General

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Scott goes and tells him not to worry about it, while Taipe continues protesting about the results produced by Custer, who is again seen commanding the 1st Michigan. After having received a message in his office, telling him that Stuart is retreating, General Scott takes a breath and thanks God for what has happened, so when Taipe again addresses him, asking the general what he is going to do about the future general, Winfield Scott answers that he will cross the street and take a ration of Cream Bermuda Onions, meaning that he would take no decision.

The following sequences show different journals alternately with images of Custer and the names of the battles in which he took part commanding and also an image in the Battle of Appomattox in a photograph. After that the train is seen arriving at Monroe, in whose station Elizabeth Bacon and her father, Mister Bacon, are waiting among the people, who greet him, making know he is proud. The attitude of Mister Bacon towards Custer has changed, thanking him, even flattering him. After Libbie greets him from afar he goes to her and kisses her. Bacon, who is giving the instructions for the parade in honour of the new general finds that his daughter is kissing Custer, who answers him that they are going to marry that day, asking Bacon his permission, which he does not refuse.

A group of soldiers with their swords up form a covered path under which Custer and wife pass after the wedding ceremony. There is a brief view of Sheridan and Butler, and after another of the couple, the black servants, two men and two women, smiling; the two women, Callie and Jane, are speaking about the place where Libbie acquired the General, the former asking, the latter answering that it was in a teacup, as a clear reference to the reading of the tea leaves. After a view

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of Mr. Bacons's portrait with the dates of birth and death, meaning that he has died and reflecting the pass of time, Libbie enters the sitting room of her house with a book in her hands and puts it on the table, followed by Jane, who comes in with the news that two gentlemen, who will be recognized as Sharp and his father, come to see Custer. Libbie asks Callie if her husband has returned and as the answer is negative, Libbie decides to receive them herself, waiting in the sitting room with a worried face, while Custer is drinking in the saloon, speaking about the war and the tactics of General Lee until he finishes the bottle, moment in which he leaves.

At home Libbie, worried, is speaking to the Sharps, father and son, though she likes the offer, for she says to have been looking for a solution in order to solve the problem of his husband in civil life. Sharp father says Custer is the best qualified for the position when this one enters and Libbie gladdens for it, she leaves, so Custer has to face both Sharps, who after some introductory references about Taipe and the stealing of his horse offer him the presidency of the Western Railroad Trading Company in exchange for an elevated sum of money, with the only condition of letting them use his name, however he does not accept for he gives a great importance to it. Sharp father calls him "romantic fool" but his son insults him clearly saying that he is sustained by his wife, after which they leave. At that moment Libbie enters the room and asks what the Sharps wanted, being answered by her husband that they wanted to hire his name in exchange for ten thousand dollars, to which she replies that it was a great amount of money. Then he takes her by the hand, both kiss each other and she puts her face just beside his showing a worried expression.

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General Winfield Scott is in his office, looking at him in the mirror, when Mrs Custer is announced, so he goes to the door and when she opens he calls her beautiful and after having taken a seat she suggests the matter of her going there. At the request of how her husband is, she replies that inactivity is killing him and asks the general to put his husband in active service. The sequence is resolved when after her being sad for Custer drinking the general suggests that he will do something for Custer because all of them "owe him so much." Custer is looking at a photo of Libbie and at a watch with a military inscription, while he speaks to his wife about both pieces, when Callie brings the mail and they continue speaking while he sees a letter directed to him and while he is opening it and reading it she shows an expression of hope, as if she knew what the letter said.

Then Callie comes again and asks Custer the way he wants the eggs prepared, as he opens the letter and reads, while Libbie continues showing a face of hope, looking at her husband from the corner of the eye. As a consequence of the content of the letter the now Captain answers Callie that he wants the eggs in all the possible ways, while smiling, standing up and communicating his wife that he newly is in the active service. They both embrace and Custer fetches a map in order to know where his destination, Fort Lincoln, is, when Callie brings a cup of tea, and Libbie tells her that the couple is going to Dakota, so that she must pack, but that the servant stays at home. At this moment Custer enters with the map and marks the way they should follow, signalling it with his finger, which also represents the travel.

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Immediately an Indian dressed with a war bonnet and a lance in his hand goes up to a hill and stops, followed by a second one with a rifle, a third Indian, later a general view of the countryside and over it the head of an Indian with a roach. Just after this, a caravan, Custer and, in one of the wagons, behind the general, California Joe and Libbie. Custer retires, the wagon passes and the camera shows two figures: Libbie and California, who is insulting the horse calling it "Son of a blue-bellied Mohawk." After some sequences showing alternately Indians, soldiers and horses, California Joe spits and introduces himself in third person "nobody in these parts can beat California Joe when it comes to spitting," which gives place to a conversation about his name and introduces the theme of Indians while seen from the front part the wagon, Custer goes near it, asking Libbie about the abilities of the old man and his ambitions.

An Indian appears on a hill nearby and is seen by California, who communicates it to his partners, after which a group of braves come down to where the caravan is, galloping. Custer orders to go after them, and he himself follows the Indians, while Libbie calls for him. At this moment Crazy Horse and Custer are face to face on horse, attacking each other. In the fight Custer disarms the Sioux warrior, attacks him and throws him to the floor and when they both are now on the floor, newly each one facing each other, Custer demands from Crazy Horse to tell his braves to surrender, menacing that on the contrary he would hang the Indian chief. This asks the general if he gives his word not to tie him and the other confirms the point, so the Sioux chief has to accept when California recognizes him in the distance and presents him in a loud voice, after which a Sioux brave speaks to other two and

passes a blanket to a second who gives it to a third one and the Army leaves.

In the film Custer arrives at Fort Lincoln and becomes angry because there were Indians living around the fort. According to Merington “There was danger. The fort was a military island surrounded by hostiles, it was remote, it was bitterly cold in winter. But it was regarded as home, and at last Elizabeth could again be with her husband” (Merington 1987 268). When the caravan is in front of Fort Lincoln, an Indian woman addresses California, asking him the favour of letting name her child as the scout, who refuses with a disgust face. There are several things in this sequence to be considered: first of all it seems that the aforesaid encounter between Crazy Horse and George Armstrong Custer never took place, because they had not had any encounter before the battle of Little Bighorn. The Indian chief only had a look at the general three years before, in a skirmish that took place on the Yellowstone and it is highly probable that Custer had not identified the Sioux chief,⁸⁵ because they had met only twice, the first one on the rivers of the Yellowstone and the second on the battlefield.⁸⁶

The figure considered now is that of California Joe, who was a scout working for Custer, however in the real life there were two figures with that name, figures that have been mixed in the film. One of them was called “Truman Head” and the other “Moses Milner,” who was the one who guided General Custer into the Black Hills, however the portrait of the other one resembles very much the face of the character represented in the film, only the lack of a beard can be missed. The fact, then, is that the depiction of California Joe was composed of two different

⁸⁵ McMurtry 1999 2

⁸⁶ Ambrose 1975 xiii

characters:

There was one among their number whose appearance would have attracted the notice of any casual observer. He was a man about forty years of age, perhaps older, over six feet in height, and possessing a well-proportioned frame. His head was covered with a luxuriant crop of long, almost black hair, strongly inclined to curl, and so long as to fall carelessly over his shoulders.(Custer 1874 131).

The text continues describing his eyes as black, lustrous and kind. It is added the information that he always used “a huge sombrero,” whether he was sleeping whether he was awake, a soldier’s overcoat, a pair of trousers and boots and “a Springfield musket, from which he was inseparable,” as well as a revolver and a hunting-knife. It is noticeable the fact that he mounted a mule, contrary to the custom of the soldiers, who mounted on horse, having been chosen by Custer himself as the chief scout. Let me call the attention of the reader to the fact that the first thing to attract the attention of General Custer is the physical visage and more concretely the age. Described as intelligent and kind, and feeling hatred for the Indians in the text his real name is unknown. His description is completed with the information that he was continually refilling his pipe, for which he always had tobacco, was a good talker, always telling his adventures of mining life or among the Indians. He gave “scraps of information” from time to time and is said to know almost the whole country, and more specifically, the Pacific Coast and the Western country, though it seems he had lived in Oregon years before.

There are two important things in this paragraph: first, the continual use of the pipe he smoked, which proves he was a great smoker, but it does not say anything of his personality and second, that he released scraps of information that Custer took for true. It does not speak of California Joe as a liar in this context. It is important to underline that his words were not very polished, as also that his impressions about General Sheridan were not very favourable, whom he assures he had met him in Oregon, when he was only a lieutenant of infantry,⁸⁷ however his abilities are not described.

Custer is seen entering the fort and ordering a soldier to throw the cigar when signalling him, while many soldiers go to and fro on foot or on horse and some Indians are standing up in the middle of the fort, whose yard can be seen. Now Custer is ordering again when a trumpet sounds and the colonel is heard reproaching the soldiers the way they are behaving. An informal review of the troops, who look unworried and careless, which provokes Custer to be upset for the form the soldiers are behaving, takes place. At this moment he makes Crazy Horse be brought to the fort and a group of cowboys try to catch him, as two voices are heard, the first one saying the name of the Sioux chief, the second, asking to string him up. A tumult follows, trying to string up the Indian chief, who protests, reminding Custer of his promise of not tying him, to which this one answers keeping his word and sending him, untied, to the guardhouse, but escorted by four soldiers. At this moment Crazy Horse is at the left side of the screen and Custer at the right, while the centre is full of soldiers and cowboys, to whom Custer orders to

⁸⁷ Custer 1974 131

treat him right, being answered by the soldier that so it will be done.

An unknown voice says: "You'll find the headquarters straight ahead, sir." And they take Crazy Horse out. After that a dialogue between Custer and California Joe in which the general asks why there are Indians in the fort and California answers that they are trading for rifles, for which reason Custer becomes alarmed. Still on horse he says he leaves for a moment and California accepts to be at the service of the Army, with certain conditions, while the wagon carrying California and Libbie leaves. Four soldiers arrive at the doors of the guardhouse with Crazy Horse and put him in, after which a soldier closes the door and they all turn around.

Immediately after it there is a view showing a part of the fort, in which Custer is seen on horse, surrounded by a great many of people, soldiers as well as Indians, some of these ones, at the left of the screen, are bearing rifles. There is also one more Indian on the floor, as well as an Indian woman accompanied by a soldier. Two Indians are coming out of a door, in a way unseen for the spectator, while Custer is dismounting, moment in which they are seen on the screen. Before the post office there are three Indians, two of them with rifles, when Custer approaches the door. Then Custer grabs a rifle under the look of the shop assistant, asks him for the owner, who comes and then the colonel discovers the owner to be Sharp, his old comrade in arms, with whom he tries to shake hands, but Custer refuses. They speak about the business of Sharp, the sale of arms, and Custer is seen angry for it, both of them defending their opinions when two men, brawling out of the canteen interrupt, which provokes the soldiers to go out of it and look at them cheering them. Sharp and Custer enter the canteen, the sergeant salutes Custer

and warns the other soldiers to do the same

This has nothing to do with the way in which Crazy Horse really surrendered and there is no suspicion that this information could be a fake, since the source is General Jesse Lee, who says that Crazy Horse surrendered in a proud way, not as if he were a defeated man, but with the attitude of a great chief and unsubdued warrior. It must have to be added here that the cause of Crazy Horse surrender had nothing to do with a quarrel, such as the representation in the film shows, but with the fact that his wife suffered tuberculosis. The message from Clark to Lee explains this:

Soon after, a squad of fifteen or twenty Indian scouts arrived from Red Cloud (RedCloud Reservation), having been sent after Crazy Horse to arrest him and bring him back. It was understood then, and afterward known to be a fact, that they overtook Crazy Horse as he was riding alone quite leisurely with his sick wife, and when they asked him to go back with them, the prestige of his name and warlike deeds overawed them, when he said: "I am Crazy Horse! Don't touch me! I'm not running away. (Neb. Hist. Mag. Vol. XII n° 1 22).

Another misrepresentation of the film is the fact that Crazy Horse asked not to be touched, which in the film does not appear; however, in neither of these cases does he refuse to be caught, though in the film he is seized by the arms. The scene in which the Sioux chief is arrested accompanied only by a handful of his warriors is also far from reality: he was really surrounded by his friends and warriors

and accompanied by his wife. Sheldon tells about the fact in this way:

On the 6th of May, 1877, shortly after meridian, Crazy Horse's band approached Red Cloud Agency, descending the hills in the following order: First, Lieutenant William P. Clark, with the agency Indians-that is "Red Cloud" and his Indian soldiers; next, "Crazy Horse," at the head of his warriors, having abreast of him "Little Big Man", "Little Hawk", "He Dog", "Old Hawk", and "Bad Road." Stringing along behind, for a distance of nearly two miles, came the old men with the women and children, lodges, ponies, dogs, and other plunder. Lieutenant Clark had gone out early in the morning to a point seven or eight miles from the post to meet the incoming party (Neb. Hist. Mag. Vol XII n°1 46).

As can be seen, the merit of the arrest cannot rest on the shoulders of George Armstrong Custer, for he was not the one who caught him, but the Indian chief went to deliver himself. It must be added here that the fort in which Crazy Horse can be seen surrendering in the film is not the place in which he was actually arrested. The reports say he was arrested in Spotted Tail Agency, after having surrendered in Red Cloud Agency and having tried to escape, going in the direction of the first. Custer orders the arrest of the two men "brawling outside" and the sergeant goes out to fulfil the order. Custer and Sharp are at the counter, the latter defying the former, telling him to observe the men in the canteen, because they are his recruits, while these are drinking. Then Custer decides to close the bar, despite the protests of Sharp and, after a general view showing the inside, the new Colonel

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orders the Sergeant to close the canteen. As the men protest and Sharp assures he cannot do it legally, Custer uses a trick, recognizing Sharp to be right, but claiming that if he wants to keep it open he will have to let Custer beat him, so the decision of closing the bar comes from Sharp himself. Custer assures he is asking for the same sacrifice as he is making himself, setting himself as an example. All this happens with Sharp at the left, Custer at the right of the scene and the group of soldiers behind in the middle.

A soldier walks before the guardhouse in a distracted way when an Indian comes with a rifle, tells him that the gun does not work and asks him to fix it, so the soldier drops his gun and explains the Indian that the safety catch is on, but when the soldier is going to recover his rifle the Indian hits him with it. In the next sequence the door is opened with Crazy Horse at one side of the door, while the unknown Indian frees him, both of them escaping on horseback. After that, there are alternate images of Custer with California, and both Indians escaping, California and Custer speak about the Indians, whom Sharp considers friendlies, after which Custer gives orders to send all the Indians out of the fort, and immediately enters the office, where the officers are meeting. Custer tells them that their work is to protect "a hundred thousand square miles" of land and that for that job he wants a regiment having something special of their own. And here start those images developing the finding of that soul, which cannot be other than the song "Garry Owen," beginning with the arrival of Butler, the man who was playing it for the first time in the film, to whom after a small conversation, Custer asks him to play the aforesaid song and all of those present start to sing.

The next sequence is outside that office and it shows a bigger group of soldiers, one with an accordion, singing that song; the third sequence shows an even bigger group in the same place, but from another point of view and this one is succeeded by a great number of soldiers singing "Garry Owen", accompanied by one playing a drum and another one playing a flute, all of them beating the rhythm with their hands and arms. Finally, the regiment play the tune all lined up, with civilians looking at them and also some officers, all of them shown in a succession of images, while among the people looking are Libbie, Custer and California Joe.

There was a moment at which it seemed that Crazy Horse could escape, with the intention of going back to the north, where he would find himself safe and resume his old life, with the possibility of hunting the different kinds of animals and making raids. Despite all the efforts of the soldiers, this famous chief finally escaped. "Crazy Horse, who escaped alone in the direction of Spotted Tail Agency, was captured at that place last night" (Om. Daily Herald, 5, September, 1877). Sheldon gives the date of the third of September as that in which he escaped, adding that he was unable to escape from the column of soldiers pursuing him.⁸⁸

The following images show different battles between the Indians and the Army, in which both parts are seen attacking their respective enemies. Among the protagonists of these images California Joe, who is under a wagon, shooting with a rifle, and Custer, observing what is happening around him; however, the great majority of the people, Indians as well as soldiers, are unknown. This series of images ends with the armies retiring under a snowfall, and a casualty list on the

⁸⁸ Nebraska history Magazine Vol. XII N° 1 50

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walls of Fort Lincoln, after which California and Butler are shown on a hill, looking at a group of Indians who, though unknown, may be Sioux. One of them moves a spear over his head, making a signal to them, a signal that California interprets as saying that they want a peace Powwow with Custer, called Long Hair by California in this sequence. Immediately after it, the Indians as well as the Army are arriving at a place, where supposedly there will be a parley, with the Army on one side of the screen and a similar number of Sioux on the other side. A small group of each advances, among which the most important characters are, on the part of the Sioux, Crazy Horse and on the Army side, Custer, the latter accompanied by California and an Arikara scout. The Indian chief, whose proposals are listened to by Custer, transmits to the General the idea that the Sioux will give up their arms, their territories, and their possessions, except the Black Hills. The General says he will transmit it to the Great White Father (the President of the United States), while Crazy Horse assures that if the treaty is broken there will be war, a war in which all the Indian tribes of the Black Hills will join. After the words of Crazy Horse, the only result shown is an image of the treaty.

In the fort, there is only a handful of men and, in their office the Sharps and Taibe, having a meeting, in which they agree that their company is almost bankrupt due to the treaty with the Sioux. Sharp (the father) assures that the only route for the railway is through the Black Hills and calls the Sioux who are stopping Civilization "savages". According to Taibe, if gold is discovered in the Black Hills, a great many American citizens would flow to Dakota and, consequently, they should be protected, even if the breaking of the treaty was necessary, but for their plan to

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work they have to undo that of Custer, who is protecting the Sioux. Custer, California and one other go through the entrance gate into Fort Lincoln. Custer makes his horse trot and hurries, reaching his house, meets a soldier called Roberts, to whom he give the orders to review a squadron the next day. Immediately after, Libbie comes out of the house, kisses her husband and tells him she has a surprise for him, leading him to the sitting room, where the Sharps (father and son) are, the first with his wife, and Taipe, who is also there. The latter congratulates him for the reputation of his regiment, and they both, Taipe and Sharp Senior, propose “a toast to the 7th Cavalry,” which Custer will make with water, under the critiques of Sharp junior. As they go out of the house, in the view of some people, the Colonel boasts about his regiment, assuring that it is well trained, disciplined and sober, when suddenly the troop arrives on horse, absolutely drunk, even to the point of falling from their horses!

The following sequence shows the canteen, and in it one of the bartenders, talking to Sharp junior, telling him to “vamoose”, because Custer can arrive “loco.” Sharp is calling Custer “goldilocks” when this arrives angry, which provokes Sharp to show a feared expression. A general view of the canteen shows Custer on the right, Sharp on the left, tending to the centre, and behind him the main bartender, though there are two other barmen, and two soldiers, drunk. Sharp tries to defend himself by going behind the bar, while Custer goes to him, gives him a punch, throws him to the floor and beats the three bartenders, after which he breaks the glasses. Taipe arrives, together with Butler and a soldier, tells Custer that the bar had been opened by his authority, so Custer grabs him and pushes him against the

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bar so hard that Butler and the soldier have to separate him from Taipe, who relieves him of his command and tells him he must “be in Washington for a Court-Martial”.

Inside the train going through the prairies, George Custer and his wife are speaking about Sheridan and also about his situation for the quarrel. He sees no solution, because of his aggression against a representative of the government, when they reach Springfield, while Libbie expresses the opinion that, once the truth is discovered, he cannot be blamed. A little later the train stops and Libbie goes for a paper, calls the newspaper man, buys one, takes it in her hands, and reads the headlines. The dialogue between them both is as follows:

Newspaper Man: Papers, papers.

Libbie: Paper. One of Chicago or Washington?

Newspaper Man: Chicago Record Herald. Just out, half an hour ago. All about the gold in the Black Hills.

Libbie: Black Hills in Dakota?

Newspaper Man: Yes, ma'am (sic), it's bigger than the one in California, they say.

When he mentions the name of the Black Hills, Libbie becomes surprised and goes into the wagon again with the intention of showing the paper to her husband, giving it to him, and pointing to the news in the paper. Custer looks at it with interest, reads aloud the news that gold has been found in the Black Hills, which happened

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in a surprising manner when one Indian gave a White a gold nugget in the West Railway in Fort Lincoln. The paper also says that there is a rush to the Black Hills with thousands of people going to them. Custer also adds the comment about the non-existence of gold and qualifies the plan as a conspiracy, complaining about it, for he had given his word to Crazy Horse and it is implicit that the circumstances will oblige him not to fulfil the agreement he made. Then Libbie realizes that Mrs Taipe told something about the people going into the Black Hills and they realize that the new gold fever was a plot and also about the consequences and the effects of the breaking of the treaty with the Sioux.

In the following sequence, there are several newspaper front pages showing some news about Custer being brought to Court-Martial and other related news. After this, Custer is brought before the senator, speaking in his own defence, accusing Taipe of being part of a plot to violate Indian territory, but the senate demands proof, alleging that what Custer says is "hearsay" and only admissible "in case of a dying declaration." He warns the senate about the terrible effects the breaking of the treaty can bring, like the thousands of people that will die, to which Taipe responds that Terry and Crook will concentrate in Yellowstone. When the reunion is ended and the senators leave the room, Sheridan goes into it, puts his hand on Custer's shoulder, sits down and starts to speak to Custer, who had remained.

The latter asks the Court Martial to be postponed and him to be permitted to lead the 7th Cavalry into the Black Hills, but Sheridan answers that only the President can authorize it and does not want to see the Colonel. However Custer is seen in the following sequence in an office when a man goes to him and tells him that the

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President does not want to receive him, but Custer follows the man and breaks into the office of the President, who has a cigar in his hand, both of them holding a verbal duel in which Custer is on foot and Grant sitting, both of them displaying a defiant attitude. Then Grant stands up, puts the cigar in his mouth and ponders, walking through the office, while the clock chimes, followed by three men bursting into the office, and their ejection. Custer goes into the canteen, where the news that he took command of the Army is told in the words of the bartender, who asks for Sharp, and then the bartender calls him. There is a drinking duel, in which Sharp falls unconscious, so Custer calls California, who looks at him with his hands in his pockets.

A bugler is playing the trumpet, calling the soldiers while it is still dark, so the soldiers are seen coming out of the barracks and going to mount on their horses. Custer, with a pistol in his hand, and Libbie are at home, preparing the luggage for the battle. He puts a leather jacket on, takes a watch from a drawer and breaks its chain, which is observed by Libbie with grief, after which he leaves the watch, looks at the photo of his wife, who puts him the belt while he ridicules General Winfield Scott, mimicking him as if they were making plans for their future, takes the orders from the drawer and discovers the diary of her wife, opens it and finds some unhappy thoughts, while the faces of them both are alternately seen on the screen. Meanwhile he is holding the diary with a hand, serious, while she tries to apologize. The bugle sounds, they say goodbye and, after kissing he leaves while she faints, falling to the floor. Then Custer takes command of the regiment with his leather jacket on as Butler tells him that the regiment is formed, and it will be

immediately seen riding along a path.

In the letter written by Custer to his wife on the 2nd of July, 1874, when he was near Harney's Peak, in Dakota, he confesses that they had no Indian fights, and that the Army had found gold as well as, probably, other valuable metals.⁸⁹ Harney's Peak (or Harney Peak, as is found now in the maps), is in the middle of the Black Hills, near Mount Rushmore and the city of Custer. According to this information the representation of the finding of the gold is not correct, for Custer's Army was who found it, not the miners. The following letter written by Sheridan to Major Forsyth on the 10th of June of the year 1874 proves this fact. The recognition of the Black Hills should be made under the orders of Lieutenant Custer, who with his men might leave Fort Lincoln about June, 25. The Major was addressed to proceed to Custer and report in person to him:

It is especially desirable that these Headquarters should have a complete and detailed description of the country passed over, so it is desired that you will devote yourself to the collection of such information and embody it in a daily diary.

This should embrace distance travelled, character of the soil, wood, water and grass, and topography of surface and geological formation, as well as incidents which may occur.

On the return of the command to Ft. Abraham Lincoln you will proceed without delay to report in person to these Headquarters. Vy Respectfully . P. H. Sheridan (Merington 1987 271-2).

⁸⁹ Merington 1987 272

Contrary to what the film says, Vestal tells that Custer was sent to the Black Hills by Sheridan, who wanted to establish a post over there and, after walking freely through the Black Hills, was the one who found the precious metal and after having come back gave to the press the account that that country was a paradise, which provoked a rush into that part of the country that could not be stopped by the Army.⁹⁰ Speaking about the campaign of the year 1874, Hyde describes the group of people who went with the General. Even though he uses the verb “permit” referring to the “gold hunters”, it is crystal clear that there were people close to the government or the Army looking for gold or otherwise they could have not been allowed. He left Fort Lincoln with the Seventh, “two companies of infantry, some Gatling guns and artillery, sixty Indian scouts, and a staff of scientists and newspaper men. He had 1,200 men in all and a train of a 110 wagons. A party of gold hunters was permitted to accompany this column” (Hyde 1967 218).

This means that, despite the fact that Custer was the one who found gold, and that the U.S Army was looking for it too, the film insists on the misrepresentation. In the sequence in which Custer and Sharp are speaking in the middle of the night of the 25 June 1876, the dialogue between them both is very expressive. Sharp, who has been freed by Custer and wants to come back home, after having complained, asks the new colonel the chances he has to go back home without danger and the General answers that the same he gave to the people who went there in order to acquire gold, without knowing that there was none there.

⁹⁰ Vestal 1957 132-3

5.2.2 Crazy Horse

After an image showing two Sioux spying on the arrival of the Army in Indian territory, one of them, who will be found to be named Grey Eagle, arrives at the Indian camp, where Crazy Horse is in his tipi. Grey Eagle goes into the tipi, bringing news from Custer, telling him that he is in the Black Hills. In answer to that, Crazy Horse tells Grey Eagle to go “to the lodge of Sitting Bull” and convoke the chiefs to a war council. The spy leaves and Crazy Horse stays alone. Red Feather gives a description of Crazy Horse, saying that he:

... was a nice-looking man, with brown-not black-hair, a sharp nose, and a narrow face. Nobody on the reservation nowadays looks like him. His nose was straight and thin. His hair was very long, straight and fine in texture. (Hinman 1976 30).

He adds that he knew him well, but that he was unaware of his age and his burial place. Short Buffalo describes him in a slightly different way:

Crazy Horse neither was a man not very tall and not very short, broad nor thin. His hair was very light...He was a trifle under six tall. Bad Heart Bull was the same general type. But Crazy Horse had a very light complexion, much lighter than the other Indians. He usually wore an Iroquis shell necklace; this was the only ornament he wore. His features were not like those of the rest of us. His face was not broad, and he had a sharp, high nose. He had black eyes that hardly ever looked straight at a man, but they

didn't miss much that was going on all the same. (Hinman 1976 40).

As can be seen, there are some traces common to both portraits: a) sharp nose, b) narrow face, c) fair hair (meaning not black). As has been previously said, there was no encounter between Crazy Horse and George Armstrong Custer and, consequently, there could not be any fight between them, except what could have happened at Little Bighorn, but what happens in the sequence in which both of them are having a quarrel is wrongly depicted; however, it is very interesting to analyse the sequences in which Crazy Horse is taken to the guardhouse, which will be made later. In the film, the chase is not seen, but merely suggested, while in the article by Sheldon the chase is evident. It is even witnessed that Crook, the author of the chase, was under the instructions of General L. P. Bradley, who sent a force about nine o'clock of the fourth of September to surround the village in which Crazy Horse was, about six miles below the post. This force was not simply a couple of soldiers, as is shown in the film, but a good many warriors, U.S. soldiers as well as Indians. General Bradley again tells how these forces were composed:

The column consisted of eight companies of the Third Cavalry, and about four hundred friendly Indians. The Indian scouts were under Lieutenant Clark; the other Indians under chiefs "Red Cloud," "Little Wound," "American Horse," "Young Man Afraid of His Horses," "Yellow Bear," "Black Coal," "Big Road," "Jumping Shield," and Sharp Nose." The Cavalry were under the command of Colonel Mason (Neb. Hist. Mag. Vol. XII n° 1 50).

Very similar to the film in some ways is the escape of Crazy Horse from the guardhouse, however there are some slight differences. While the film shows Crazy Horse only accompanied by an Indian warrior previously seen, for he had liberated him from the guardhouse, General Bradley states that Crazy Horse escaped on his own, reaching the Spotted Tail Agency. There, he was arrested the same day by friendly Indians, bringing him back here to the fort.⁹¹ In the interview with He Dog held by Hinman on July 7, 1930 the Sioux warrior gives the names of some men who were with Crazy Horse at the moment of the surrender, and more concretely at the moment of going into the guardhouse, like Turning Bear (1848-1911), who was present in the 1876 Treaty and signed himself, being one of the leaders who took the Sioux from Rosebud Reservation to Pine Ridge and was in the Wounded Knee Massacre, but survived, and who also acted as a decoy in the fight with the Flatheads:

Mole and Herald were chosen to lead the advance party. Other young men chosen to act as decoys were Bull Eagle, Hump, Owns-the-Warrior, Red Gun, Drops-Two, Red Circle, Looks-for-Enemies, Bear-Shoot-Him-as-He-Runs, Eagle Thunder, Red Thunder, Use-Him-as-Charger, Red Thunder (no. 2), Crane, Two Eagle, Red Tomahawk, White Shield, Turning Bear, Charging Bear, Long Ghost and Running Wild (Vestal 1957 120).

⁹¹ Nebraska History Magazine Vol XII N° I 50

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This warrior was walking ahead of Crazy Horse the moment of the surrender, as were also Little Big Man, Wooden Sword and Leaper.⁹² Before going on, it is appropriate to say some words about He Dog. He was born in Smoke's camp, was a nephew of Red Cloud, the son of one of his sisters, who was living in Smoke's camp, which was led by the sons of Red Cloud after 1850. He Dog, who was born in this camp, had a brother called Short Bull. In the fight against Crook on March, 1st, 1876, he was at the camp of Two Moon:

On March 1, 1876, Crook set out from Fort Fetterman, Wyoming, heading for Powder River. With him went one of the strongest single outfits ever seen in Sioux country. Crook was looking for Crazy Horse and his Oglala, said to be a few miles above the mouth of the Little Powder, in Montana. It was reported to contain 120 lodges. Actually this was the camp of Two Moon's Cheyennes which Crazy Horse's Sioux friend He dog had joined in order to go into the agency (Vestal 1957 140).

In the Second Arrow Fight he was in disagreement with Bad Heart Bull because of the counting of coups, assuring that there had been an error and that the man in the third position should be second. On December, 21th, 1866, he was in Peno Valley, on a day that is described as cold. It is curious to notice that this is one of the few days that are described relating to the fight. In this fight also Red Cloud was there, supposedly as a warrior, for he had not abandoned the fight:

⁹² Hinman 1976 21

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December 21 (1866) dawned bright and cold. The mass of warriors deployed on each side of Peno Valley, but not until they had been harangued by Hump and others about holding their positions until the decoys, ten in all, gave the signal to attack. The Sioux graciously gave their allies, the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and others, the sunny side of the valley ridge, while they took their places on the shaded, colder side. Red Cloud watched from a distance (Ambrose 1975 222).

In this deployment there were two Cheyennes called Wolf Left Hand and Little Wolf, as well as the Sioux Hump, Lone Bear, American Horse, Young Man Afraid, Crazy Horse and He Dog. It must be noted here that these last four ones were Shirt Wearers.⁹³ In 1870, he must have been with Crazy Horse and Hump in an expedition against the Shoshones, whose story he told Eleanor Hinman some years later.⁹⁴ He must have been in the village when No Water arrived from a hunting trip, and having found his tipi empty, gathered up his children, and realized that his wife, Black Buffalo Woman, had gone with Crazy Horse. He Dog assures that Crazy Horse had been courting her since a long time ago, for which reason it was not difficult for him to deduce what had happened. Consequently, he joined a group of warriors and went after him. In 1876, he was in a village besieged by Crook:

⁹³ Ambrose 1975 222

⁹⁴ Ibid. 307

As the Southern prong of the Army's campaign against the Sioux, General Crook was leading a powerful column (eight hundred soldiers) from Fort Fetterman up the Bozeman Trail, in search of Indians. On March 16, 1876, Crook stumbled across the He Dog-Old Bear village" (Ambrose 1975 381).

Though most of the testimonies say that Crazy Horse and He Dog were friends, there are certain signs that suggest a certain tension, (if not enmity) between them both, such as the opposition he seemed to have to Crazy Horse attacks.⁹⁵ The following situation, in which Crazy Horse asked him to go to his tipi, is an example of it, for when he was there it seems that Crazy Horse assured he was expecting trouble and He Dog seemed to have asked if that meant that they were enemies.⁹⁶ It is, at least, obvious that there was a certain tension between both warriors and there was a provocation on the part of He Dog. The gift of friendship he presented to Lieutenant Clarke makes us think that the friendship with Crazy Horse is, at least, doubtful. The text that speaks about the gift to Clarke says that Crazy Horse had given his war bonnet to Red Cloud, but that He Dog gave his war shirt and war-bonnet to Lieutenant Clarke, meaning friendship.⁹⁷ He survived the battle of Little Bighorn, becoming very old: "He Dog lived to be a very old man, highly respected by both Red and White. He became the judge of the Court of Indian Offenses at Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota" (Ambrose 1975 441).

⁹⁵ Ibid. 416

⁹⁶ Ibid. 430

⁹⁷ Hyde 1967 291

White Calf, in his interview with Hinman, speaking about the Indians present at the moment of Crazy Horse death, adds the names of Iron Hawk (who was at the Battle of Little Big Horn, says that the battle was over when the sun was in the middle of the sky and gave a description of the battle in Sign Language), Big Road, and Long Bear.⁹⁸ Also American Horse and Red Cloud were in the fort⁹⁹ at the moment of the surrender and, more concretely, when Crazy Horse was taken into the office, that is to say the moments previous to being taken to the guardhouse. It has not been attested whether he had been interrogated or if he had only been taken to the office and put into the guardhouse. Neither has it been attested who was the officer who was in the guardhouse.

Big Road was an Oglala of the Smoke people. The Oglalas of the Smoke people division on Powder River had three principal bands: the Hunkpatila, "Those who camp at the horn" (referring to the horn of the tribal camp circle-the position of honour) led by Man-Afraid-of-His-Horse; the Oyukhpe, "Thrown Down," among whom Red Dog was the rising man; and the Iteshicha, "Bad Faces," the band of Red Cloud, Crazy Horse, Big Road, and Little Hawk (Hyde 1967 98). With his comrades in arms Sweat and Low Dog and commanded by Crazy Horse Big Road was in the fight against Crook in March, 1876.¹⁰⁰ He was one of the warriors who remained at the Powder River when Red Cloud went to his new agency. "The few Oglalas who had remained on Powder River when Red Cloud went to his new agency were mostly Bad Faces under Big Road, Little Hawk, and some minor

⁹⁸ Hinman 1976 43

⁹⁹ Ibid. 21

¹⁰⁰ Vestal 1957 143

chiefs" (Hyde 1967 192). He was one of the hundreds at the Rosebud on June, 24th, 1876, facing Reno's men, together with men like Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Black Moon (1821-1893), a Minniconjou who had become important in 1869, when Sitting Bull was named "generalissimo" of the Lakotas. He was present at the battle of Little Bighorn and was one of those who fled into Canada with Sitting Bull, where he decided to remain when the latter surrendered. With him there were other warriors, like Big Road, Gall and many other famous ones.¹⁰¹

He was against Crazy Horse as, in Hyde's opinion, were practically all the Indians, and as example of that he gives the names of the leaders who went to arrest him, among them Red Cloud, Young-Man-Afraid-of-His-Horse, Little Wound and Yellow Bear, in representation of the Oglalas, but also Black Coal of the Arapahoes, as well as Big Road, Little Big Man or Jumping Bull.¹⁰² However, it must be considered that Hyde was on the side of Spotted Tail, as has been stated before, and clearly against Crazy Horse, which explains his words minimizing the great chief and his actions as well as the number of people backing him, otherwise he could not have led the warriors in battle, not only in Little Bighorn, but also in the other ones. Moreover, the bad opinion of the Sioux about Little Big Man for the affair of the guardhouse must be underlined here, in which he grabbed the arm of Crazy Horse, betraying him and not letting him move. This opinion could not have been held if most of the braves were against Crazy Horse. It must also be remembered here that Crazy Horse was a warrior chief, a position not to be maintained without being well considered by a great part of the tribe. It is a remarkable fact that after Crazy

¹⁰¹ Hyde 1967 268

¹⁰² Ibid. 297

Horse's death he led the band that Crazy Horse had led before.

As it can be seen, when he is taken to the guardhouse, Crazy Horse was accompanied by four soldiers, while a fifth, who is near the guardhouse, is the one who opens it. Crazy Horse is the only Indian put into prison at that moment, which is a difference between the film and reality, because in reality he was in prison with a number of people who were making a noise. As Garnett says in his interview with Ricker, there was a noise inside the building at the entrance of Crazy Horse, some Indians cried that it was a guardhouse, and panicked. The scraping of some chairs was heard and a moment later some prisoners are fastened to iron balls, others trying to escape, fighting for their freedom, while uproar ensues.¹⁰³ Contrary to what happens in the film, they told him to go in, while some of the Indians were scared, because they saw it was the jail. Red Feather confirms that, among them, there were some scouts of Spotted Tail, who left him.¹⁰⁴ What can be deduced from this paragraph is that, contrary to what is shown in the film, there were some warriors who were taken prisoners and imprisoned at the same time, but it can also be deduced that there were people crying to Crazy Horse to go into the jail while some others implored him not to do it. Whether all that cried to him to go in were soldiers, or if there were some Indians cannot be assured, but neither of those two positions is represented in the film.

In an article called "How Crazy Horse Died", Brinistool tells the quarrel of Crazy Horse in his last moments of life and adds some interesting details, such as the attack with a knife he made on Captain Kennington. He says that Crazy Horse

¹⁰³ Ricker Tablet 2 197-200

¹⁰⁴ Hinman 1976 28

desperately sprang into the guardhouse, took a knife from his clothes and tried to plunge it into Captain Kennington, who was able to avoid it. He then struggled with his knife, trying to leave and reach the place where his friends were.¹⁰⁵ As can be seen, this has nothing similar in the film, because in *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) an Indian friend releases Crazy Horse and they escape from the fort, the death not appearing at any time.

Some moments previous to his death Crazy Horse took his knife and tried to obtain his freedom. At that moment, Little Big Man took his hands and the Oglala chief cut Little Big Man in the wrist. As Garnett says in an interview with Ricker, Little Big Man seized Crazy Horse's arm, they both struggled and Crazy Horse tried to be free, the scouts took their revolvers, but they did not use them due to the prohibition of the officer of the day and Crazy Horse protested "Let me go! Let me go" and was mortally wounded with a bayonet. Nothing of this appears in the film, when Crazy Horse is freed by an unknown Indian and Crazy Horse escapes, though in reality there was nothing like that, because the sentry wounds him and he dies as a consequence of it. As Red Feather says again "The sentry came in behind them and ran Crazy Horse through once. The thrust went through the kidneys" (Hinman 1976 29).

Little Big Man was an Oglala Sioux warrior. His name is due to the fact that he was the son of a warrior called *Chasa Tonga* (Big Man) and as he had the same name as his father the word *Chikala* (little, meaning junior) was put before the name, giving so the name Little Big Man, by which he was referred to when the speaker

¹⁰⁵ Nebraska History Magazine Vol. XII N° 1 27

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meant he was speaking about the son to distinguish him from the father.¹⁰⁶ He was one of the lieutenants of Crazy Horse. In 1865 both of them were raiding the settlers, after which they returned to the Powder River. "Early in June 1865, Young Man Afraid, Little Big Man, Crazy Horse and the other warriors who had been out on raids returned to the main camp near Powder River" (Ambrose 1975 146-7). In August 1867, he was with Crazy Horse and others at the siege of Fort Phil Kearney, he opposed the 1874 treaty, which wanted to take the Black Hills from the Sioux, where he could have been sent by Crazy Horse, being here, in the council for the 1875 treaty, that he made his dramatic appearance, menacing the peace commissioners with shooting all those who tried to sell the Black Hills:

Red Cloud was just getting (sic) ready to speak when the thousands of warriors began to seethe with sudden excitement. An opening was made in the circle of warriors and through it shot Little Big Man, a belligerent warrior from Crazy Horse's camp. Whether he was acting on instructions from Crazy Horse or on his own is unknown, but he was an impressive sight. He was riding bareback on a magnificent horse, with a lariat tied to the lower jaw in place of a bridle (Ambrose 1975 362).

The text continues, describing the aspect of Little Big Man, saying that he was almost naked, only covered by a breech cloth and an eagle feather, bearing in one of his hands a Winchester, and a fistful of cartridges in the other. He entered the council, going into the middle of it and threatening to kill the Whites who were stealing the Indian lands, and some time later became a policeman, after having

¹⁰⁶ Hyde 1967 243

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been in the battle of Little Big Horn and at the moment of Crazy Horse's death. "There Little Big Man and Pretty Bear, two fierce young devils from Crazy Horse's wild camp, acting as judge advocates, they court-martialed Saville" (Hyde 1967 209). After the affair of the guardhouse Little Big Man acquired a bad name and was badly viewed by the people of his tribe.

In the article "How Crazy Horse Died" General Jesse Lee again gives some details of what happened with Little Big Man, details that give some glimpses of his personality, telling that at that moment Little Big Man, previously a friend of Crazy Horse, grabbed his arm, trying to throw him to the ground. The great chief, tried not to seriously wound Little Big Man, but only hurt him as little as possible to be free. General Jesse M. Lee tells that the death of Crazy Horse was not accidental or, such as can be thought considering his last words, a question of duty from the soldier who wounded him, when he tried to escape, but a matter of revenge or hatred, and betrayal on the part of some of his men. As he says:

Swift Bear, Black Crow and Fast Thunder (loyal Brulés) caught him, and in the struggle Captain Kennington called out, kill him! Kill him! And just then an infantry soldier of the guard made a successful lunge, and Crazy Horse fell, mortally wounded, with a deep bayonet in his right side" (Neb. Hist. Mag. Vol XII n° 1 28-9).

There was then confusion, and the Indian camp became hell. Crazy Horse's uncle was there and was seeking revenge. The account of Dr McGillicuddy adds some very interesting details, for he assures he was at a short distance and so he saw

him enter the guardhouse, and that after having taken a knife to regain his freedom he was bayoneted by a private belonging to the ninth Infantry. He saw he was mortally wounded and consequently communicated the news to the officer of the day, who was Captain Kennington. The place was full of Indians, hostiles as well as friendlies. Of the U. S. Army, almost everyone had disappeared, leaving only Captain Kennington, McGillicuddy and twenty guards. Kennington decided to put Crazy Horse, dying, in the guardhouse, opposed by the opinion of the Indians:

About 11: 30 p.m., Crazy Horse made a last struggle and passed away. Chief Touch-the-Clouds crossed over to the body lying on the floor, drew the blanket over the face, and pointed to it with the remark "that is the lodge of Crazy Horse." Then, standing to the full height of seven feet, pointed upward with the remark "the chief has gone above!" (Neb. Hist. Mag. Vol XII n° 1 40).

As can be seen, another detail omitted in the film is the hour at which Crazy Horse died. However, that does not mean that it is not known or that it is not recorded, the accurate time being given by McGillicuddy. As in the film, this scene has nothing to do with Crazy Horse's death, because in the fiction there is only an imprisonment, from which he escapes safe and sound, the details concerning the death of this great chief being ignored, the same as the reactions following the death of the chief or the fact that the Indians took the body with them, following the discourse of American Horse. As Garnett tells in his interview with Ricker, Chief American Horse, who was a natural born diplomat, had made the scout go where the

wounded man (meaning Crazy Horse) was, bearing some blankets with the orders of carrying him to the adjutant's office. When all the things were ready he stated, ambiguously, that the chief could be seriously hurt or not, but that they would take them with them and examine him to see the degree of wound he was suffering, he also assured that probably the Indian medicine men could help him.¹⁰⁷ Not being meaningful for the action, his last words were not transmitted in this film, though McMurtry himself, who cites these words in his book *Crazy Horse*, says it is supposed the great chief pronounced them, telling them to Agent Jesse Lee:

My friend, I do not blame you for this. Had I listened to you this trouble would have not happened to me. I was not hostile to the white man. Sometimes my young men would attack the Indians who were their enemies and took their ponies. They did it in return. We had buffalo for food, and their hides for clothing, and our tipis. We preferred hunting to a life of idleness on the reservations, where we were driven against our will. (McMurtry 1999 137).

The speech of the great chief continues, telling that the Indians were no expense for the government. He assures that the soldiers destroyed their villages in winter, that Long Hair came with the same intentions, that the soldiers accused him of having massacred them, but that the soldiers would have defended them in the same way if necessary. He adds that the first impulse of the Indians was to escape,

¹⁰⁷ Ricker Tablet 2 203-4

but that they had to fight, to go to Tongue River with his people, but the Whites did not let him and his people live in peace, so he went to Red Cloud Agency, where he tried to talk to the Big White Chief, but he was not given the chance and they tried to imprison him, so he tried to escape, and a soldier bayoneted him. Also the names of the people who were near him at the time of his death are known. They were, among others, his father, Worm, Spider and White Bird, who were present there.¹⁰⁸

White Bird was born in 1841 into the Tapisleca (or Spleen) band, which was led by Yellow Bear until his death by one John Richard, when the band divided into five parts and he took the leadership of one of them. In the summer of 1877, he was accused of stealing horses. The facts occurred in the following manner when Gray Eagle arrived at the camp with the stolen horses. Sitting Bull asked him who else was involved in the robbery and how many they were, to which question Gray Eagle gave the names of Good Crow, White Bird and White-Cow-Walking.¹⁰⁹ He became a policeman, being one of those who was picked to arrest Sitting Bull. In order to go and arrest Crazy Horse, Lieutenant Bullhead asked the Major the favour to choose his own men, among who were men like One Feather, Good-Voiced Eagle, Black Pheasant, Weasel Bear, Running Hawk, Iron Thunder and, of course, White Bird.¹¹⁰

The sequences of the battles between the Indians and the U.S. Army show these happened between the arrival of Custer to Dakota and the battle of Little Bighorn.

¹⁰⁸ Hinman 1976 29

¹⁰⁹ Vestal 1957 211

¹¹⁰ Ibid 273

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They are summarized, as if they were lacking in importance for the History of the United States, ignoring the names and the events occurring in them. However, it must be underlined here that they are a prominent part of History, due to the fact that they show two battles in which the United States lost before the Sioux, and so they balance the forces between the two nations. The first one was in the Powder River and took place on the seventeenth of March, 1876. The night of the 16th, General Crook sent Colonel Reynolds to attack a hostile camp located on Powder River, which seemed to be Crazy Horse's, though there were also Cheyennes. The Indians saw the Army and reported this fact to their chiefs, when Reynolds attacked the camp, finding that there were only warriors. A group formed by sixty hunters returned to report to the chiefs after having discovered the column commanded by George Crook. However, those Indians, who are described as usually suffering apathy, had not set any guards, and when Reynolds arrived with two columns, they were almost asleep.

And here Hyde's narration becomes a little confusing, for he says that the Indians were "taken completely by surprise," but afterwards he adds that "the Indians fled up the steep hillside." In fact, he seems not to be very clear about what happened or does not want to recognize it, so he keeps on telling that, though the warriors were taken by surprise, they had put their wives and children in a safe place, went back to the camp and fought fiercely. The narration goes on, telling that then he withdrew and ordered his troops to set fire to the Indian camp, going to Lodge Pole Creek. The troops "destroyed everything in it, including quantities of fresh and dried buffalo meat" (Ambrose 1975 381-2). The Indians attacked and recovered

their herd, though Crook's troops, later, brought some of them back. As Ambrose says: "... after recovering from the initial shock, the Sioux and Cheyennes counterattacked and managed to recover most of their large pony herd" (Ambrose 1975 382). During the night, the hostiles ran off with all of the seven hundred ponies that had been taken by the troops. When they were going back home the Indian were attacked by Crook, who recovered two hundred ponies, later killed.¹¹¹

From Hyde's narrative it is not clear if Crook went with Reynolds or if they went separately, but it seems they were both together in the same expedition, though sometimes the protagonist is one of them and sometimes the other. It cannot be deduced if this sleepiness of the Indians was a trick to catch the soldiers, or if it is a trick of the author to justify his positions against Crazy Horse. The second one was the battle of the Rosebud, and more concretely between Trimk Butte and Ash Creek, which took place the 17th of June of the year 1876, a week before the battle of Little Bighorn. The Sioux were there celebrating their yearly council, and also their annual Sun Dance there in the second half of June, lasting three days, from the 12th June to the 15th of the same month, so the battle took place two days after the Sun Dance had finished.¹¹² The Sun Dance was not celebrated according to the Sun calendar, but according the Sioux calendar, which was a lunar one. Joseph Epes Brown, in his book *The Sacred Pipe*, which is written according to the teachings of Black Elk, a medicine man of the Oglala Sioux, says, speaking of the Sun Dance: "It is held each year during the Moon of Fattening (June) or the Moon of Cherries Blackening (July), always at the time when the moon is full..."(Brown

¹¹¹ Hyde 1967 255

¹¹² Ricker Tablet 2 147-8

1988 67).

Ricker tells that: "The Sun Dance is a sacrificial performance. A brave bargains with the Great Spirit. He covets a precious favor. It may involve the preservation of his life" (Tablet 2 145). Brown makes this a little more specific, recognizing that the Sun Dance is one of the greatest Sioux rites,¹¹³ describing the tools and ceremonies. The preparation of the Sun Dance is as follows: the lodges are set in a vast circle, having a diameter of two miles, and in its centre, where a pavilion is built, having a circular form, whose measure is 300 or 400 feet in diameter.¹¹⁴ In this dance, the main dancer was Sitting Bull, who had his famous vision in which he saw a great many U.S. soldiers falling down dead. Ricker specifies the place and date on which it was celebrated. Ambrose in his book *Crazy Horse and Custer* tells the way this Sun Dance was celebrated:

Everything was done in the old way, according to strict and elaborate ritual. Virgins cut the sacred tree; chiefs carried it into the camp circle; braves counted coup upon it. The buffalo skulls were set up, along with the sacred pipes and other paraphernalia. Many men pierced at the dance, undergoing the self-torture so that Wakan Tanka, the All, would smile upon his people (Ambrose 1975 384).

Sitting Bull, the promoter and leader of this ritual, had his breast injured by the scars of the previous dances. He sat on the floor while Jumping Bull, an

¹¹³ Brown 1988 67

¹¹⁴ Ricker Tablet 2 143

Assiniboine warrior captured by the Lakota and more concretely Sitting Bull, who adopted him as his brother, cut fifty slices of his skin in each arm. Sitting Bull, bleeding from both of his arms, danced, his sight constantly fixed on the sun during eighteen hours, until he fainted, when Black Moon revived him. After this, Sitting Bull recognized he had had a vision.¹¹⁵ This is the way Ambrose tells how the ritual was done. Let us see the way the ritual is described, according to the teachings of Black Elk written in the book *The Sacred Pipe*, so as to have an idea of its accuracy. As the whole account of the legend is very extensive, a small summary will be made here.

After some days of preparation, the men offer their bodies and soul to *Wakan Tanka*. It is compulsory to build a large tipi and place sage around inside it. A pipe is necessary and other material also, among which is a large drum made with a buffalo hide and stout sticks, after which all the equipment was prepared, each one with a ritual meaning, a circle is traced and painted blue, each man wearing one of these symbols. The next day, the sacred tree was placed there, later it was carried by six men to the camp and when it was in the camp it had to be put upon poles. All the things that had to be used in the ceremony had to be purified. Then there was a small dance around the tree, later the dancers dress and go into the sacred lodge, dancing towards the west, centre, north, centre, east, centre and south and centre again, each of the dancers made a vow and offered the pieces of flesh, by putting the thongs through their flesh, ending their dance at dawn, when they stopped.

¹¹⁵ Ambrose 1975 384

The knife used to pierce the breasts was now purified, after which a pinch of earth was offered to the Heaven and to the ground and another pinch to the four directions, an Indian term to refer to the points of the compass, sometimes referred as the six directions, because up and down are also considered, and then it was stretched out to point with the stick to the six directions. Now the skull was put on a sage-bed and the men sang and danced. After the drumming and singing had stopped, the dancers sat on sage, the helpers helped them to rub the painting and they put plumes on their heads, painting themselves again with red and black colours. After all this, the dancers stayed at the base of the tree, looking at the top of the tree, and when the singers started to sing, the dancers started to dance, moving around and blowing their bone whistles until their thongs broke loose from their flesh. All the tools used were deposited in the centre of the sacred place. Now there was a sweat lodge ceremony to finish with the whole ritual.¹¹⁶

Reno was sent by Terry to scout the Rosebud. Despite the fact that they were near the place where the Sun Dance was being celebrated they did not see it, but Crook's column was discovered by a small party of Cheyennes near the Rosebud on the 16th of June and when they went back to the camp they reported what they had seen. After having held a council of the chiefs they prepared for war, some thousand soldiers going to the fight. "At dawn they draw up behind a hill on the west side of the Rosebud, near the southern end of the canyon."¹¹⁷ Some Indian scouts were sent to the top of the hill, but Crook had also sent some Crow scouts and they discovered the Sioux. "With their ponies at a dead run, the Crows made

¹¹⁶ The summary of this ritual is taken from the pages 81-100 of *The Sacred Pipe*.

¹¹⁷ Hyde 1967 263

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for Crook's camp, which was just beyond the hill, shouting *Lakota! Lakota! Sioux! Sioux!* (Hyde 1967 263).

It was then the 17th of June when Crook, who had gone after the Indians, found them at his back and the Indians struck Crook's forces. Crazy Horse was there, though according to Hyde he was only a warrior, and also Sitting Bull who, after having passed through a Sun Dance, was in a very bad state. Crook divided his troops, one part going into the canyon. The story of the battle is not easy to tell and it is not meaningful for this thesis, the really important matter being that the hostiles were:

...charging boldly and rapidly through the soldiers, knocking them from their horses with lances and knives, dismounting and killing them, cutting off the arms of some at the elbows in the middle of the fight and carrying them away. Next day, Crook withdrew to Goose Creek, where he was waiting for reinforcements while the Indians came back with a great number of warriors. After that they were around the camp until the 20th June, when they disappeared (Colonel Anson Mills. *South Dak. Hist. Col.* Vol XV 362).

The following sequence is that in which California Joe and Butler are on top of a hill, spying the Indians, while these are reunited and their leader makes a sign, which California Joe comments on, assuring they are using Sign Talk and that they want a Peace powwow. What is interesting here is the fact that Sign Talk is alluded to, but what is the Universal Indian Sign Language, such as it is frequently named? It is a language of signs, and only signs, created by the Indians long ago and

qualified as Universal because it is understandable by all the tribes and, consequently, serves as a common language. It is not the intention of this thesis to speak about it. For that purpose there are excellent works such as *Sign Talk*, by Ernest Thompson Seton, *Sign Language among North American Indians, or A Collection of Gesture-Signs and Signals*, by Garrick Mallery. In this sequence only one sign is used, which is made with the arm up and moving the lance that the warrior has in his hand in a circular way, it being important to notice here the fact that the sign is erroneous, because the one for council is made with the fists together and moving them in a circular way. Tomkins describes it in this way: "COUNCIL (meaning: sitting in a circle and talking). Closed hands well out in front of body, little fingers touching, move hands in horizontal circle towards body to meet with backs to body-then add TALK to right and left" (Tomkins 1926 19).

In the sequence in which Crazy Horse threatens Custer with war, he mentions the different tribes that are going to join if there were war with the United States, mentioning the Cheyennes, the Oglalas, the Minniconjous, the Blackfeet and the Sans-Arcs as different tribes. The reality is that there were only two tribes involved on the side of the Indians: Sioux and Cheyennes; the Oglalas, Minniconjous, Blackfeet and Sans-Arcs were sub-tribes of the Sioux, as is explained above in the section concerning this tribe. In the sequence in which the Indian chiefs decide to fight the United States, joining their forces just before the battle one more tribe is added, the Shoshones, who did not take part in the Battle of Little Bighorn. As for the other bands of the Sioux (Oglalas, Minniconjous, Blackfeet and Sans-Arcs), each one of them had a chief, though throughout the film only the names of Crazy

Horse and Sitting Bull are known. In fact, the film only says that they were Sioux, while the truth is that Red Horse was the chief of the Minniconjous, Crazy Horse was the chief of the Oglalas, Gall and Rain-in-the-Face were chiefs of the Hunkpapas, and Spotted Tail was chief of the Sicangus (Brulés). The fact of mentioning some tribes makes some chiefs be alluded to: the Blackfeet, the Sans-Arcs, whose chief was Touch-the-Clouds, and also the Minniconjous, because Sitting Bull was not a warrior chief, but a medicine-man. Neither the Sicangus, the Brulés nor the Two-Kettle Band are mentioned in the film.

In this sequence, there is an agreement between Crazy Horse and Custer so that the Sioux can conserve the Black Hills, and this agreement is ratified with a treaty between Indians and U.S. Army, though in fact no treaty took place in this year. The previous one was signed by Spotted Tail and twenty four other chiefs on 29th April 1868¹¹⁸ and the following one would be on the 15th of August, 1876 after the battle of Little Big Horn.¹¹⁹ In it, the government passed an Act, which would give as a result the aforesaid treaty of 1876, also called the Black Hills Treaty:

The treaty was presented to Spotted Tail on September 23rd, (1876) and it was signed by the old chief and forty-two of his leading men. On the 26th it was presented to the Oglalas and signed by Red Cloud, Man Afraid, the younger American Horse and nineteen other prominent men” (Robinson 1967 441).

¹¹⁸ Robinson 1967 386

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 438

No middle treaty is recorded, so the conversations between the Sioux and the United States did not result in any treaty, though that does not mean that there were no conversations at all. On the contrary it would be unreasonable to suppose that there were not. About the exploration of the Black Hills enough has been said, but now the U. S. found an excuse to invade the Black Hills because on the Missouri River, in Dakota, it was not clear for everybody the existence of gold, which was an excuse for Custer to lead an expedition in 1874 that violated the 1868 treaty. Though in the film the characters planning this invasion were the Sharps and Taipe, no information of the existence of those characters has been found. It is reasonable to think that they are based upon real persons, whose names have been changed, but there is also the possibility that they have been composed as a mixture of different people and, therefore, absolutely fictional. What is really clear is that the characters of Taipe and the Sharps do not appear in History as such. Concerning the Court-Martial scene, it should be said that it did not take place in the year 1876, such as it should be, if the chronology of the film is followed, but in 1867. Frost, who gives the official version of the facts, says:

The court martial convened at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, on September 15, 1867, at 11:00 AM., under Special Orders N^o. 426 under date of August 27, 1867, at Washington, out of the Adjutant General's Office by order of the commanding general, Ulysses S. Grant. (Frost 1968 96)

The charges in the film are those of having hit a representative of the government, though nothing similar appears in the official version. Frost specifies the charges,

saying that in the first one Custer is accused of being absent from his position without having been properly authorized, and going to Fort Harker, on the 15th of July of the year 1867, when he was supposed to be fighting the hostiles. The second charge has three specifications: the first one tells that after his troops had had a long and exhausting march and with the horses also exhausted he took a group of officers and set off rapidly towards Fort Hays, in Kansas, without any public necessity and in this way he harmed the horses and the officers; the second specification accuses him of procuring some mules; the third specification adds that George Armstrong Custer did not attack a small party of Indians when he was informed of their existence, being near Downer Station, the 16th of July. The additional charges and specifications, though they are not unworthy of mention, have nothing to do with the sequence in the film. It would be a little too tiresome to list these charges, in which it is said that G. A. Custer shot down several deserters without any kind of trial; however, it is meaningful to add that among the witnesses was his brother, Thomas Custer.

Though the film does not say anything about that particular fact, Custer was suspended for a year.¹²⁰ In this way, the basis of speaking of a negotiation with General Grant, according to Custer's action in the battle of Little Bighorn, is dismantled, for two reasons, first: because the sequence of the film suggests that the sentence has no end, while the real thing is that it is limited in time, and second, because the aforesaid battle took place nine years later, and consequently the idea of going to battle in an immediate way is not possible. The *Daily Eagle* in

¹²⁰ Daily Register, December, 28th 1867

its issue of December, 5, 1867 affirms the remission of the sentence would be convenient, as it can be seen in: "it is hoped that the gratitude of the country may yet be shown by the remission of the sentence." The interview between Custer and General Sheridan taking part in the film for the remission question has no sense; however, there were some communications between them both, such as the letter of December, the 12th 1867, in which he affirms he will be at Leavenworth in January and some days later, 20th December in Washington, where he will try to pay a little attention to his case.¹²¹ In his letter of November 19th 1867, which he wrote to Custer, Sheridan considered the court had done him a favour, saying he presumes the court had made everything right for him, according to what he had heard from some of the members.¹²² As a reason for that opinion, he adduces what he has heard, but Frost does not add any words that can confirm that opinion.

The Diary of Libbie, which appears in the sequence in which General Custer is going to leave his home to go to the battle is, if not the same notebook given to her by her father when she was nine, a continuation of that, with the notes she started to take at that age, for it is believable that she started to write a diary at nine and continued later with more and more volumes. This diary is attested in Merington, who assures that his father had given it to her, describing it as beautiful and blank, exception made for the inscription it had upon it.¹²³

Afterwards, a column of soldiers is seen advancing, an image of Custer and Butler is shown, and later the Arikara scouts, and then Custer sends them out, followed

¹²¹ Frost 1968 256

¹²² Ibid. 254

¹²³ Merington 1987 23

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by a sight of the Army camp. At night, California goes into Custer tent, reporting that "the scouts are back," bringing news about Crook, whose troops were massacred, and from Crazy Horse, camped "on the other side of the Little Big Horn." California assures that a great number of Indians are in the Little Big Horn and that the best solution is to "vamoose," but Custer intends to attack, at which California becomes surprised and a little scared. Then Custer sends California to fetch Butler with the intention of giving him a letter in order to take it to Fort Lincoln, because he is not American, but English. His friend, dissatisfied, protests, considering he is as American as the others, and adds that the only real Americans may be the Indians, so he refuses to take the letter and California, who was listening to the conversation, escapes. After the long shot of an Indian camp, the image shows a tipi, in which a group of Indian chiefs are having a meeting. Crazy Horse takes a small branch and puts it on the fire, followed by the rest of the chiefs, who do the same as they name their respective tribes, meaning that they and their tribes are ready for war. The scene starts with one "Hoka Hey" and ends with another.

Custer is walking towards a wagon at night, reaching it, opening it, after which Sharp is seen falling from it to the floor, and consequently he protests. Custer frees him and tells him the place and the date, which makes Sharp appear desperate, because he is very far from home and "the whole country swarmed with Sioux." Custer expression is eager, for the revenge he is having, as he says that he has the same chances as those who were sent there due to the Gold Rush. After a view of the column led by Custer and California, there are different images of

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Indians and Custer, in which the latter is seen in front or alone, and the Indians are seen on a tree or in the grass. Custer runs together with the Arikara scouts, probably Bloody Knife, though his name is not mentioned, and California. The Sioux appear on the hill in a line, and they attack the regiment while Custer and his men are formed and the bugle is sounded. Custer draws his sabre and orders to do the same, so the soldiers attack while the Indians escape. What follows is the development of the battle, with a series of charges on both sides, the battle ending when Crazy Horse shoots an arrow and Custer falls dead.

In Fort Lincoln, the bugle sounds and immediately Sheridan is telling Taipe that “all that Custer said was true.” Taipe replies that Custer might have defended himself in the Congress, meaning the Court-Martial, when Sheridan opens the door to Libbie, who brings the letter written by her husband the night before the battle, in which he reaffirms all the things said in the Congress and Sharp’s father is sad for the death of his son. As Libbie menaces with publishing the letter and they both, Sharp and Taipe, do not want this to happen Sharp father dissolves the society and Taipe renounces to be Commissioner, but Libbie announces the restitution of the Black Hills to the Sioux, which is granted by Sheridan, who acts in the name of the President of the United States. The U.S. Army arrived in different columns, just as has been represented, but it is wrong that the Sioux tribes attacked first. On the contrary, it seems that the soldiers attacked the Indians, who were on a bluff, from the valley. According to Red Horse, the day of the attack he was with four women, not very far from the camp, when one woman called his attention, making him look

at a dust cloud. He also assures having seen the soldiers charging.¹²⁴

While, in the film, Custer can be seen differentiated from the rest of his men, in the case of the Indians, only Crazy Horse can be differentiated at the end of the battle, just when Custer is going to be killed. No one else among the Indians, neither Sioux nor Cheyennes taking part in the battle, is known, even those shown in a close up are not identified. Their names might be acquired through other sources. The main chiefs are registered in some places, among them George E. Hyde, who says: "By this time the hostiles had several hundred warriors facing Reno's little band. Sitting Bull was there, and Crazy Horse, Black Moon, Big Road, Gall and many other famous men" (Hyde 1967 268).

Concerning Gall, one of the Sioux Indians who attacked one of the columns of the U.S. Army, he was the one who made Reno go back and harried Custer, making the Seventh Cavalry could not take any firm position.¹²⁵ Also, Ricker gives the names of some of them: "Painted Horse, an Oglala, a relative of Red Cloud, was in the Custer battle; he returned to R. C. Agency (Red Cloud Agency) and enlisted among the Oglala scouts but was not one of this little party" (Tb 1 106). And also "Flying Hawk who lives on east side of W. K. Cr. (Wounded Knee Creek) and $\frac{3}{4}$ miles south of White River and was in the Custer battle" (Tablet 2 191). As for He Dog, Eleanor Hinman, in her introduction to the "Oglala sources on the Life of Crazy Horse" says: "He Dog sided with Crazy Horse in the fighting in 1876" (Hinman 1976 3). As the battle of Little Bighorn took place that year, it is reasonable to think that he took part in it. Red Feather was in the band of Crazy

¹²⁴ Capps 1976 226

¹²⁵ McMurtry 1999 103

Horse during the fighting of 1876,¹²⁶ consequently he might have been in the battle of Little Bighorn. The Hunkpapa warrior Bad Soup was also there, for he was the one who pointed out the dead body of Custer to White Bull.¹²⁷

Garnett says the Indians tell that when Reno attacked the village the Indians were almost uncontrollable, so great their eagerness to press a counterattack, but Crazy Horse rode up and down in front of his men talking calmly to them and telling them to restrain their ardor till the right time when he should give the word, that he waited Reno's men to get (sic) their arms hot so they would not work so well. (Ricker Tablet 1 223).

As can be seen in this fragment, Crazy Horse had a prominent role in the battle that is not reflected in the film, not only because he ordered his men to attack, as warrior chief that he was, but also because he could restrain his warriors. Crazy Horse does not appear much in the film, the only sequence in which he is seen warring at the end of the battle is not enough to express all of this. He is only seen riding on a horse, shooting an arrow and making a sign of victory. If this is meant to represent the death of Custer by Crazy Horse, this depiction cannot be correct, for Custer was found with two bullets, one in his head and another one in his chest, but no arrow has been accredited, as will be later proved, besides the fact that nobody knows who killed Custer. Other facts of the battle have been omitted, like his walking in front of his men, or his restraining them. Jesse Lee gives more

¹²⁶ Hinman 1976 3

¹²⁷ McMurtry 1999 104

details of this action of Crazy Horse going in front of his army saying he was the first one to break the line of the soldiers. Brininstool again gives some details of Crazy Horse when in battle, adding what the great chief said. The words of Crazy Horse in battle were these "It is a good day to fight; a good day to die! Strong hearts, brave hearts, to the front! Weak hearts and cowards, to the rear!"(Neb. Hist. Mag. Vol XII n°1 409.

5.3 SITTING BULL (1964)

5.3.1 His Life

Sitting Bull, who came from a family of fighters, was born the Winter-when-Yellow-Eyes-Played-in-the-Snow, which corresponded to the Christian date of March, 1831, being the only son his parents had, which made him very well received, due to the belief of the Sioux that a son is the greatest gift. His birth place was at a place called Many Caches near the city of Bullhead, South Dakota, now called Grand River. He belonged to the Hunkpapa band of the Sioux tribe. When he was a boy, he was called Slow, due to the fact that he was "careful and deliberate in everything he did" (Freedman 1987 115). He hunted his first buffalo at ten and had his first coup when he was fourteen.¹²⁸ He was a young boy when he became a member of the Strong Hearts, one of the Sioux warrior societies.¹²⁹ In the decade of 1860, due to the growth of his reputation, he was named chief of the

¹²⁸ Freedman 1987 15

¹²⁹ Ibid. 115

Hunkpapas.¹³⁰

At this time, the pressure of the Whites started to be felt and the soldiers guarded the Bozeman Trail. In 1866, the U. S. Army went into the Hunkpapa territory to build Fort Bufford, for which reason the Strong Hearts went against the fort and their surroundings and terrorized the civilians and soldiers.¹³¹ That was the year in which Red Cloud with the Oglala attacked the forts and travellers with the intention of defending the ownership of the Bozeman Trail for the Sioux. In 1868 a council took place at Fort Laramie, where the government decided to abandon the Bozeman Trail, which Sitting Bull did not attend. For that reason, Father De Smet went to pay him a visit with the intention of making him sign, but the Sioux chief said that the Sioux territory was being taken away:

Along with several other Sioux and Cheyenne chiefs, Sitting Bull refused to attend the peace talks. Father Pierre Jean de Smet, the veteran Catholic missionary, traveled up the Missouri River to visit Sitting Bull's camp. He urged the chief to accept the Fort Laramie Treaty in the interests of peace. Sitting Bull pointed out that while the treaty seemed generous, it would actually take away much of the territory claimed by the Sioux (Freedman 1987 118).

While Red Cloud and other chiefs signed, Sitting Bull and others did not, and continued living outside the Reservation, when a new menace appeared: The Northern Pacific Railroad, which was planned to go into the Powder River country,

¹³⁰ Ibid. 117

¹³¹ Ibid. 118

so the Black Hills, a sacred place for the Sioux, where they believed the spirits inhabited and where the warriors went to search for a vision, was being explored in order to find gold. In 1875, the Sioux were declared a threat to the Whites and the chiefs that had not signed were ordered to go onto the reservation. When they refused, the Army rounded the hostile bands, thus Sitting Bull sent runners to all the bands of Sioux and Cheyennes summoning them to a great war council, which would take place in Rosebud Creek, where hundreds of warriors met in June 1876. On this occasion, Sitting Bull celebrated his famous Sun Dance, where he saw a great number of soldiers falling like grasshoppers, as a consequence of which he announced a great defeat of the U. S. Army. Soon the battle of the Rosebud took place, after which the Sioux and Cheyennes went to Little Bighorn, where on the 25th of June they were attacked by George Armstrong Custer. It was a massacre in which almost all the U. S. soldiers died and many were scalped, but not Custer, whose body was found with a bullet in the head and another one in the chest.¹³² The Sioux and Cheyenne chiefs decided to separate, while Sitting Bull and his men were pursued by Colonel Miles. The meetings between them reached no agreement, but some chiefs, tired, gave up the fight and surrendered; even so, Miles continued the chase and in February 1877 Sitting Bull escaped to Canada, where he stayed for some years, but the government of this country did not help them with food or assistance.

That same year, 1877, Crazy Horse surrendered, so Sitting Bull and his people were the only Sioux and Cheyennes who continued living out of reservations, but their number decreased little by little and in 1881 they were scarcely two hundred

¹³² Ibid. 124

people. On July 19 Sitting Bull, after having crossed the border separating the United States and Canada, surrendered at Fort Bufford, being imprisoned at Fort Randall for two years and freed in 1883, being permitted to go to Grand River, having become the most famous Indian in the country, for having defeated Custer.¹³³ Now "Buffalo Bill" Cody proposed him to join his Wild West Show, so he went on a tour in which a great number of people could see him and bought a copy of his picture from him, the money of which he gave to the poor. After the end of the tour, Cody gave Sitting Bull a horse, but the Sioux chief became an obstacle to the government, because they wanted to buy part of the Great Sioux Reservation, which was finally done, the price being reduced. He realized that the Indians would lose more than the land, due to the fact that their customs were being forbidden, their hair cut and they were to be obliged to live in the "cowboy" way of life, for which reason, in 1890 a new religion, the Ghost Dance Religion, was born. Sitting Bull was accused by the government of being involved in it and, consequently, around eight hundred reinforcements were sent to the reservation with the order of arresting him and, on the 15th of December, 1890, forty three Indian policemen surrounded his cabin and killed him:

Just before daybreak on December 15, 1890, a force of forty three Indian policemen commanded by Lieutenant Henry Bull Head surrounded Sitting Bull's cabin. Bull Head and several others burst into the cabin. They shook Sitting Bull awake, ordered him to get (sic) dressed, and hustled him outside. About 150 of the chief's followers had gathered at the scene. As they started to protest, Sitting Bull stopped short and shouted, "I'm not

¹³³ Ibid. 130

going! Do with me what you like. I'm not going!" (Freedman 1987 135-6).

The text continues, telling that the police made a path to walk through the crowd, Lieutenant Henry Bull Head was hurt, after which he fired a shot, striking Sitting Bull. Red Tomahawk, who was also a policeman and had been pushing from behind, shot Sitting Bull in his head, then the horse of the medicine man, which had been given to him by Buffalo Bill, was near, and when it heard the shots it started to make its tricks. After the shooting stopped eight followers of Sitting Bull, among them his son, Crowfoot, and six policemen had died or were wounded.

5.3.2 The Film

These are the Black Hills of Dakota. The Sioux Indians named this land. It is their word for friendship. There are seven warrior tribes in the Sioux nation and I have prayed that the Dakota and its hills will be too rough for the White man, but once again the White man comes. I watch them coming with a sad heart. There are few now, but I know many will come for they seek the White man's treasure: gold. I am Sitting Bull, the leader of the Sioux nation. My people are spread to the four corners of our land. This is Crazy horse, my warrior chief, and these are some of my men.

Thus the film starts with the voice off, while the image shows the mountains and the plains, and, coming through it, a caravan. Then there is an image of Sitting Bull

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and a warrior, introduced as Crazy Horse, “warrior chief,” coming after him and just beyond him a group of Sioux. The whole group stands on a hill for a short time, after which they attack the caravan of cowboys, when a column of the Army appears and, after the skirmish, Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, stopped on the hill with their men, decide to retreat, the former ordering the rest to go to the Rosebud. The cowboys join the Army, telling them they have been attacked by the Sioux, they present themselves as miners and are interrogated by Major Parrish about what they were doing there, while the miners demand from the Army revenge against the Indians, for having stolen their food. Major Parrish asks them to follow the soldiers to the fort while the Sioux share the food stolen from the Whites. As they enter the fort, Kathy comes out of her house and the miners, whose chief is protesting for the way they were treated, dismount. An order is heard for the soldiers to dismount, then Kathy approaches Parrish, they speak and he kisses her.

At an interview where Colonel Custer is present, the commander in chief asks the chief of the miners the number of men they lost, when Major Parrish presents and reports, but Custer does not agree to what he did and even becomes angry. Meanwhile, Kathy enters a room next to it and hears the conversation, so she opens a door connected to the office and sees the quarrel. As a consequence of this trouble with his superiors, Parrish is sent to Red Rock Agency to spend a year, after which Kathy closes the door and leaves, while Parrish leaves the office, followed by the commander in chief and Custer. Now Parrish is alone in his house, when Kathy arrives, recognizes she has been listening to the conversation and

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communicates to her boyfriend that she is not going to marry him, because her husband must be the best and he is not.

She says goodbye to him, gives him his ring back, telling him that it is in case he wants it for another girl, and opens the door for him. Some soldiers appear in the field, through which an Indian comes walking, exhausted. At the sight of the soldiers he falls to the floor, so the soldiers take care of him, giving him water, and when he had drunk some and recovered he spoke to the scout of the Army saying he comes from Red Rock Agency and he is the son of Sitting Bull, Young Buffalo. Consequently, they let him go and Parrish orders his men to go to the Agency. Now the next shot shows an Indian village in which normal life is being developed when Young Buffalo arrives, towards whom some boys are running, as an old woman advises White Cloud that her husband is coming. She, who has her baby in her hands, gives it to the old woman and runs to the place where her husband is, together with many other people, who surround him and greets him.

The Sioux are one of between 500 and 600 tribes that inhabited America between their arrival there and the present. The term Sioux comes from the abbreviation of the name the Chippewa gave them: "Natawesiwak" or "Nadowesioux" that meant "Snakes", a derogatory term. (The Chippewa, who inhabited the woods north of the Sioux in the Minnesota territory, were their enemies and responsible for their leaving the area of the lakes). In time the term, nowadays used for the three divisions of the tribe, gradually became shortened, becoming the one used nowadays, "Sioux." The Sioux tribe is composed of a series of bands spreading over the lands between the Missouri River and Lake Superior, starting once the Big

Sioux River estuary is passed. According to Doane Robinson, due to the pressure of the Chippewa nation and the abundance of buffalo in the prairies, the Sioux nation migrated from the area of the lakes to the prairies in three waves.

They were a semi-nomadic people,¹³⁴ who hunted buffalo and collected berries, and with these two ingredients made pemmican. The hunting of this animal, being the basis of their economy, was a ritual that must be followed. It was used for everything: skins for their tipis, bones to make their arrows, meat to eat, but also a part of their religion.¹³⁵ Their rituals were brought to them by the White Calf Buffalo Woman together with the Sacred Pipe. They believed in the powers of Nature,¹³⁶ among them the possession of the warriors by animal spirits. "It was his belief further that the spirit or mystery-strength of the animal that appeared to him in vision entered his body and became a part of his *waka* (holy, mysterious) strength" (Curtis 1908 21). Polygamy, or marriage with several women, was common,¹³⁷ usually with a younger sister of the wife, living all together under the same tipi. In case of divorce, the divorced wife returned to the house of her parents. Their funeral rites were very elaborate, choosing a person to prepare the pyre, who was the same person to carry the body, while the rest of the people followed the corpse until it was put on the pyre.¹³⁸

The conception the Sioux had about the way of making war was absolutely different from the way the Whites had, because while the Whites considered that

¹³⁴ Curtis 1908 7

¹³⁵ Wissler 1989 179

¹³⁶ Curtis 1908 21

¹³⁷ Curtis 1908 19

¹³⁸ Ibid. 20

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war was made to kill, the Sioux thought the honour was the touching of the enemy, which is exemplified in the film *Little Big Man* (1970) in the battle of Cheyennes and Whites, and it is also told by the voice-off of the protagonist. "But Old Lodge Skins's idea of war was different from the Whites's...they "took coup" with a little stick" (*Little Big Man*) (1970). As Erdoes and Ortiz say: "The main object of any battle-and the only way to gain honors-was to 'count coup' to reckon one's brave deeds", and so the first who obtained it had a great honour, also the second and the third to touch an enemy received honour from it, the same the fourth, but from the fourth on there was no honour. This custom is witnessed in tales such as "Little Mouse Counting Coup," "Chief Roman Nose Loses his Medicine" and "Brave Woman Counts Coup." The Sioux were not accustomed to kill excessively in battle, in fact the usual number is eight or less dead, usually less. This different way of conceiving war was one of the causes that made the Sioux lose many battles before the Whites until the moment when they realized that the Whites came with the intention of annihilating the Indians, and so they reacted.

Originally, the Great Sioux Nation was formed by seven tribes: 1) Mdenwkanton (the people of Lake Spirit); 2) Wahpekute (those who shoot among the leaves); 3) Sisseton-wan (the people who live in the swamp); 4) Wahpeton-wan (the ones living among the leaves); 5) Ihantonwana (later Yanktonai); 6) Ihantonwan (later Yankton); 7) Teton-Wan (later Teton Sioux: the ones living on the plains"). After some time, the Sioux Nation, due to emigration and outside influences, became divided into three parts, according to the region where they inhabited: a) Eastern Dakota or Yanktons; b) Teton; c) Santee.

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Firstly, the Yanktons (Yankton-Yanktonai), were composed of two bands: Ihantonwan and Ihantonwana. (The term “Yankton” means “end of village” and the word “Yanktonai” “ends of little village”). Secondly, the Tetons, divided into: Oglala (those who scatter their own); Hunkpapa (those who camp by the door or wanderers); Sihasapa (Blackfoot); Minniconjou (those who plant by the Stream); Sicangu (Brulés or Burnt Thighs); Itzipacola (Sans Arcs or Without Bows); Oohenonpa (Two Kettles or Two Boilings). Thirdly, the Santees, composed of four bands: 1) Wakpekutes; 2) Wahpeton; 3) Sisseton and 4) M'dewankton. The Santee (the word comes from “Isanyati”, which means “the people living near Knife Lake”).¹³⁹ The term Isanyati comes from “Isanti” (Knife), however According to Clark Wissler the Sioux, whom he calls Dakota were divided into:

- Eastern Dakota
- Santee Dakota
- Teton Dakota
 - Blackfeet Sioux
 - Brulé
 - Hunkpapa
 - Minniconjou
 - Oglala
 - Sans Arcs.

¹³⁹ Robinson 23

- Two Kettle
- Yankton Dakota

As can be seen, the two divisions seem a little different, because Wissler seems to differentiate between four types of Sioux, but this can be considered a mistake, due to the fact that the Yankton Dakota were living in Minnesota, that is to say the easternmost part of the Sioux region, so it can be observed that the three divisions are coincidental. After all these considerations, it can be concluded that, according to the geographical division and the tribal division, it can be said that the Sioux tribe was divided into:

- Eastern Sioux (Yanktons); Ehanktonwan; Ehanktonwana
- Central Sioux (Santees): Wakpekutes, Wahpeton, Sisseton, M'dewankton
- Western Sioux (Teton): Blackfeet Sioux, Brulé, Hunkpapa, Minniconjou, Oglala, Sans Arcs and Two Kettle.

When the Black Hills were invaded by the Whites, a message was sent from Red Cloud Agency to inform the hostiles that the government wished to buy the Hills. The advice of the chiefs in the Powder River camps was sought. Sitting Bull replied to this message that the Black Hills belonged to him and that if the Whites wanted to take them they would have to fight, assuring that he would not give them without fighting, which he finally did, convoking the chiefs of the different tribes in order to prepare the battle of Little Bighorn.

As for the other protagonist, Parrish, first he is seen before the troops, when the cowboys come to cry for help due to the Sioux attack, in which the latter stole their food, later with the column arriving to the fort, speaking to a girl and then entering the office of his superior, and reporting. This is a fictional character, because there was only one survivor among the soldiers, Buck John Martin, the only survivor of the battle of Little Bighorn on the side of the Whites, among the soldiers, who became a ticket chopper on the New York Underground. A bugler for twenty eight years, he has a document in his possession, signed by General Sherman, stating the fact of having survived the Custer Massacre due to the orders Custer gave him, sending him to Major Reno.¹⁴⁰ The second survivor of the battle of Little Bighorn, this time an officer, was Major Reno, whom the Court of Inquiry declared not guilty. "In 1880 he was dismissed from the Army for drunkenness and conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman...He died, a bitter man, in 1889" (Ambrose 1975 440-1). The third man surviving the battle was Frederick Benteen, who wrote many letters and articles about the battle, and in 1887 won promotion for his fighting against the Nez Percés and died in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1898, after having retired from the Army eight years before.¹⁴¹ These are all the men who remained alive on the White side.

In the sequence in which Parrish speaks to Colonel Custer and his superior, whose rank is unknown, he is assigned to Red Rock Agency, a non-existent one, for the five Sioux Agencies are Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Cheyenne River, Standing Rock and Lower Brulé, though originally there was only one great Sioux Reservation, which

¹⁴⁰Ricker Tablets. Tablet 7 2

¹⁴¹ Ambrose 441

was later divided, but there is no agency with the name of Red Rock, so we find there is a fictional protagonist who is destined to an non-existent agency! Later, they go to Sitting Bull's tipi, because Young Buffalo says he must go to see his father, where Young Buffalo tells that many Sioux are dying in the agency, of all the ages, young, old, women and men and that all of them are starving. In the tipi, some warriors, among them Crazy Horse and Young Buffalo, and also his wife, all of them sitting in a circle, are speaking to Sitting Bull. All but him are resolved to attack; they only need a decision of Sitting Bull, whom they want to convince, but he is determined to maintain peace and only desires hope for his warriors in the agency and pray for them. Young Buffalo asks his father why he does not answer, but Sitting Bull seems, through his words, not to know what to do to describe the situation. Then Crazy Horse, who is sitting, speaks hurriedly: "tell you will send fighting men, still blood for blood..." In the opinion of Young Buffalo the words of Chief Crazy Horse, considered by him as a wise decision, are answered by Sitting Bull, saying "Our drums have been silent for many moons. Our fighting men are scattered to the seven nations. I can only send a word of hope to those prisoners."

Young Buffalo speaks, saying that those men will be sent to the swarms and Crazy Horse enquires of Sitting Bull if he does not want to make war. Before the insistent protests of the warriors, among them Crazy Horse, he decides "to send them word they are not forgotten." Then his son will go away to the Whites with a message, transmitting to them the intentions of the medicine man of making peace with the Whites, though White Cloud does not want her husband to go, but he himself takes the decision of going, while in the tipi White Cloud, Young Buffalo and their baby

stay alone, after the exit of the others. Here, Sitting Bull is shown as an advocate of peace, though in reality he was not. In fact he was the one who decided to respond to the White Man's war with war, sending runners with the message of meeting on Tongue River in April, where he assured that the Whites were seeking war. The runners were ordered to go to every Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapaho agency.¹⁴² However, the representation must be considered faithfully done, because, even if Sitting Bull is containing his men for a long time in the film, in this one he finally sends runners in order to convoke a council to promote a war.

In the fort, some soldiers are seen leading their horses to and fro, while a group of them comes to the fort. The scene shows a fence, and beyond it a group of Indians and in front of it a soldier acting as sentinel, when the column of soldiers arrives at the fort and they are ordered to dismount. Parrish talks to a captain who came running from a hut inside the fort, asks to be informed about what there is beyond the stockade and he is told that there are Indians that were held as renegades by Webber, the man running the fort. The Major makes the captain open the door for him and discovers frightened Indians with their babies crying. In the sequence in which Parrish reaches the agency, he speaks of the Indians with a soldier that greets him and who knows him from of old. They speak about the situation of the Indians and the conversation ends when the soldier says that Webber is trying to make the Indians starve, accusing them of being renegades who need to be disciplined. Parrish leaves and goes to Webber's office and, having reported, he tells he wants to share food among the Indians, who Webber assures to be

¹⁴² Hyde 1967 256

renegades refusing to obey orders and Parrish replies that they are going to die due to the lack of food, leaving while Webber leans back on his chair, looking with suspicion.

A group of Indians are inside the stockade when Young Buffalo, after having been looking at the fort, climbs the outside stockade, goes into the fort and reaches the place where the braves of his tribe are, being informed that his comrades are preparing to escape the next day. Young Buffalo decides to help the Sioux to fire the fort and stays with them. At dawn the following day, a column of soldiers marching leave the fort with Swain, the old commander in chief, ahead of them. In the meantime Parrish, who is watching, and Webber, who comes from the inside, meet and talk, having some differences about who must command and the view of them face to face expresses it clearly. Then Parrish is interested in knowing the time the Indians eat and Webber answers him that "once a day, at sunset." Parrish touches his ring, walks through the fort and sees a soldier with a bucket, in which the Indian food is, tastes it, finds it is very bad quality and makes his way to Webber office, as the Sioux are lying on the floor, ready to fire the fort, with fire arrows in their hands.

Parrish enters Webber office, puts the food for the Indians on his table, when he is eating a supposedly savoury meal, demands from him an answer about the Indian food and Webber answers that the Indians refused discipline. Then Webber is obliged to have the food used to feed the Indians, his face being submerged in it, when they are given the news that the Indians are escaping, so they run out of the office and see them escape through the broken walls, followed by the horses, while

the bugle is sounded and the Indians fire the fort". The Indian complaints had more to do with the insufficient quantity than the quality of the food" (Hyde 1967 238). When captain Parrish walks through the fort, he sees a sergeant and is interested in what he can see, so he asks what it is, being answered that it is the food for the Indians. Captain Parrish affirms that it "would sicken a dog," being reaffirmed by the sergeant that this is true. This sequence speaks of the bad quality of the food the government gave to the Indians. "As for the quality of rations issued at Red Cloud, the government had never pretended that it was supplying the Indians with first-quality, and some of the articles in the rations were a special quality, very poor grade, supposed to be good enough"(Hyde 1967 238). Then the bugle sounds to advise that the Indians are escaping.

Referring to the treaty of 1868, Hyde says: "These Indians were supporting themselves by hunting when the treaty was forced on them, and if they were pauperized, living in idleness at public expense, it was because the government policy had brought them to it" (Hyde 1967 246). There are a great many witnesses certifying that the Indians were obliged to go into the reservations, such as is indicated in this film; that is the reason why Webber treats them as renegades, because they had to be disciplined, given the fact that they did not want to go into the reservation. The film shows that the Indians escaped from the reservation in order to join the hostiles or to roam freely through the plains, such as really happened. The figures proved that the number of hostiles diminished at the same time as the Agency Indians increased, but it was known that this only happened in winter and that in spring a great number of hostiles abandoned the agencies to re-

join their old comrades.

Many of the bands the U. S. Army wanted to go into the reservations were roving ones. “The excuse for ordering the roving bands of Sioux to come to the agencies was found in a report of Indian Inspector E. C. Watkins, dated November 9, 1875, in which attacks made by the Sioux on the Whites and on the Crow Indians were set forth” (Hyde 1967 250). And also, speaking about roving bands, namely Sitting Bull’s, the ones that the Army had to deal with were the Cheyenne and Sioux ones, who wanted to keep their old way of life, hunting, far from the life of the Whites, except for good blankets, arms and ammunition.¹⁴³

Now Webber orders the soldiers to open fire, but Parrish contradicts him, revoking the order, opening the gates for them and letting them go, which provokes a quarrel between them both, then Webber shoots a gun and wounds Young Buffalo, who is taken by his comrades and, while the fort is in ruins Kathy and other soldiers arrive. They go into the fort and she asks about what had happened and, as Webber is on his way to arrest Parrish, she is soon informed, so Kathy becomes conscious of what had happened and leaves immediately, while he is arrested. After a Sioux girl reaches Sitting Bull’s tipi and tells him to come out, a group of Sioux are seen running, because Young Buffalo is brought dead, which provokes Sitting Bull to be in grief. A girl is weeping, leaning on the body of the dead warrior, while Sitting Bull, who is asked if he will make war, kneels down near him. In the burial of Young Buffalo the Sioux sing a burial song, while Sitting Bull prays before the pyre of his son to the Great Spirit, asking his advice about what to choose, “war

¹⁴³ Ibid. 252

or peace.” The depiction of the burial is absolutely fitting to the descriptions made about it. The burial pyres were made with four poles, set into the ground and on it a series of furs making a bed, on which the body of the dead person was put, dressed and with some of his or her belongings.

Inside the office of the President of the United States, Parrish is seen on foot before the table of the President, who is sitting, while they are talking, the soldier affirming that war depends on the way the U. S. treat the Indians, the President answering that Parrish has to explain his conduct. The latter recognizes the honours the young man earned, and that he had a brilliant career, if he had not been undisciplined, then Parrish tells of the situation the way he sees it, telling the President that the only obstacle for the Sioux Nation to be at war with the United States is Sitting Bull, who is constraining his warriors, so his idea is to invite Sitting Bull to Washington and treat him with respect. The President asks him if he would bring Sitting Bull to Washington and Parrish assures he can do it; consequently, the President gives him a paper which qualifies him to avoid all the military charges, being over every officer, despite that fact he degrades him to Captain, warning him that what is expecting him is worse, due to the discovery of gold in the Black Hills.

An Indian is shot and killed defenceless by two cowboys and an Indian woman cries, while one of the men says in a despicable way that she must bury him. In a tipi, supposedly the one of Sitting Bull, the Indian chiefs are meeting in full regalia, speaking about the miners who invade the Black Hills, who are compared by the Indians to the soldiers, being said that the former are worse than the latter. Sitting Bull recommends caution, because he knows that the Army is backing the miners,

so he refuses once again to make war, stating that the best solution is to call the rest of the tribes in order to make an alliance with all of them. Parrish enters the fort, and after having dismounted, sees Kathy from afar, calls her and they speak, he being informed by her that the men filling the fort are miners and gold seekers, while Custer crosses the screen with a group of Indians tied up and some soldiers, and while this is happening in the yard of the fort, Kathy introduces Parrish to his new love, Charles Wentworth, the faces of both men remaining, one at each side of the screen, and Kathy in the middle, as the expression of the three make clear the fight for the girl and the thoughts of Kathy, who looks at Parrish with both disgust and pride.

While Charles and Kathy continue speaking about the situation, Parrish goes to the guardhouse and asks to see the prisoners, who are four Indians and a black man called Sam, who assures he knows where Sitting Bull is, so he is told to take Parrish before the great medicine man. He demands from Parrish to go with the other prisoners and it is granted, so consequently the prisoners accept, while Custer is protesting against Parrish to the commanding officer in the office of this one. Parrish goes in and, after Custer is asked to leave and he has done so, the captain reports, giving the commanding officer the letter from the President and asking to release the prisoners. The commander in chief reads the letter and grants what he asks and also wishes him good luck. Kathy and her new boyfriend are at the table, when Parrish knocks at the door, so he is granted permission and enters, while Charles leaves, so as to let them speak. The talk deals with the forthcoming marriage of Kathy and Charles and about Parrish and Kathy having

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been fiancées, when he kisses her and he returns her the ring she had previously given him. When Parrish and the prisoners are riding through the mountains, Sam asks the captain if he is going to have them with their hands tied, and, after having answered that that is his duty, the image shows Charles and Kathy, but in another part of the mountains, where Charles realizes about Kathy remembering Parrish, but she changes the theme of the conversation and he suggests that Kathy may not forget Parrish, but finally they turn their horses around and go back.

Again, Parrish and the prisoners are walking, while in the Indian camp many Indians are dancing and chanting and Sitting Bull is beside his tipi, when Crazy Horse approaches him and informs the medicine man that soon there will be enough men, supposedly of all the Sioux and Cheyenne tribes, and also supposedly with enough strength to make war on the Whites. Once more, Parrish is with the prisoners, eating and laughing at the same time. When asked if he knows the cause of the laughter, he says he does not, and then Sam informs him that it is for two reasons: first, because he serves them food as if they were children, and second because they can become untied when they want. And now the film becomes serious after Parrish has asked the location of Sitting Bull camp to Sam, for the latter turns his head and realizes that the Sioux are beside them and that there is a group of that tribe shouting. The next sequence shows all of them arriving to the camp and children running, then a multitude screaming. When the multitude separates, opening their way to Sitting Bull, Parrish can be seen tied to a tree when the Sioux generalissimo asks him if it is true that they have brought a message from the President, which the Captain assures to be true. Crazy Horse

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challenges Parrish to fight, so they release him and just after it an Indian prepares the circle when they fight, observed by the whole tribe, the Captain winning.

As a consequence of that, there is a council with Sitting Bull, in which the three of them are in Sitting Bull's tipi (Sam, Parrish and Sitting Bull), where Parrish proposes that there will not be any kind of attack while the medicine man goes to see the President of the United States, so Sitting Bull accepts. His idea is that the President of the United States goes to see him and that if there is not an agreement the armies will, fight and the chiefs that are located in the middle will die. Parrish seem to hesitate, but finally Sitting Bull convinces him, saying he will give the President time until the full moon after which Sam and Parrish are riding through the mountains, first in the middle of the night, immediately when it is day, meaning that they were riding the whole night to reach the fort, and when they do it, he calls the Sergeant and asks him to give the horses food, runs to the office of the commanding officer, and reports.

The commanding officer assures that the President will be informed, and Parrish leaves the office in order to have a rest, when he finds Charles, who is accompanied by Kathy, and after a little talk in which it becomes evident that she is a little angry, she leaves and Charles stays alone. Sam and Parrish meet in the yard of the fort, the former asking if there is any news, the latter answering that there is none. Sam consoles the Captain telling him a fourth of the moon is lacking, while at another part Sitting Bull is also looking at the moon, being informed that the warriors are ready. The next day, when the warriors of a great many tribes are joined in full assembly, Sitting Bull takes the main place and is cheered, as also are

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the names of the tribes when they are heard, but even if the tribes are ready, he recognizes the moon is not full, for which reason they wait, given that the time appointed ends in a moon (a month) though Crazy Horse argues for an attack.

In the fort, Sam and Parrish are talking about the moon, while the music sounds in the fort, meaning that there is a party when the Captain invites Sam to go back with his Indian friends, but the latter does not want to leave and Parrish is pleased for it. Then Sam asks him if he is going to renounce Kathy, who is going with Charles through the fort, talking. She tells him she wants to marry him and they kiss each other, then Kathy leaves and he looks at her, while Parrish and Sam are speaking about Kathy, when Charles, who comes to say goodbye, arrives and, after having wished the reporter good luck, Parrish leaves. Kathy is in her house, when Parrish, who comes with the intention of recovering her, knocks at the door. She opens and, when he is in, both of them stay face to face, until she tells him of her firm decision not to go back with him and he finally leaves. Just when he is coming out, he is called to go and see the commanding officer, who has received a telegram in secret code. Parrish orders the sergeant not to let anyone enter the room, while the commanding officer deciphers the code and reveals to Parrish that the project is approved, but that secret must be maintained. When Parrish leaves the sergeant is permitted to go in and the Captain meets Sam and tells him to go and see Sitting Bull, communicating to him that he will go with Custer and the Army. Right now, Charles is in his room, preparing his suitcase when Bob enters and tells Charles about Grant coming to the fort and meeting Sitting Bull.

While in a place in the prairies, Sitting Bull is praying to the Great Spirit, in the fort the flag is waving, the bugle sounds and Custer is seen ahead of the troops, receiving his sealed orders. The soldiers move, starting with the scouts, at the sound of "Garry Owen" under the attentive look of Kathy. Sam is alone, in the middle of the prairie, until he arrives at the Sioux camp, where he runs to Sitting Bull's tipi, while the drums are sounding. Sitting Bull convokes a council and stops the war, which makes the Indians become angry. In a soldier camp the riders are going to and fro, while Sam comes and speaks to Parrish, telling him the news that Sitting Bull is not going to make war, but he also informs him about the presence of a great many of armed miners.

About the scene speaking of the conference with Sitting Bull we have to distinguish between the fact of Sitting Bull going to see the President, the date and the place. In the film, the President of the United States goes to visit Sitting Bull in his camp, however this is not historically true:

He (Sitting Bull) went off to Washington with a delegation afterward, held firmly together under the fire of the Secretary of the Interior, got (sic) the price offered for Sioux lands raised to \$ 1.25 an acre, shook hands with the President, and came home again in good humor. His influence was at its height (Vestal 1957 258).

From this paragraph it is crystal clear that the meeting with the President was in Washington, contrary to the opinion maintained in the film. As for the matter, it can be seen it has nothing to do with the Battle of Little Bighorn. There is now a view of

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the bugler, for Custer is calling his men, and all of them respond to the call, which makes the troops meet and then dismount. Custer sends Reno to Little Big Horn and another officer to Medicine Creek, though Parrish reminds him that his orders were to wait; however, Custer continues with his ideas, telling Benteen he must cover Reno and reminds Parrish to go back under his orders. After having received orders from Custer, Bob Parrish leaves, being followed by Charles, who tells him he has received news from Kathy for him, giving him the ring and a letter that he will not take. During all this time, Charles is at the right side of the screen and Bob Parrish is on the left talking, facing one another, until finally they shake hands, and it seems that there is friendship between them both. Charles advises Custer that Parrish is sure the Indians will not attack, but Custer does not listen to what Charles says and goes on with his plans and, to finish the talk, Custer discredits Parrish. After the troops start their march and make a path, Parrish reaches the miners' camp and, following orders, makes them leave it, while the troops continue on their way, being spied on by an Indian, who reaches Sitting Bull and tells him that the soldiers are coming, to which the medicine man answers that such is the plan.

Parrish, Sam and the soldiers reach the camp of the miners and the Captain asks the chief of the miners about the contents of a barrel, the miner avoids answering and the Captain orders them to be destroyed. Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse are on a hill, while the troops are advancing, and a voice coming from one of the two Indians is heard saying "the long knives are moving too close," however the Indian chiefs maintain their promise not to attack until the moon is full. At the bottom of the

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hill, two Indian scouts are observing the scouts of the Army, but they are detected and try to escape. The Army do not want the Sioux scouts to let them warn Sitting Bull, so the Army scouts shoot and wound one of them; however, the other Indian spy escapes, and when they reach the camp, one of them dies, and consequently Sitting Bull declares war. Immediately, all the warriors mount, the drums start to play and, while the troops are peacefully going through the Plains, the Indians attack, which means that they have to fight. When the Army retreats, Custer meets the Indians just before him and, while they are chased by the Indians another part of the Sioux army are formed in line on a hill. When they descend from the hill chasing the Army there is a series of battle sequences, in which most of it is chaotic, the most important of them being the dialogue between Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, the fact that Custer was in the middle of the attack and the escape of Parrish and Sam, who take refuge behind the bushes.

Parrish is wounded with an arrow and Sam takes it out, when Sitting Bull, who is gazing at the battle from afar says that that will be the end of Custer, whom he calls Yellow Hair. The battle follows and Custer dies, first killed with an arrow and just after it under a rain of arrows, after which the Indians review the battlefield and, when they have left, this is inspected by Parrish and Sam. Custer is seen dead and near him Charles Wentworth, Kathy's boyfriend, which eliminates all the obstacles for Parrish's marriage with Kathy. Then cheering is heard, coming from the Indian camp, showing the sounds of the celebration of the victory, while two soldiers, who are riding through the soldier camp, reach a tent and ask for General Terry, who appears right there and is informed about the place of the massacre and the date.

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At the arrival of this news, Terry announces a general assembly, so the bugle sounds in order to convoke it, which is also advised by a soldier running, after which the Indians are seen chanting and playing drums in the middle of a council and after, the music stops Sitting Bull advances to the centre of the circle and speaks, warning his chiefs of the danger that new waves of Whites will bring, to which his chiefs answer that they will encounter the Whites and fight, when Parrish arrives accompanied by Sam. The Captain asks to speak, but this is not permitted and both men, he and Sam, are taken to the centre of the circle, where Sitting Bull, who is angry with Parrish, because he thinks he has lied, proposes to kill him, after having heard what he has to say, but Bob argues in his defence that Custer has advanced contrarily to the orders given to him and warns Sitting Bull that Terry is coming near. Before the situation created, Parrish proposes Sitting Bull escape: The latter answers that there is no place to go, but the soldier tells him there is a way and then the Indian answers he must take him there, consequently the soldier takes the tribe to that place.

Columns of Indians and soldiers are seen alternately and, after it, Sam, Sitting Bull and Parrish, the three of them on horseback, the third of them showing the Indian where the way of escape is. General Howell and his men advance until they reach the Indian camp, almost empty, for only Parrish, who tells the general that the Indians have escaped and that he has shown them the way, is in it, for which reason he is arrested. After that, some people can be seen going to and fro in the middle of the yard in the fort, and in it a soldier putting the order with the sentence of death on the wall. In a wooden room, in an unknown place, Kathy intervenes

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before President Ulysses S. Grant, asking him for her one-time boyfriend, to which Grant replies that he cannot do anything, adding that it is customary to give the prisoner forty eight hours to arrange his life. When she leaves, she is in the yard of the fort, where she finds Sam, with whom she speaks about Captain Parrish, considering that the only alternative to save him is to fetch Sitting Bull. When the soldiers are reunited, Grant leaves the office and Parrish is taken to the front of the platoon, where he is dispossessed of all his honours, while, inexplicably, Grant is again seated inside a room in the fort. Just then, the bugle is heard, the sentence is stopped and the sentry comes to tell that Sitting Bull, who is coming, is permitted to go into the fort. He and Grant parley, shake hands, and the Indian chief leaves the fort in peace while Parrish and Kathy kiss each other. The film ends with Sitting Bull joining his chiefs and leaving.

About the battle, Robinson adds some details interesting to know about the tribes and the chiefs who were there, saying that even though being one camp it was formed by seven different groups: the Hunkpapas, led by Gall and Black Moon; the Oglalas by Crazy Horse; the Minniconjous by Fast Bull; the Sans Arcs by Fast Bear; the Blackfeet by Scabby Head; the Cheyennes by Ice and the Santees and Yanktonais by Inkpaduta. This relates what the camp was like and the chiefs of every band of Indians present in the Battle of Little Bighorn on the side of the Indians was given by Crazy Horse at Red Cloud Agency and later confirmed by Rain-in-the-Face and other Indians. After the battle, there is a sequence in which Parrish, the white protagonist of the film, is talking to Sam and their dialogue, in which the spectator is informed that General Terry is very close to the place of the

battle, as really happened. After this sequence, two messengers are seen running, reaching the U. S. Camp and going into a tent, to which General Terry comes, and then the two messengers inform him about Custer's battle, one of them reporting that "it was a massacre" and the other one, a few sentences later, adds that the troops "were completely cut to pieces." However, Robinson assures that those who informed Terry were the Crows, which happened at four thirty the next morning, being awoken by the three scouts of the aforesaid tribe who had been in battle with Custer. ¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Robinson 1967 437

5.4 CHIEF CRAZY HORSE (1955)

5.4.1 His Life

Crazy Horse, son of a medicine man and interpreter of dreams called Worm, and a Brulé woman, was born around 1840, near Bear Butte, beside Belle Fourche River, in what is today the city of Custer, his first name in life being that of Curly. This name was later changed to His-Horses-Looking, due to the gift he had with this kind of animals, which happened after a horse-catching party, and even later than the one by which he is known today, Crazy Horse, after the vision he had. It is in this period of his life when he is said to have made friends with Pretty One, the *winkte*, who would betray him in his last days. It is also in this period when his manhood was proved, this being done in battle, not in a sundance. When he was a boy the 1851 Treaty, at Fort Laramie took place, in which the Whites assumed that the Indians were represented by a single chief, which was a great mistake; however the Whites chose Conquering Bear for that position.

In August 17, 1854, when Conquering Bear was living with the Minniconjous, a caravan of Mormons passed near the Indian camp from which Hump, one of Crazy Horse's friends is said to have killed a cow. This happened near Fort Laramie, for which reason the owner of the animal presented a complaint in the fort; consequently, Lieutenant Fleming menaced Conquering Bear, a chief of the Brulés, for which reason he could not command the Minniconjous, who offered the Mormons a horse as well as some ponies in exchange for the death of the cow. The Mormons refused and demanded Hump to be delivered to the Whites, but the Sioux chief could not do it because Hump was a Minniconjou. Fleming was aided

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by Grattan, who took the artillery and went to the Sioux camp with a cannon. He fired it and injured Conquering Bear to death. Then Hump responded shooting his arrows and killing Grattan, and the rest of the warriors shooting the rest of the Whites.

A little time after the Grattan Massacre, Crazy Horse went in search of the vision, without following the rules, a vision that would give him his name, while his father, who had been looking for him, was worried because he believed the Crows or Pawnees had hurt him, and found him faint and weak. One of the things that the horseman of the vision said was that he would only die when some of his men grabbed his arms. It is said that Crazy Horse was living with Little Thunder when, a year after the Grattan Massacre, General Harney attacked Little Thunder's village and massacred it, in revenge for Grattan's death. "By most accounts, Crazy Horse spent the winter of 1856-57 with Yellow Woman's people, in Kansas" (McMurtry 1999 42).

Supposedly, Crazy Horse was hunting and when coming back to the camp he saw the carnage and rescued Yellow Woman, a Cheyenne girl, whose husband and son had been killed by the soldiers.¹⁴⁵ Isatai, a Comanche prophet, and a Cheyenne medicine man, convinced the warriors that bullets would not hurt him. He was probably that year at Bear Butte with Hump and it must have been around this year that he joined the *akicita* society called Crow Owners. In 1857, Crazy Horse was trying to approach the love of his life, Black Buffalo Woman when, some days after coming back from a raid, he discovered that she had married No Water

¹⁴⁵ Ambrose 1975 66

and in 1858 went on a raid against the Shoshones, in which some authors, such as McMurtry, think he won his name. In 1864:

Crazy Horse and other Indians burned wagon trains and ranches, robbed and destroyed stagecoach stations and telegraph offices, laid waste to private dwellings for hundreds of miles on all the various lines of travel from Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains, most especially the Holy Road (The Bozeman Trail)" (Ambrose 1975 139).

In 1865 the Shirt-Wearer institution was revived and the great chief was elected to form part of it. The following year, 1866, the U. S. government tried a peace conference because of the discovery of gold, building some forts bordering the Bozeman Trail and Colonel Carrington being sent to the Powder River Country, when the Sioux realize about the intentions of the U.S. Army. Carrington was not a friend of warring with the Indians, but one of his subordinates, William Fetterman, was, and announced he would destroy the whole Sioux Nation with 80 men. He was warned not to go over the Lodge Trail Ridge, but Crazy Horse made him go precisely there, where he was killed with his soldiers. Despite the victory over Fetterman, three forts still stayed in Indian country and in the autumn of 1867 Sherman himself went to parley with the Indians, Old Man Afraid being one of those who went to Fort Laramie to negotiate and inform the Whites that there would be no peace "until the forts along the Powder River were removed,"¹⁴⁶ which happened in March of the following year, due to the 1868 Treaty, in which Crazy

¹⁴⁶ McMurtry 1999 66

Horse was not present, because he was opposed to it.

He had been after Black Buffalo Woman for a long time, and now that her husband had gone to hunt he took advantage, and both of them escaped together some days after she had borne her third child. At his return from the hunt No Water chased them and shot Crazy Horse. Black Buffalo Woman fled, but later she and her husband went to live with Red Cloud's band. Chipps, the shaman of the tribe, was accused of having made a potion for Crazy Horse, with which he could make Black Buffalo Woman lose her mind, which would result in the destitution of Crazy Horse as a Shirt-Wearer. A little later, he married Black Shawl, a marriage that was arranged by his friends, especially He Dog, but it seems to have resulted in success. At these moments, the Sioux did not have many arms. In 1872, Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull fought together for the first time.¹⁴⁷ A year later, in 1873, under the command of Stanley, Custer met the Sioux warrior chief for the first time, though it seems he did not recognize him.

It was the following year, when the U. S. General started to search gold in the Black Hills and Crazy Horse's daughter, They-Are-Afraid-of-Her, was born, for which reason he retired from the fight for some time, "By the summer of 1875 the crisis over the Black Hills could no longer be postponed" (McMurtry 1999 82), for the U. S. government wanted to take the Black Hills. The Indian way of life was disappearing fast, but some Indians, the most prominent of them Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, were determined to resist, when the Whites invited some Sioux to Washington to make a demonstration of U. S. power. This year, 1875, there was a

¹⁴⁷ Ambrose 1975 326

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great council of Sioux and Cheyennes, in which the matter of selling the Black Hills was treated, where Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse were not present, due to the fact that they both opposed the idea of selling the Black Hills.

In March 1876 General Crook attacked a Sioux village believing it was Crazy Horse's, but the Sioux chief was not there, and in June there was a great council of Sioux and Cheyennes in the Bighorns, in which sitting Bull celebrated his famous sundance. Just after this there were two battles, within a week of each other, in which the coalition of Sioux and Cheyennes beat the U. S. soldiers: the Rosebud and Little Bighorn. In both of them, Crazy Horse was present and in the second one he was a warrior chief, as also in the battle of Little Bighorn. In the autumn of 1876 the Whites took the Black Hills and Crook tried to depose Red Cloud and put Spotted Tail in his place. Later, he defeated Little Wolf and Dull Knife. At these moments Crazy Horse was wandering with his band along the Plains, but the winter was hard and they were starving and suffering cold, so Colonel Miles, who was camped near, tried to tempt the Sioux chief, while Sitting Bull was travelling to Canada with his warriors.

Due to all these factors, after January, Crazy Horse sat on a council with the Whites with the intention of surrendering, and on May 1877 he surrendered. Now Dr. Valentine McGillicuddy was treating Crazy Horse's wife, Black Shawl, for tuberculosis, while the Sioux chief, who was living at Red Cloud Agency with his wife, felt the attitude of his Sioux comrades to be between ambiguous and malignant. He had been offered a travel to visit the President in Washington, but was reticent to it. Then the Indian called Grabber started to say that the Whites

were going to make Crazy Horse chief of all the Sioux and the rumours spread. At this point in history, the Whites wanted to rearm the Sioux so that they could fight the Nez Percés, and in a dialogue between the Whites and Crazy Horse the latter was erroneously translated by a supposed friend of Crazy Horse, Jack Grouard, who stated that Crazy Horse had told them he was going to fight until the last white man were killed. The others, understanding Lakota, tried to correct him, but the Whites did not accept the correction. In September 1877, General Crook, on his way to Fort Robinson, met Woman's Dress, who told him Crazy Horse was trying to kill him, for which reason Crook decided to arrest him, and so he did very soon. The sixth of September 1877, Crazy Horse went to Fort Robinson to explain his attitude and was taken to the guardhouse. When at its entrance Little Big Man grabbed his arm, someone bayoneted him and, as a consequence of it, he died, being buried nobody knows where.

5.4.2 The Film

The film starts with a series of titles announcing that the story to be told is true and that Crazy Horse was one of the best American war leaders. Just after it a couple of riders appear, approaching the spectator, one of them being a major of the United States army. The other one leaves and in the close-up image the major looks at the horizon, where the other is and tells him goodbye. A voice off, the voice of the major, is heard telling the story of the film as a flash-back of the events remembered by the major himself, whose name is still unknown, starting to relate that that place in which he is at that moment, the Bighorn, was “once home of the

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Lakota Sioux.” The film has a very concrete date, in fact it could be accurately dated, because it starts the day of Conquering Bear’s death, however the teller of the film does not give the number of the day and the month, but he says: “The story I’m going to tell began on a summer day in 1854.” Some warriors enter the camp riding, and then a big group of Sioux meeting at the tipi, inside which Conquering Bear, who came wounded from the battle, is agonizing, while a boy is looking at him and the voice off starts to tell the story of the boy, saying:

A chief of the great Sioux Nation, Conquering Bear, wounded by a white man, had been brought back to his...camp to die. What happened that day was told to me years later by someone from whom Conquering Bear’s death was the beginning of a great adventure, Crazy Horse, as the boy then (sic), so named because the day he was born a wild horse ran through his village.

Crazy Horse remains there while a woman, whose relationship with the boy is not established yet, stays sitting before him. Spotted Tail, opposite him, is wearing a war bonnet, while speaking to Conquering Bear and assuring that the Great Spirit is clamouring for revenge, when a new warrior dressed for battle and wearing a war bonnet appears. Though his name is not said until later, this warrior is Man Afraid, who assures that the other tribes will not help them, due to the lack of a great leader, and Spotted Tail assures that “Man Afraid has been well named,” which confirms the hypothesis that the aforesaid chief was this warrior. At this moment Conquering Bear assures that there will be a day in which a great leader will come, some images of Conquering Bear, the Indians and Crazy Horse being

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inserted here. Conquering Bear continues speaking, telling that that leader will unite “all the tribes of the Lakotas” and will lead them to victory, after which he dies, and the medicine man and the woman proceed to cover him with a blanket. The Indians leave, and Crazy Horse continues looking at the inside of the tipi, then he also leaves, and the image shows three tipis, the structure of a fourth and people walking, while the voice off is speaking about what Crazy Horse could have felt at that moment. There are two matters here to comment on: first, the death of Conquering Bear, which has been previously dealt with in the historical introduction, second, the name of Crazy Horse, which will be later dealt with.

He stands in the middle of the camp, while the rest of the tribe keeps on walking and a little girl, Little Fawn, stops in front of him. Crazy Horse starts walking again and passes in front of the tipi, goes through the village and reaches the outskirts, stopping in front of the horizon, looking at the sky, where a storm and some lightning can be seen. A rider on a horse, dressed with celebratory dress and a war bonnet and bearing a lance in his hand comes through the sky towards him, Crazy Horse kneels down, the horse raises its hands and puts down its head. Then the boy puts down his head and his hands on his face as he remembers the words of Conquering Bear and, at this moment, his father comes to him, angry, and reprimands him for having gone away from the village. The boy tells his father the vision and also about Conquering Bear’s voice, consequently Worm does not say anything else, but takes his son and accompanies him back to the village.

About the death of Conquering Bear, also named Brave Bear in other contexts,

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Hyde says that he, as well as the other older chiefs opposed more killing.¹⁴⁸ The following mention he makes about this chief is when he was buried. In this way he does not say anything about the manner of his death. Of course, he tells the story of the Grattan massacre in which he lost his life, but does not say anything about the process of his dying. Sandoz, however, tells the way he is taken to the village, when she says:

They took the wounded Conquering Bear with them, six of the tallest, strongest Brulés carrying him in a buffalo hide sling between two long poles. Ahead of the chief rode the younger wife leading his favorite old war horse, his shield and spear on one side of the empty saddle, the war bonnet in its case on the other. Before and behind the Bear rode members of his warrior society, a guard of honor among his fleeing people” (Sandoz 1942 35-6).

Second, the words “so named because the day he was born a wild horse ran through his village” appears to be false. Certainly, some sources affirm that to be the real cause of the name, however the name attested when he was born is that of Curly, a name that he retained for a long while, until it was changed to “His-Horses-Looking” and later to “Crazy Horse.” According to McMurtry, he was still named Curly when the incident of the vision occurred, after having fasted for two days. When he was given the name he had, he had been catching horses, with which he had a special touch, for which reason he was named “His-Horses-Looking.” The really important thing is that his name was not Crazy Horse at that

¹⁴⁸ Hyde 1967 54

moment, which makes us sure that it was not due to the fact that a horse entered the village running the day he was born. Moreover, the name of Crazy Horse was given to him by his father, who changed his to Worm, as attested by Red Feather:¹⁴⁹

It seems he dreamed of a horseman, floating above the ground. The horseman was dressed plainly, was not painted, was in no way grand; the horse may have been dancing or in some way magical. The horseman told Crazy Horse not to adorn himself, not to wear a war bonnet; he was permitted a single feather at most. He was instructed to throw a little dust over his horse before going into battle, and to wear a small stone behind his ear (McMurtry 33-4).

McMurtry deduces the existence of a battle in the vision, called "dream" by him, he also tells that no arm, neither arrow nor bullet, touched him. The rider told Crazy Horse not to keep anything to himself, according to McMurtry, but others say that Crazy Horse would be generous with the poor, not letting us know if that means having something for him or not, but in any case, he was obliged to be a generous man. All in all, his visage as well as his attitude might not have been luxurious. Ambrose tells the story of the vision, saying that the rider came from the lake, that the horse changed colour and that both, the horse as well as the rider were floating on the ground. He describes the appearance of the rider, stating that he was wearing leggings and a single feather, which would be later permitted by the

¹⁴⁹ Hinman 1976 33

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medicine man of the tribe, as well as the stone behind his ear, which Ambrose assures to be brown.¹⁵⁰ Like McMurtry and the others, Garnett states that there were constant attacks on the rider, but he was able to stay safe, no matter if these attacks were produced by arrows or bullets. He also adds the existence of some people of his tribe coming and grasping his arms and also tells about a storm which resulted in some marks of hail on his body, and finally, after the storm, a hawk screamed and the vision ended.

Ambrose gives the date of 1854 for the event of the vision and also for the death of Conquering Bear, starting Chapter four saying: "In the summer of 1854..." (Ambrose 1975 55), and a little later he tells the story of the Grattan Massacre and Curly's Vision. If we are to believe him, he was a 13-year-old boy watching Conquering Bear die or having news of his dying neighbour, because it seems he was at the village of the Mormon Cow Affair.:

Some of the boys of the Oglalas, like young He Dog and Lone Bear and the son of Man Afraid-mostly those who had killed their buffalo but had never struck an enemy-lay on the warm sand of a knoll at the emigrant trail where the smoke of the camp smudges rolled over their bare backs and kept the mosquitoes off. Among these boys, there was one who appeared to be always silent: young Crazy Horse, then still named Curly.¹⁵¹(Sandoz 1942 16)

¹⁵⁰ Ambrose 61

¹⁵¹ Sandoz 1942 17

Crazy Horse seems to have been 13 years old or so in this year, because he is said to have been born about 1840. In the opinion of McMurtry: "He was born around 1840, by the Belle Fourche River" (McMurtry 1999 15). In Mary Sandoz' book, the dates 1840-5 are found as possible for the birth of Crazy Horse in the index to Crazy Horse Country but, according to He Dog, that date would go back until 1838, which seems a little earlier, related to the ones Mary Sandoz gives, and cover a reasonable range of years. He Dog affirms that he and Crazy Horse were both of the same age, born the same year and in the same season, and challenges Hinman to guess what year that was, after having told her that they both courted the girls together and fought together and that he was ninety two at the moment of speaking.¹⁵² Chipps, the medicine man of the tribe, assures that Crazy Horse had been born "in the year the Oglalas stole one hundred horses, and in the fall of that year" (Ambrose 1975 448), this being reflected in the Iron Shell Wintercount, relating to the year 1841.¹⁵³ With these data, it can only be thought that Crazy Horse would be then a boy between 9 and 16, which would make the boy in the film adequate to the age. However, it should be considered that the age might have been about 12, more precisely between 12 and 14, as the vision was supposed to give the name to a boy and he needed to fast before it, so 11 years of age seems a little early. Moreover, it is crucial to know that a Sioux brave did not acquire his permanent name until he had done something important, after which his name was changed to that his father had before him. It was the custom that boys had the same name as their fathers, so the great Sioux chief was destined to bear the

¹⁵² Hinman 1976 9

¹⁵³ Hasstrick 1964 348

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name Crazy Horse, because that was his father's name, transferred to the famous chief after he had proved valorous in battle, and after that the name of the father was changed to Worm.¹⁵⁴ Worm himself recognizes, when he gives him a new name, that he will call him Crazy Horse.¹⁵⁵

A voice off says that many years had passed and the war between the states had reach an end, while a wagon comes through the mountains leading a caravan. Images of a Sioux attack are followed by some Indians riding peacefully, as the voice off says that they had to retreat. At the Laramie Treaty there are two lines, one of Indians and the other one of soldiers, while the American flag stands in the middle. After a sight of the Indians with their war-bonnets, dress and full regalia, there is a scene showing a herd of buffaloes, which takes us to the sight of Crazy Horse, who is now grown up, standing beside a tree, while the voice off assures that the Lakota want to continue with their hunting life. After this, some Indians attack him and there is a quarrel, which ends with a lance on the floor, preceding the coming of another Sioux, who brings the news that the attackers were Shoshone. He is called "brother" by Crazy Horse, who tells the other not to scalp the dead, when a new warrior appears, Little Big Man, riding a horse. The conflict between him and Crazy Horse is clearly seen from the beginning.

An Indian girl is washing some clothes at the river when a horse with a rider injured coming through the grass goes to the river, where the rider falls, observed by the girl, who runs to help him when she saw the scene. At the same time that the girl, who will be introduced as Little Fawn and later Black Shawl, puts the cowboy, later

¹⁵⁴ McMurtry 1999 15

¹⁵⁵ Ambrose 1975 72-3

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identified as Twist, on the floor, a group of Sioux arrive, among them Crazy Horse, Little Big Man and a third one, presented as Crazy Horse's brother, but whose name is unknown through the whole film. After Crazy Horse had cut the arrow in Twist back, the two of them can be seen in a tipi with Black Shawl and Crazy Horse's brother, where Twist says the Shoshones had taken his horse, and a little later he is healed by the medicine man, the father of Crazy Horse, who appears to have been in the tipi, too, telling the latter that there are people doubting about the truth and Crazy Horse says he knows it.

The noise of Crazy Horse's brother and Little Big Man coming into the village interrupt the conversation of the chief and his father, so the chief leaves the tipi, while the other two come near it, are surrounded by the a group of children and speak to Crazy Horse. Little Fawn says to Little Big Man and the brother of Crazy Horse that they took things from the Shoshone they fought, as is deduced from the words of Crazy Horse's brother, after which Little Big Man asks her if she belongs to the white man, too, so her father, Spotted Tail, who was a little withdrawn from the sight of the spectator, advances and assures that his daughter is still not married. She smiles at Crazy Horse, invites him to walk with her and they both speak while the village can be seen behind them. After Crazy Horse turns around and looks at the other side, the valley can be seen, as he seems to be worried because the girl he likes will be given by her father to the warrior who will present more gifts and she answers him she is worried because she considers Crazy Horse may be betrayed by one of his own tribe.

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When the people of the village are reunited, a warrior is seen bringing horses. The medicine man, Crazy Horse's father, a holy man and good interpreter of dreams, sitting under a pall, stands up and says that Little Fawn had become a woman, so she must acquire a new name, which will be Black Shawl. Then the ritual of conquering a wife is shown, when a warrior bringing horses arrives and a little later Crazy Horse with his brother, while Spotted Tail, father of Black Shawl, stands up and a gift is presented to him by an old man. The warriors laugh, the gift is rejected, and the Sioux chief also presents a gift, also rejected, being considered insufficient, so the face of Black Shawl changes, becoming sad, a little before Spotted Tail approaches Little Big Man, sees his gifts and seems he is going to accept them when Twist, the soldier before cured by Worm after having been found by Black Shawl, appears. It seems he has come for Black Shawl, but after having recognized the fact that she had saved his life, adds she is only interested in his Indian friend, and at this moment he points to Crazy Horse and offers the gifts for him, influencing Spotted Tail's decision in favour of the warrior chief. Black Shawl, then, becomes glad, while he goes near her and embraces her, as Little Big Man insults him.

As can be seen here, a friend was the person who arranged this marriage, which has been reported to be true, but the existence of a U. S. soldier among the friends who arranged his marriage is doubtful. Red Feather assures that Crazy Horse and his sister were unmarried for a time much longer than normal. As for the fact that Little Big Man was interested in Black Shawl, no historical evidence has been found about it:

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It was evidently in that summer of 1872 that Crazy Horse got (sic) married. The evidence indicates that it was a marriage of convenience arranged for him by his friends, especially He Dog. Her name was Black Shawl and she was the sister of Red Feather, a strong warrior and a friend of Crazy Horse (Ambrose 1975 329).

An unknown warrior takes his knife and challenges Little Big Man, who also takes his. Crazy Horse, then, defies Little Big Man, they two fight, the warrior chief wins, Spotted Tail expels the loser from the village and Crazy Horse and his wife-to-be thank Twist. In this sequence the film seems to suggest that there was enmity between them. There is no firm proof either to think about the friendship between Crazy Horse and Little Big Man or to think about their enmity they were perceived as allies among the Sioux, for they were comrades who were harassing the Platte together and stealing horses. "Little Big Man was a Crazy Horse man, vain and troublesome. He was settled at the council by Young Man Afraid. Garnett thinks it possible that the Whites were alarmed at L.B.M's (Little Big Man) bravado" (Tablet 2 255).

This does not mean, however, that they were friends, but only allies with a common objective and keeping in mind the fact that Crazy Horse was grabbed by Little Big Man when he was in the guardhouse, and the moment at which after the adultery of Crazy Horse, the lovers (Crazy Horse and Black Buffalo Woman) were found by the husband (No Water) and Little Big Man, it should be suspected that the relation between them both was not a real friendship. The fact that he was grabbed by the

arm by Little Big Man, while No Water fired at him, breaking his upper jaw¹⁵⁶ is enough to make the conspicuous reader suspect, and would justify the sequences in which he is seen wanting the same wife or the fight with a knife in their hands, even if they are not correct in their form, but their spirit must be considered right.

When they arrive at the fort, after having seen each other at a distance in the Indian camp before it, the flag is being brought down and the bugle is sounding. Twist enters, followed, a little later, by Little Big Man, who brings some skins in his hands and observes a group of soldiers who break ranks, after which they pass before him. At the sight of two riders going to the gate of the fort, Little Big Man goes into the store with the furs on his shoulder, being received by the shop assistant, who sees the furs and asks him what he wants for them. The Indian says that he wishes a gun, the shop assistant laughs at it and Little Big Man takes his furs and tries to leave, but he is caught by the other one. At the noise formed by this, the owners of the shop come in, as Little Big Man is picking up from the floor some things, among them some gold nuggets fallen after the incident. One of the men asks the shop assistant what does Little Big Man want and when he is answered that a gun one of the owners orders to give him it, so the Indian is given the rifle. At the office the two owners, brothers, and Little Big Man have a drink, the Indian is offered a job, and one of the owners tells him that he must be proved before. In this way is represented the manner in which Little Big Man, who had once been one of the most ferocious enemies of the Whites was now decided to cooperate with them.

¹⁵⁶ Ambrose 1975 312

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Following there are several sequences related to the search for gold, such as the one mentioned above between the shop owners and Little Big Man, the moment when the two brothers are looking for gold in the Black Hills or the meeting between some soldiers and some businessmen, in which they speak about gold seeking. The theme to be dealt with is the action of the cowboys in the Black Hills. Some of them, among them the officer representing the Army, oppose the plan finding it dangerous and immediately the shop owners are seen seeking gold.

As a consequence of the job offered to Little Big Man, he can be seen on horseback watching the actions of the two shop owners, who are looking for gold in the river, find a few gold nuggets, supposedly in the Black Hills, due to the three Indian pyres, when an Indian, also on a horse, arrives, so the three of them follow the Indian and kill them. As the voice off tells that the news of the appearance of gold created a new Gold Rush, and that the caravan of cowboys was on their way to the Black Hills, ending in the construction of Fort Bill Cody, the images show the arrival of cowboys.

Immediately after this, an Indian, whose face cannot be seen at the beginning, but who is later recognized as Spotted Tail, who was present in this Fetterman Affair, though he was not the leader of the military operations, is seen. The real leader in this operation, and the whole fight for the Bozeman Trail, was Red Cloud, who had joined the other bands of the Teton Sioux, and the chiefs Black Moon, Inkpaduta, Sitting Bull and Gall, as well as the whole force of Cheyennes, led by Roman Nose and Medicine Man, Crazy Horse being with all of them, and who, at that time, was the main lieutenant of Red Cloud. As for the other tribes, Roman Nose, among the

Cheyennes, and Black Moon, among the Missouri Indians, were the main leaders. However, it must be known that Red Cloud did not take an active part in the campaign, but was its tactician and the genius who organized it, leaving the active part of the campaign in the hands of his subordinates, that is to say Black Moon, Little Chief, Sorrel Horse, Roman Nose and, of course, Crazy Horse.

This Indian, who speaks first, identified as Spotted Tail, talks also of a new gun, saying that against it they would lose too many warriors, possibly meaning a repetition rifle, because, at some other moments this arm is qualified as shooting twice. Crazy Horse is seen in the film just after the speaking of another Indian who is not known, but who says that the Sioux are aware that Crazy Horse is a man of “strong visions”, to which he answers that he is not speaking of visions. Later, he transmits his colleagues that “Captain Fetterman has boasted that with 50 soldiers he would ride with (through) the Lakota Nation,” which is a perfect report, except for the number he gives in the film (50), a little scarce, for in fact he had assured that he could destroy the whole Sioux Nation with eighty men.

Before going on, it is convenient to speak a little about Captain Fetterman, who was a young officer, the main tactician of Carrington, with less experience than the rest of the officers, due to his having joined the regiment after the fort had been built¹⁵⁷ and, consequently, not very prudent, as was proved later. Ambitious as he was, he decided to increase his fame, and for this reason he thought that the best solution for it was an attack against the Sioux, an attack in which he wanted to harass the entire Sioux people. Under his command was Captain Brown, who was

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. 217

with two civilians, whose names were Wheatly and Fisher, who were serving as volunteers, and all four of them anxious to prove their rifles against the hostiles. However, that was not Carrington's case, who was a prudent man, even to the extent of making his soldiers disappointed, and who recommended to Fetterman: "On no account to pursue the Indians across Lodge Trail Ridge" (Ambrose 1975 365).

The answer to the question about the start of the war is given by Spotted Tail in this film, when he speaks at the beginning of the aforesaid sequence, saying that the road (the Bozeman Trail), whose use the Whites desired and had in their minds to buy, was full of soldiers, the reason being that its use had been permitted to the Whites, due to the presents that E. B. Taylor had given the friendly chiefs,¹⁵⁸ inducing them to sign a treaty, a signing which some of the chiefs, such as Crazy Horse and others, did not want to attend, assuring those present it was not necessary, while other braves, among them Red Cloud and Young Man Afraid, went to see what Taylor would offer them. Taylor tried to deceive them, not telling them anything about the construction of the forts, but the situation suddenly changed when Standing Elk, a Brulé chief, arrived at Fort Laramie, where Red Cloud and Man Afraid were listening to the offer of Taylor, saying that Carrington was some miles east from there with a column of troops, when this (Carrington) had assured Standing Elk that he was going to the Powder River, where they intended to build some new forts.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. 214

Red Cloud then became angry and did not want to hear anything else, saying that the President of the United States was sending them presents in order to buy the Bozeman Trail from them, without waiting for an answer to take it as his own. Fortunately for the Sioux, that sale did not take place, because the buffalo herds would have been destroyed, and with them the Indian way of life, due to the fact that the Plains Indians depended completely on the buffaloes, which provided them with everything necessary to live and cover all their needs. To allow the road to be travelled and a military post in it would mean the disappearance of the buffaloes and, with it, the source of food for the Indians.

The following sequences develop the battle, starting with the soldiers leaving the fort and walking along the deepest part of a valley, observed by Crazy Horse and his braves. The column stops, a group of soldiers appear on the hill and after a new view of the column, Crazy Horse is again seen behind a rock and, while the Army is galloping an Indian is seen crawling. It is important to notice here that the film presents a good day, sunny and bright and it can be assured that the representation is correctly made, according to what has been reported by the documents. Though the film does not say the date, this is reported to have been the 21st of December, and described as clear and cold.¹⁵⁹ A little later, the column can be seen in the middle of the valley. Finally, the troop goes up to the hill, the fight starts, Crazy Horse shoots his weapon, a new group of Sioux appears, everybody fights and the following sequence shows all the soldiers dead. The film does not add anything else, but then the Sioux surrounded the wood train and,

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. 222

when they realized that Fetterman was on the other side, left it. General Dodge and Brady¹⁶⁰ tell that the Indians surrounded the wood train, helped by their own scouts and that, after having seen the troops of Fetterman, they immediately retreated, leaving the wood train, which went on its way to Piney, without disturbances and when the troops of Fetterman disappeared a certain number of Indians were again seen in the valley.

“Then the Whites found that there was no doctor with the Army, so Surgeon Hines was sent with four men to Fetterman, who returned soon...”¹⁶¹ Now Carrington sent Captain Ten Eyck to join Fetterman and return to the fort.¹⁶² Sample, the orderly of the general, who had been galloping at full speed down the opposite hill with the best horse possible, completed the distance between Lodge Trail Ridge and the fort and came back with a message from Ten Eyck, saying that “the valley on the other side of the ridge was filled with Indians,” who were threatening him, that the firing had stopped, and he saw no sign of Captain Fetterman’s command.¹⁶³ The result was that the soldiers were found dead.

The conflict had started on the 6th of December, when Carrington sent Fetterman with forty soldiers to defend the wood train from Indian attacks, with the expectation that the Indians would have retired toward the Lodge Trail Ridge.¹⁶⁴ Fetterman and Carrington retreated, both together going back to the fort. On the 19th, Red Cloud made another attempt, but the final battle was the 21st of

¹⁶⁰ General Dodge Official Records and Brady Graphic Stories

¹⁶¹ Robinson 1967 361

¹⁶² Ibid. 367

¹⁶³ Ibid. 368

¹⁶⁴ Ambrose 1975 220

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December. As can be seen, there is no reference in the film either to the wood train or to the presence of the Indians before the fort, but everything happens in a far-off place, with the absence of any sign about the messenger or the doctor, the retreat of the two men not happening, and Carrington and Fetterman not appearing.

After this, the soldiers attack and the Sioux defeat them in battle, killing the whole group of soldiers. Crazy Horse reviews the battlefield, surrounded by a group of his men, while Spotted Tail recognizes that the Sioux chief has fulfilled his promise and speaks about his intention of going "to Fort Laramie to talk." At an Indian camp, a group of warriors arrives, and Crazy Horse, who is suggested to be one of them, enters the tipi where Worm, his father, is holding a womb in his hand, suggesting to Crazy Horse that his baby has been born and adding that it was "down by the river place," where Black Shawl is by a tree with the baby in her arms, to whom Crazy Horse approaches and is told that his baby was a daughter. Later, some Indians, among who is Crazy Horse, all of them in full regalia, are coming to the fort, as the soldiers are standing up. Little Big Man is discovered among the soldiers, dressed as one of them, while the representative of the government, in the middle of the screen, speaks, surrounded by Indians and cowboys, as he states that the Sioux will be given rifles to hunt, that Fort Phil Kearny will be destroyed and the Black Hills will be given back to the Sioux. A Sioux chief, face to face with the representative of the government, agrees to the conditions, while Crazy Horse, who was in a second position, advances and reproaches them their attitude and tells the commissioner and the others that he does not trust them, because the Whites broke many treaties. Finally he throws a spear to the ground, after having

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mounted his horse, and leaves the fort, followed by a group of warriors under the attentive look of Little Big Man, while the commander in chief asks the commissioner permission to bring him back, in an image in which four men can be seen: the commissioner, the commander in chief and other two. Immediately after it, Twist mounts and leaves the fort and, in his journey to the Sioux village, is shot by a Sioux warrior, who wounds him, but when they approach and recognize him they take him to the Indian camp, to save him.

Now Twist is in the camp, seated before a group of Indians, many of whom are dressed in full regalia, between Crazy Horse and his father, telling that Crook has many soldiers and assuring that this General reduces the fight to the words “surrender” and “die”. At the right of the screen, beside Crazy Horse’s father, Spotted Tail, who asks Crazy Horse for his opinion, while at the left side of Crazy Horse there are some Sioux chiefs. Crazy Horse advances to the centre of the circle and declares that the food of the white man produces weakness and asks Twist if that is what he wants for his daughter. The soldier answers that he desires “a full and happy life for her” or, on the contrary, “death”. Before this dilemma, Crazy Horse chooses the death option and expresses his desire to fight, but Twist asks him if he wants to fight against Crook and warns him that it is not possible. After that, there are some images of Crazy Horse, Twist and the Indian chiefs, in which the cowboy tries to leave, warning him that he will have to fight against them, and having finally mounted his horse, but as he is injured and exhausted, he falls from the horse before everybody. Now Worm approaches Crazy Horse and the other Sioux warriors and asks him if he doubts that he is the warrior of the

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prophecy. The Sioux chief, who was looking at the horse for a short time, takes it and leaves. The action now shifts to the place where Black Shawl is having a dialogue with Twist, who is lying on the floor, injured, and tells him he must stay in the camp. Now Crazy Horse looks at the horizon, goes into the tipi and stares at the baby, when Black Shawl goes into the tipi, too and in the dialogue between them the discussion goes around the topic of whether he is the warrior of the prophecy, but he rejects the idea and wants to be sure. In the Sioux dance that follows, Black Shawl and Worm are in the centre of the screen, between two tipis, watching the Indians dancing, while in the tipi Crazy Horse is looking at the baby, who is sleeping. Then he raises his head, becomes angry, as the rest of warriors are dancing all together when, suddenly, the image shows Crazy Horse, at the door of his tipi, dressed in full regalia, with a rifle in his hand, meaning that he is ready for war.

After a column of soldiers is seen riding through the countryside, a group of Sioux meet on a hill, on which two warriors report to Crazy Horse that they saw: “the soldiers here in a line...with rifles and boxes” entering Sioux land. Crazy Horse informs his warriors about the plan and all of them begin their march down the hill, except a little remnant of them, who will be seen later observing the soldiers, who are now crossing the river. The Sioux are waiting and, when they see Shoshone scouts, they immediately go after them and kill them, while the soldiers are attacked by the Sioux, who steal the bullets while the soldiers attack, after which the Indians leave, reunite and distribute the arms and the bullets. While the Lieutenant and the General are speaking, a group of Sioux, led by Crazy Horse,

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arrives and faces them from a certain distance, and start a battle, after which the soldiers “retire across the river” followed by the Sioux, until they see them disappear.

Crazy Horse tells one of the soldiers that the Sioux have won and that the Whites cannot enter the Black Hills. As the soldiers, exhausted, enter the fort, one of them addresses the Sergeant, when one of the women, who is coming from the inside of the fort, goes beside a horse with a soldier on it, who seems to be dead or seriously hurt. A soldier says to the commissioner that Lieutenant Cartwright, who was “in charge of the rearguard,” is recommended by General Crook for a medal from Congress, then the commissioner looks at a photo, takes a gun, puts it into a pocket in his jacket and leaves the office. As he leaves, he sees Little Big Man with a rifle in his hand, looks at him and continues his way to the office of the shop owners, who greet him, but then he takes his revolver out and points at them, killing them and then committing suicide, after having accused them of having provoked a war.

A column of Indians is then arriving at the Sioux village, where they are being received by a handful of comrades. When Crazy Horse, who comes with a happy face, reaches his tipi, his expression changes, becoming sad at the sight of three women beside its door, two of them with their heads covered with blankets and all the three of them showing grief. He goes into the tipi, where his wife is, just beside the door, advances and sees his father, who is also sad, the same as his wife. The chief addresses Worm, but the latter directs him to Black Shawl, who will tell him that the death of their child has happened when he was in the Rosebud. After this,

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Crazy Horse is beside the pyre, taking the body of his daughter in his arms when his wife arrives and later the body of They-are-Afraid-of-Her is again on the scaffold.

The early appearance of Crazy Horse in the place where the pyre is gives the impression that this was put in a place very near the village. The chief is with his child, who is wrapped in red, dead, in his hands, as he offers her to the Great Spirit, and after he has taken her to his breast he is seen under the scaffold, while his dead daughter is on it. Black Shawl arrives, and while she is telling him that "Custer, the one they call Long Hair, runs along the Bighorn with many soldiers" he grabs a pole from the pyre. The date given in the film is 1876, due to the reference to the arrival of Custer at the Bighorn, which is, no doubt, the moment of the battle of Powder River; however, the death of Crazy Horse's daughter seems to have been in 1873, some three years before, though the development of the sequence is very similar. "As Crazy Horse entered the village, Worm grabbed his arm and pulled him away from Black Shawl's tipi. Sadly, Worm informed his son that They-are-Afraid-of-Her has caught cholera and died" (Ambrose 1975 352), nonetheless the differences are great. In both cases, Worm informs his son, but while in the film this happens in the tipi, in the book of Ambrose it happens when he is entering the village, just before the tipi of the chief's wife. Another difference is that in the film Black Shawl is present, while in the book of Ambrose she was absent.

The following sequences show Crazy Horse in the Indian camp speaking to his warriors, after whom they run, followed by another image of the U.S. Army in a valley, while the Sioux chief and his warriors are watching. The Army reach the top

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of the hill, have a look and come back, taking up positions for battle, the moment when a black cloud is shown, eluding the carnage, while the shots and music sound and only the dead are present on the screen. The immediate image is that of the Indians singing and dancing around the fire, celebrating their victory over the Army soldiers, while holding their rifles with their hands. Then in his tipi, Crazy Horse is saying to Twist: "General Custer and his men died bravely, but foolishly," to which he answers, complaining of his staying out of the battle, due to his injury, being excused by Crazy Horse.

When he is telling Twist that one victory does not mean the end of the war, some Indian chiefs enter the tipi, and state that they do not want to continue fighting, due to the scarcity of food and the falling of the snow. Crazy Horse disagrees, adducing that if they separate they will be destroyed, but the Indian chiefs leave, after having insisted on their idea. Over an image of the countryside the voice off says: "Crazy Horse was right. One by one the separated tribes were defeated, driven into reservations." Twist picks up a small bundle of wood and bears it to a tipi, while the voice off assures that Crazy Horse stayed in the Badlands with some people, while the cowboy walks to the tipi. At the same time, some warriors, women and children go in the opposite direction, towards the encounter with the Sioux chief, who comes on horseback, with three rabbits. A little later, Crazy Horse comes down from his mount, as Twist goes into the tipi, in which Black Shawl is, and puts the wood in the fire, while Crazy Horse, who had been seen coming to his tipi, comes in, goes to her, who is sick, and leaves with Twist. Outside, a group of warriors before them, while Crazy Horse and Twist dialogue about the possibility of giving

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up their arms and how long Black Shawl's illness will last, after which the Sioux chief comes back to the tipi and takes care of his wife.

This sequence, in which Crazy Horse is speaking to his Army friend, followed by the entrance of the Sioux chiefs in Crazy Horse's tipi, would not in fact have been possible, due to the fact that the battle of Little Bighorn took place in June and the wound that Twist suffers had not cured, which indicates that it is recent, nonetheless the conversation with the other chief is in winter, as is obvious from the words of one of the visitors: "this is the winter..." And that winter was really terrible, with the wind howling, and poor hunting, which made the people hungry.¹⁶⁵

In this sequence, Crazy Horse shows his dissatisfaction about separating; however the reality seems to have been that he was dissatisfied because he did not want his people to surrender. Accordingly, he did not permit it, calling the *akicita* (Sioux word for "warriors.") and making them kill the ponies.

It was in the middle of December when Crazy Horse decided to surrender, due to the lack of buffalo, the children coughing and the lack of ammunition. His wife was ill with tuberculosis and he had only around five hundred men, but it was not easy, in fact it took some attempts. Miles, who was on the Tongue River, sent runners to Crazy Horse, assuring him he would treat the Indian chief kindly, and around Christmas the Sioux took his people to the Tongue River, near Miles' camp. When he saw the fort, Crazy Horse stopped, sending some of his men to the fort, when some Crow scouts jumped onto their ponies and went towards the Sioux before Miles could stop them and killed five of Crazy Horse's men. The Colonel made

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. 420

them come back and sent apologies in the way of a tobacco offering to the Sioux chief, but he rejected it.¹⁶⁶

From that moment on, some groups of Oglalas surrendered and the news of Crazy Horse coming to the Agency were confusing, with Sitting Bull offering to join him in his journey to Canada. In midwinter, Crook sent Spotted Tail to Crazy Horse to induce him to give up. Spotted Tail started his journey on February 15th 1877, accompanied by two hundred warriors, and found Touch-the-Clouds with his Minniconjous,¹⁶⁷ but he did not find Crazy Horse, though later he met Worm, who told him that his son would surrender as soon as the weather permitted. The latter then sent a message to Spotted Tail through his father, saying that he would surrender, as soon as possible, with his four hundred lodges composed by Oglalas and Cheyennes. Spotted Tail communicated this to George Crook at the beginning of April. What follows is not present in the film: there was jealousy on both sides, with Red Cloud feeling jealous of Spotted Tail and Clark of Crook; moreover Clark wanted Red Cloud as absolute chief of the Oglalas to make his agency as important as Spotted Tail's, for which reason the news that Spotted Tail had convinced Crazy Horse to give in made Clark and Red Cloud furious:

Red Cloud was jealous of Spotted Tail, and Lieutenant William H. Clark, the military head of Red Cloud Agency (which as administered separately from Camp Robinson), was jealous of Crook. In addition Clark wanted Red Cloud reinstated as head of the Oglalas, so that his agency would be as important as Spotted Tail's. So, when Spotted Tail came back to Crook with the

¹⁶⁶ Ambrose 1975 420

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. 422

great news that he had convinced Crazy Horse to surrender, Clark and Red Cloud were furious. They thought the honor of bringing in Crazy Horse should have been theirs (Ambrose 1975 423).

Clark wanted Red Cloud to take Crazy Horse to surrender, so that they could both make the trip to Washington, because the Army was very interested in Crazy Horse travelling to Washington in order to demonstrate that they had won the Indian War:

Clark added that after Crazy Horse came in, both chiefs would make the trip to Washington to consult with the Great White Father about their new agency. The Army wanted Crazy Horse in the delegation, to prove to the Great White Father and to the American public that it really had won the Sioux war. (Ambrose 1975 423).

Clark was ready to recognize Red Cloud as the highest officer and would assist him by giving him control of the rations, which would mean control over the people and also give him a great quantity of presents and food. Around April, 27th Red Cloud found Crazy Horse and all his people, whose ponies were moving slowly, when he was going to the agency, and when they met, Red Cloud reported by sending a runner to Clark. Crazy Horse surrendered to Red Cloud, spreading his blanket before him and giving him his shirt, as a sign of surrender.¹⁶⁸ After Clark had heard about Crazy Horse coming, from the mouth of Red Cloud, he sent

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. 423

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Lieutenant Rosencrans of the 4th Cavalry, accompanied by Billy Garnett, the interpreter, with fifty Indian scouts, and ten wagonloads of rations plus one hundred cattle. Rosencrans met Crazy Horse's group on the Black Hills. Lieutenant Clark, accompanied by an escort, met the column of Indians on the 6th of May, 1877, two miles to the north of Camp Robinson, and a little later the march to the fort started with Crazy Horse leading the column, accompanied by Little Big Man and He Dog, and followed by the rest of the warriors, all of them dressed with their war dresses and with their ponies and bodies painted for war, the women and children.¹⁶⁹

What follows in the film is the surrender of the tribe, represented by a column of Sioux coming through the Indian camp near the fort, observed by a group of Indians in the camp, while, in the fort, the Indian patrol lined up, is going from one side of the screen to the other, and after they have crossed the screen they stop, forming a line, with Little Big Man in the centre, surrounded by other Indian soldiers, just beside a line of Cavalry men. After the moment at which sabres are presented, there is an image of a group of soldiers playing the bugle and some drums, followed by the column of Indians coming into the fort through a camp of tipis, again the column of Sioux warriors, followed by an image of Worm and some other Indians coming towards the fort, while Crazy Horse is seizing his horse, as he advances with it, and pulls a *travois* (a kind of stretcher where people and things were transported) at which Black Shawl goes ill. When they saw the Indians arrive singing, the Whites realized that their problems had not finished:

When they came within sight of Camp Robinson, the chiefs began to sing,

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 424

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the warriors and the women and children taking it up, filling the White River Valley with their song. Thousands of agency Indians lined their route, and they began to sing and to cheer for Crazy Horse (Ambrose 1975 425).

Then the Indians were disarmed and their horses taken by Clark and Crazy Horse himself in a place about a mile south of Camp Robinson. After this, Crazy Horse demanded an agency near a place today called Gillete, but Clark now wanted Crazy Horse to go to Washington, affirming that the matter of Crazy Horse's Agency could be decided after having gone to Washington, supposedly after having come back from it, so that the Sioux chief might go to Washington at once to speak to the President. Crazy Horse answered that if it were not possible to have an agency in Beaver Creek, he wanted the agency in what today is Sheridan, but Clark insisted that first he had to go to Washington, while Crazy Horse said that he would go to Washington after having been conceded an agency. He first asked for one at Beaver Creek, but adduced that, if it were not possible, he would accept another one in the Bighorns, near the present-day Sheridan, to which Clark responded that first he had to go to Washington, and that until that moment he would be under the orders of Red Cloud, but Crazy Horse said that he intended to go to Washington after have been granted an agency.

What the film lacks here is plenty: the encounter of Red Cloud with Crazy Horse, the meeting of Crazy Horse and Lieutenant Rosencrans, the march starting to the fort. Only the arrival of the column is shown, but nothing is said of the warriors forming part of it, locating some of them in an erroneous place, such as is the case

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of He Dog, who is not shown accompanying Crazy Horse. As for Little Big Man, he was beside Crazy Horse in the column escorting him when he was going to surrender, which signifies that he could not be in the fort, serving as a soldier; however, the film depicts him in it, not at one side of the Sioux chief, as he really was. General Crook and Lieutenant Cartwright are speaking before a group of soldiers, in the fort, after which Crazy Horse goes into it and is received by General Crook, who wants to be sure that Black Shawl receives urgent medical attention. The following sequences develop the entrance of Crazy Horse with his wife and warriors into the fort and the action of taking her to the interior of the fort, where she is cured, alternately with some views of the countryside (lakes, river and flowers) representing the passing of the year and the process of healing Black Shawl, who, after these images is seen happy and strong, now cured, with her husband, Twist and some other Indians, in the middle of the fort.

Black Shawl was cured by Dr. Valentine McGillicuddy, "Crazy Horse's closest white friend was Major V. T. McGillicuddy, the post surgeon, who had successfully treated Black Shawl for tuberculosis" (Ambrose 1975 427). They had become closest friends after his surrender in the fort; however, the film does not show the presence of Dr. McGillicuddy at any time, only Black Shawl ill and a little later cured, but who cured her or how he did it is not shown. The criticisms for putting the life of his wife into the hands of a white medicine man are not shown in the film, and the same could be said of Crazy Horse's response to those who criticized him, for the Indian chief affirmed that the Indian medicine man had not helped her. "Then Red Cloud's people even made a fuss about this, saying Crazy Horse should have stuck to

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Indian medicine men; Crazy Horse replied that they had done his wife no good and he would try anything” (Ambrose 1975 427).

Different images are shown of Crazy Horse in the fort, first outside, looking everywhere, while a voice off says: “Crazy Horse and his people felt the need to be free”. Later he is shown inside, walking in the fort, or asking permission to go on a hunt because the eating of the buffalo flesh will make them become stronger, and it was true that Crazy Horse was becoming weak since he surrendered. Now he was bored, something that had never happened to him, for the agency did not offer him anything, so he desired an agency of his own, an agency that should be in a land good for hunting. He wanted the opportunity to eat buffalo meat again, due to the fact that beef was not good for him, so he demanded a hunt, which was approved, and in this way he and his people could go on a big buffalo hunt to the Powder River.¹⁷⁰

Things happened in this way: after Crazy Horse is standing up in the Indian camp before the fort, he is seen with Twist in it, and they met a soldier patrol, while he is going to the office of the general. One of the soldiers turns and is discovered to be Little Big Man, who is stopped and looking at the two men. Crook has requested an audience with Crazy Horse and Twist, and as it is granted, they both enter the office, where Crazy Horse asks permission for a buffalo hunt and tells the general about the excellences of the buffalo meat and the problems caused by their lack. Though at the beginning Crook seems to refuse, finally he grants the permission. Immediately after which, Little Big Man is seen in Crook's office assuring that what

¹⁷⁰ Robinson 1967 428

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Crazy Horse really wants is to make war and reminds the general of some battles and also the location of Sitting Bull. Consequently, Crook wants Crazy Horse to report before him, and he sends order through Little Big Man. When he leaves, Crook speaks to a soldier, and in their conversation, both of them conclude that they did not believe a word, but the general wants Little Big Man “to repeat his charges when Crazy Horse is present.” After a view of the fort from the outside, a group of Indians crosses the field, reach the place where Crazy Horse is with his father and Flying Hawk, and follow their way, while the camera stops where the chief is with his comrades.

When the voice of Black Shawl is heard, her husband approaches her, puts his cheek against hers and they smile, but they suddenly separate when they see a patrol going past. Under the orders of Little Big Man, the patrol stops there with the order that “General Crook wants to see you now.” So he goes to the fort, escorted by the patrol and followed by a number of Sioux, after which Crazy Horse goes into the fort accompanied by Little Big Man, whom he asks where he is taking him and is answered “to the guardhouse”. Here, Little Big Man twists his words, putting them in the mouth of General Crook and a little later he spits out his words to Crazy Horse, who tries to escape, but is surrounded by a group of eight soldiers. Little Big Man treacherously bayonets him and Crazy Horse falls to the ground, observed by Black Shawl, Worm and Flying Hawk, who look angrily at the murder. As Little Big Man escapes, Black Shawl, Worm and Flying Hawk approach the chief, who is agonizing. The film ends with the voice off of Twist, who assures that “the prophecy was fulfilled.”

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What the chronicles say really happened is that Little Big Man grabbed the arm of the Sioux chief, but that he was not the one who killed him with the bayonet. His escape in the film is, obviously, related to this, and he must have felt guilty in some way, because the other Sioux made him notice his guilt for having shot Crazy Horse in the head. These two chiefs became very unpopular due to their behaviour at the moment of Crazy Horse's death.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The study about the migrations of the Sioux tribe from the lakes to the Black Hills explains the division of this tribe into a certain number of sub-tribes as well as the way they acquired their names and the reason why this happened, the relationship they had with other tribes, like the Cheyennes, but also the enmity of the Sioux with the Arikaras, who were blocking them in some points of their migrations and not letting them continue their way, and the problems with the Crows, to whom they displaced of the place they occupied in the Black Hills, and consequently influenced the battle of Little Big Horn.

Their setbacks in the battles, as shown in the films, were presented like another victory over the Indian tribes. As an example of that type of films, *Son of the Morning Star* (1991), shows that reverse side of the events to which the Americans are accustomed, portraying the surrender and death of Crazy Horse and speaking about Sitting Bull's death in order to diminish the importance of their failure. The brief summarizing of the Powder River and the Rosebud battles is a clear example of that. Mistakes such as the depiction of the surrender of Crazy Horse, the scarcity of images of this chief and Sitting Bull, as well as the confusion of the sub-tribes with the whole of the Sioux nation or other details, such as the place of death of Victorio or, even, the promotion of George Armstrong Custer, prove that the directors of these films did not aim to depict either the characters or the history correctly, but only to create a film with the intention of amusing the public.

The study of the films concerning the two great conflicts led to the discovery of some figures in Apache as well as Sioux culture. Among the Apache chiefs were

Victorio, Mangas Coloradas, Chato and Massai. As for the Sioux chiefs and warriors who took part in the Battle of Little Bighorn, names like Gall or Rain-in-the-Face, who were leading part of the warriors, or names such as Big Road or He Dog were unknown to the Cinema, even though they had a prominent role in it. The study of the History of Indian films helped me discover a good number of films depicting some rituals like the Ghost Dance, as well as the beginnings of the shows about Indians, like the *Procession of Mounted Indians and Cowboys* (1898) and the fact that the Indians were not depicted as the villains in the first times, but that some of them showed the positive side. The fact that the Indians had become American citizens changed the way the Westerns portrayed them, but it was not the only factor, for in 1960 the action of the American Indian Movement influenced this change; however, neither this influence nor the respect that appeared towards the Native Americans in the nineteen-eighties and nineties, considering them good savages and in possession of a certain spirituality, allowed them to acquire the same category they had in the 1910's. All in all, the rights of the Indians in the films of the decade of 1910's were lost to be only recently recovered.

The supposition of the previous existence of a council in order to prepare the battle was in time confirmed with the appearance of the fact that every year the Sioux celebrated a great council in the month of June, but it raised the question of how this council could take place if the Sioux tribes were groups sparsely spread along the Plains. The question demanded an explanation that was implicit in itself: the figure of a messenger, called *runner* among the Sioux, who is a character in some tales.

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The relationships between Whites and Indians took two different forms: enmity, which reached its extreme point in hatred; friendship, which in its most extreme cases could reach marriage, and integration. Friendship between Indians and Whites, is personified by Mangas Coloradas and Luke Fargo in *War Drums* (1957), and made more concrete with the marriage of Mangas Coloradas and Riva, a white girl, or with the marriage between Morning Star and Tom Jefford. A particular case of this sometimes friendship between Whites and Indians is the integration in the Sioux tribe of a woman called Anna Morgan, the protagonist of the film *Stolen Women* (1997).

Characters like Mike and Doug in the film *40 Guns to Apache Pass* (1966) show hatred towards the Indians, but if there is a clear example of this feeling in itself, it is the attitude of the men in the fort who have some Yellow Hand girls as slaves, in *Return of a Man Called Horse* (1976). As a consequence of that hatred, there was a humiliation of Indians, as shown in the beginning of the film *Geronimo* (1962), when an unknown Apache gives Jeremiah Burns, the Indian Agent, the news that Geronimo is coming and he tells him to take his moccasins off, so as not to make the carpet dirty. The relations between Indians and Whites give rise to the existence of two figures: the White who is considered a traitor for being on good terms with the Indians, and the Indian who is considered a betrayer for being on good terms with the Whites, like Chato in *Geronimo* (1993) or, in *Run of the Arrow* (1957), Walking Coyote. Some Indian characters are indistinctly treated as friends or enemies of the Whites, depending on the film, Chato being one of those characters, for while in the 1962 version of the film *Geronimo* the medicine man is

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presented as a friend of Geronimo in the version of the year 1993 he is clearly considered an enemy. Cochise is another character doubly represented, being in many of those depictions a ferocious warrior, however in *Broken Arrow* (1950) he is shown as peaceful.

The Army is presented on many occasions as pretending to help the Indians, for instance the moment when they forgive the Apache chief Massai and leave him alone in the film *Apache* (1954). The presentation of Custer as good for the Indians is reaffirmed by the sequence in which both chiefs, Custer and Crazy Horse, speak about the treaty. For that purpose, some facts concerning Custer, such as the massacres in which he took part in Kansas, are omitted. The same phenomenon can be seen in *Custer of the West* (1967), which shows a Custer who is in favour of a holy war, though later this is proved to be untrue by the attack with the cannons. The scene in which Libbie Custer announces the restoration of the Black Hills to the Sioux tribe also portrays Custer as a defender of the Indians. The general is framed by Taipe and the Sharps when they tried to acquire gold in the Black Hills and he decided to dissuade them. The sequences referring to this hide the fact that Custer was the one who was after the gold and discovered it with his men, so the film makes him acquire a type of kindness that he could not have had.

The statement about the complete annihilation of the Whites in the Battle of Little Bighorn was almost wholly true, due to the existence of some survivors: the horse of General Custer "Dandy", an Arikara Indian fighting for the Whites and Frederick Benteen, who was later rehabilitated, as well as some others, like Reno and Buck John Martin. A fact derived from this is that the battle cannot be completely

portrayed from the point of view of the Whites, for the only survivors on this side escaped. It would require cooperation between Whites and Indians or to take into consideration the books written by the Indians. The displacement of the Court-Martial nine years in time makes its chronology impossible, but also shows that the reason why Custer is judged is not correctly represented. Nothing is said about the role of Sheridan at the moments after the sentence condemning Custer, moments in which he himself claims to have investigated and listened to the members of the tribunal. The film shows that the attitude of the tribunal was hostile to Custer, while Sheridan affirms that they favoured him, as has been previously stated.

As expected, the depiction of the Sioux characters appearing in *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) was a poor one, the time of their appearance in the film was scarce and they were portrayed in a very flat, shallow way; moreover, the only Indian characters appearing were Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, while the other ones seem to be extras playing no specific role, but surprisingly this kind of representation did not only affect the Indians, for the Whites, starting with George Armstrong Custer, were portrayed in a shallow way as well. There are some factors that favour the protagonists of the films, Whites as well as Indians and other factors that damage their image. It was to be expected that a film like *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) would represent Custer favourably, but some aspects of his personality, like his aggressiveness, do not favour him, the same as the depiction of his arrival and admission in West Point or his promotion to Brigadier General, which, faithfully represented, would have favoured the fame of the General. The transgressions the film show do not affect the fame of the General, being real. The

film shows Custer to be the last of his class as he really was.

The escape of Crazy Horse, the way he is freed, besides the fact that it is false, is not convenient for the Army. The chase of Crazy Horse, which would have favoured the film very much, is not seen, neither are the moments of the surrender. Everything has been reduced to the fight face to face with Custer, which even if unreal, was more convenient for the portraying of the general. The surrender, though badly depicted, favours the Americans, for a surrender such as it was, with the whole tribe, the Sioux chief proudly entering the fort would have shown the power of the Sioux and Cheyennes who were with Crazy Horse, however the fact of his wife and being cared for due to her tuberculosis by the white doctor Valentine McGillicuddy would have favoured the Whites, for the depiction would have shown a degree of interest of the Whites in the health of the Indians.

Of the four films which were the object of this thesis, only *Chief Crazy Horse* (1955) represents the relationships of the Sioux leader with other members of the tribe (Spotted Tail, Black Shawl, Worm and Little Big Man). The relation between Crazy Horse and Little Big Man held some clues that indicated the possibility that the friendship between them was non-existent. In time this suspicion was confirmed due to the details in which Little Big Man grabbed the arm of Crazy Horse at the moment of his death and also the moments just after the adultery of Black Buffalo Woman in which the great Sioux leader was chased by Little Big Man and No Water. Sitting Bull portrayed the relations of the medicine man with the warrior chief and included the presence of Sitting Bull's son.

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The Savage.Dir.James Young Deer. 1913.

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Unconquered. Dir. Cecil B. De Mille. Perf. Gary Cooper and Paulette

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Goddard.Paramount Pictures. 1947.

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I.PHOTOS

Sitting Bull



(http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/people/s_z/sittingbull.htm)



Alleged photo of Crazy Horse

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crazy_Horse)

II.SUMMARY

La presente tesis está enfocada en el estudio de cuatro grandes películas acerca de la batalla de Little Bighorn. La primera, *Little Big Man* (1970,) está centrada en la personalidad de George Armstrong Custer, la segunda, *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) en su vida militar. *Sitting Bull*, (1964) En la vida del gran hombre medicina y la última, *Chief Crazy Horse* (1955) en la vida del gran jefe guerrero Crazy Horse. El principal objetivo de esta tesis es la comparación entre los hechos acaecidos antes de la batalla y que dieron lugar a este conflicto y la forma en que han sido representados, deduciendo de la comparación entre ellos la calidad de la representación, pero también prestando atención a los personajes que protagonizan este conflicto y, en ese sentido, las vidas de los principales guerreros han sido añadidas.

Para alcanzar este objetivo esta tesis ha sido estructurada en seis capítulos. El primero de ellos desarrolla un marco general en el cual se exponen las principales ideas sobre Representación, las cuales dieron origen a esta tesis. En él se intenta responder a las preguntas de a quien van dirigidos los westerns, que intenta el director y por qué el director elige unos personajes y no otros. También se analizan los puntos de contacto entre los tres tipos de corrientes de Representación, así como las relaciones entre Representación y Lingüística, considerando las llamadas relaciones *in praesentia* e *in absentia*. Igualmente se estudia al espectador, considerando que sin éste ninguna película tiene sentido y, por ello se considera su mente y sus características, como también el punto de vista desde el

cual la película ha sido hecha y si ésta fue realizada desde el punto de vista del Eurocentrismo.

En este capítulo se hace un análisis de las diferentes clases de Westerns así como de los diferentes aspectos implicados en la factura de las películas. Algunas cuestiones sociales han sido tratadas, tales como aquellas relativas a las migraciones. De la misma manera se trata del problema de las fuentes. El segundo capítulo está dedicado a la migración del pueblo Sioux desde el momento en que abandonaron su vivienda en Minnesota, pasando por el Río Blue Earth, con la división que tuvo lugar allí, hasta el momento en que se asentaron en la Colinas Negras, con el objeto de inscribirlos en el marco de la Historia. Se incluyen en este capítulo otros acontecimientos que alteraron la vida del pueblo Sioux, como la construcción de algunos fuertes o la llegada de algunos agentes Indios y de algunos otros inmigrantes, como los Mormones, por la influencia que tuvieron, dado que provocaron el incidente de la vaca de los Mormones, que acabó con la llamada Masacre Grattan. También tiene el objetivo de traer a la luz las tribus con las cuales se encontraron y las relaciones que de ello resultaron, tanto aquellas que fueron de amistad como aquellas que fueron de enemistad, como los Arikaras, que les bloquearon el paso durante años, o los Crows con quienes mantuvieron luchas por los caballos.

También se ha dedicado un cierto espacio a hablar de la Masacre de Fetterman, dada la especial importancia que reviste, al haber sido uno de los intentos de aniquilación del pueblo Sioux por parte de un miembro del ejército. El capítulo tres expone una pequeña perspectiva de las películas sobre Indios, comenzando por las llamadas "Actualities", un tipo de documentales que muestran tierras

desconocidas o eventos interesantes, entre las cuales se encuentran *Nanook of the North* (1922), que muestra la vida de esta tribu en el desierto helado de Alaska y tierras similares u otros que retratan la danza del búfalo o de la serpiente. Estos filmes fueron seguidos por los llamados Indian Story Films, entre los que se encuentran títulos como *Hiawatha* (1910), basada en el poema de Henry Wordsworth Longfellow. Se han añadido los datos del *Hiawatha* real. Se considera en este capítulo el papel de autores de guiones, actores y directores que tuvieron los Nativos Americanos, así como la pérdida de importancia que sucedió a estos momentos. Se desarrolla también la llegada del sonido, la Gran Depresión y el papel que tuvo el reconocimiento de los Indios como ciudadanos Norteamericanos, el cambio de estereotipo ocurrido en los años sesenta y el mayor respeto de Hollywood en los años setenta.

El capítulo cuarto completa el anterior desarrollando los dos mayores conflictos entre los Nativos Norteamericanos y los Estados Unidos, como son los Apaches y los Sioux. Después de una parte general en la que se presentan películas como *Duel at Diablo* (1966), *A Distant Trumpet* (1964) y *Apache Blood* (1975) este capítulo se estructura bajo los epígrafes de los nombres de los grandes jefes, a saber Victorio, con películas como *Cry Blood Apache* (1970), *Apache Drums* (1951) y *Hondo* (1953); Cochise, con títulos como *40 Guns to Apache Pass* (1966) o *Broken Arrow* (1950); Taza, Chato, Geronimo, con películas como *Geronimo* (1960) y *Geronimo* (1993) Massai y Mangas Coloradas. La segunda parte del capítulo, relativa a los Indios Sioux, consta de una parte general en la que se tratan películas tan importantes como *Dances with Wolves* (1990), la trilogía *A Man Called Horse*, con las películas *A Man Called Horse* (1970), *Return of A Man*

Called Horse (1976) y *Triumphs of a Man Called Horse* (1983) y *Stolen Women* (1997). La segunda parte de este capítulo está estructurada bajo el nombre del gran jefe Sioux Red Cloud, con películas que tratan, entre otros temas, la lucha por el Bozeman Trail. Los títulos que se analizan en esta sección son *Run of the Arrow* (1957), *The Indian Fighter* (1956), *Tomahawk* (1951) y *Bugles in the Afternoon* (1952). Se inscribe a continuación un apartado sobre los Cheyennes, con películas del orden de *The Yellow Tomahawk* (1954), *Soldier Blue* (1970) y *Scalps!* (1987). Se acaba este capítulo con varias películas bajo el epígrafe de Little Bighorn, donde se describen *Custer of the West* (1967), *The Great Sioux Massacre* (1965) y, por último *Son of the Morning Star* (1991).

En esta sección se incluyen películas de gran importancia, como *Broken Arrow* (1950), una de las que marcaron el punto de inflexión en los westerns, la trilogía *A Man Called Horse* (1970, 1976, 1983), que narra con fidelidad la vida de esta tribu de Nativos Norteamericanos o *Dances with Wolves* (1990), acerca de las relaciones entre Blancos y Sioux, así como *Geronimo* (1993), que narra la rendición del gran jefe con sus últimos hombres, su posterior rebelión y escape de la reserva y su rendición final. Se han añadido una serie de películas que, no siendo de primera importancia, contribuyen a crear una visión del marco en el que se desarrollan las relaciones entre Blancos e Indios. Entre éstas se han incluido películas como *Run of the Arrow* (1957), en la que se discute acerca de la pertenencia a la nación Sioux o Estadounidense, siendo ambas excluyentes, *40 Guns to Apache Pass* (1966), que tiene como punto central el robo de un cargamento de rifles por parte de Cochise. A esta se le unen otras como *Taza, Son of Cochise* (1953), que componen el núcleo formado por las películas alrededor de

este jefe Apache, aunque relata los primeros días de la jefatura de su hijo Taza y su enfrentamiento con su hermano Naiche. También se ha incluido de los principales jefes.

El capítulo cinco trata de las cuatro importantes películas que son objeto de esta tesis, analizándolas desde el punto de vista de la Representación y añadiendo las vidas de los jefes Indios que tomaron parte en ellos. La primera, *Little Big Man* (1970), analiza el carácter de George Armstrong Custer a través de una serie de secuencias. El análisis se inicia con la aparición de Custer y su posterior encuentro con Jack Crabb, llamado Little Big Man por los Indios Cheyennes, el secuestro de Olga, su mujer, por los Indios, el reencuentro de Jack con el general, el intento del primero de matar al segundo y su posterior intento de suicidio para volver a la realidad cuando ve pasar a Custer camino de Little Bighorn, por lo cual decide ofrecerse como explorador, siendo admitido por el general con la intención de utilizarlo como indicador de las intenciones de los Cheyennes. La segunda película analizada, *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) analiza la vida del General Custer desde el momento de su llegada a la academia militar de West Point, su posterior alistamiento, después de haber sido descubierto que éste no había sido realizado de la manera conveniente. Se analiza también su primer encuentro con Elizabeth Custer, discutiéndose tanto el lugar, como la manera en que este encuentro fue realizado.

Formando parte de esta vida militar la película relata la primera misión a la que fue enviado, así como la manera de llegar, discutiéndose si el caballo con el cual se desplazó fue conseguido de manera legal o robado; el bautismo de fuego del futuro general que tuvo lugar en Bull Run, los personajes que tomaron parte en él

y las circunstancias resultantes que dieron como lugar la concesión de una medalla. Se trata en esta sección de todo lo relacionado con el tema del oro, ora la búsqueda de este metal por Custer como representante del ejército Norteamericano ora de la forma de encontrarlo por parte de dos de los personajes de esta película, como son Taipe y Sharp. Esta sección trata de sacar a la luz los datos biográficos sobre el otro protagonista de la película y que se muestra ausente durante la mayor parte de ella, el jefe Sioux Crazy Horse, por lo cual se ha añadido una biografía suya y se comparan los datos de ella con los dados en la película, tratándose de la vida del gran jefe desde su nacimiento hasta su muerte, pasando por la visión que le dio nombre, a la cual se presta un especial interés, el arresto del gran jefe, su emprisionamiento y posterior muerte.

En estos dos puntos se habla de la forma en que se produjeron, así como los personajes históricos que se hallaban presentes en ellos, tanto de la parte India, a la que se presta especial atención, como de los Estados Unidos. Entre estos dos acontecimientos del arresto y muerte se produce la escapada de Crazy Horse, hecho que también se cuenta en la película, por lo cual ambos eventos son comparados. Se considera también la figura del guerrero Sioux Little Big Man, por la especial importancia que tuvo en la vida del jefe guerrero Sioux, incluyéndose una biografía de él. Pero existen eventos anteriores a la batalla de Little Bighorn que deben ser considerados por la repercusión que tuvieron en ellos: la batalla del Powder River y la batalla del Rosebud, la cual se describe de una manera general. Se trata también de la Sun Dance, se describe y se cuenta la importancia que tuvo y el momento en que se realizó. Por último se considera el juicio que el ejército hizo a Custer, las razones, los resultados y las consecuencias y se compara con

las secuencias de la película en que se relata este hecho.

La tercera película que se analiza en esta tesis es *Sitting Bull* (1964), sobre la vida del hombre medicina Sioux nombrado generalísimo de los ejércitos Indios, relatando su vida desde su nacimiento en Dakota y su infancia, con la razón de su primer nombre, Slow. Se trata el rol que tuvo en la batalla de Little Bighorn, con el envío de *runners* a las demás subtribus Sioux y Cheyennes con la intención de convocar a sus líderes para organizar la batalla contra los Blancos, así con su escape a Canadá y su posterior incorporación al espectáculo de Buffalo Bill Cody. Se habla también de la tribu Sioux y las subtribus, explicando quienes eran los Sioux y dando el nombre de las siete subtribus, el lugar en donde se encontraban ubicados y la pertenencia de cada uno de ellas a la locación correspondiente. Sobre el otro protagonista de la película, Parrish, se trata la posibilidad de que sea un personaje ficticio, dada la no existencia de vivos en la parte de los Estados Unidos entre los soldados rasos, con la única excepción de Buck John Martin. Se trata también de la no existencia de la reserva llamada Red Rock. Pero en la película aparece el hijo de Sitting Bull y de él también se habla.

El último punto que se trata en esta sección es el de la entrevista entre Sitting Bull y el Presidente Grant, considerándose el lugar donde tuvo lugar y comparándolo con las secuencias de la película. La última película, *Chief Crazy Horse* (1955), describe la vida del gran jefe desde el momento de la muerte del jefe Conquering Bear hasta su muerte. Aunque la película comienza con el momento de la muerte del gran jefe Conquering Bear el análisis comienza con la exposición de la vida de Crazy Horse desde su nacimiento. Se discute también la apariencia del gran jefe, comparado con la información que dan los testimonios.

Se discute también el nombre de Crazy Horse en el momento de la batalla, así como los dos previos que se le asignaron y los momentos de su juventud, en la cual él hizo amistad con algunos de los miembros importantes de la banda que tuvieron un rol importante en la batalla de Little Bighorn, la muerte de Conquering Bear, por la repercusión que tuvo en el citado conflicto, así como sus causas. Se habla también del Tratado de Fort Laramie, más tarde roto por George Armstrong Custer con su irrupción en las Black Hills con la intención de buscar oro.

Se describe la visión, de acuerdo a los testimonios aparecidos y se compara con las secuencias en las que se desarrolla la visión y su posterior encuentro con su padre después de ella. En esta sección se habla de la misma manera, del Fetterman Affair, importante a causa de su repercusión, dado que formaba parte de la lucha por el Bozeman Trail, de su *affaire* amoroso con Black Buffalo Woman, el nacimiento de su hija They-Are-Afraid-of-Her, la invitación del gobierno de los Estados Unidos para ir a Washington y su intención de conseguir una reserva de la cual él fuese el jefe. Por lo que respecta a la película se trata de la muerte de Conquering Bear, importante a causa de estar incluida en la lucha por el Bozeman Trail, lo cual da lugar a un adscripción del proceso de enterramiento entre los Sioux, incluyendo algunos detalles acerca de la muerte de este importante líder Sioux. Como la película menciona el nombre que tuvo en su niñez se discute cual fue éste y cual el que se le concedió en segundo lugar, así como su causa, y en tercer lugar el nombre definitivo que adquirió y su origen, así como por quien le fue concedido. Al considerar la visión se considera también el año en el que ocurrió y la edad que entonces tenía. Diferentes testimonios han sido utilizados para concretar el año de su nacimiento, así como la edad en la que se le presentó la

visión.

Se habla también del Tratado de 1868, ya que dio lugar a la prohibición de que los Blancos entrasen en las Black Hills y el rol que desempeñó Crazy Horse, debido a la falta de confianza mostrada, tanto en el filme como en la realidad. Pero esta película desarrolla el enfrentamiento entre dos guerreros Sioux, el mismo Crazy Horse, y el considerado por los otros miembros de la tribu, según la Historia, amigo suyo, Little Big Man, con quien se le relaciona en diferentes aventuras contra los Blancos. Este enfrentamiento toma la forma no sólo de pelea cuerpo a cuerpo, sino además de confrontación amorosa en el intento de adquisición de la misma mujer, Black Shawl, que es finalmente otorgada al jefe guerrero, en detrimento de las aspiraciones de Little Big Man. La toma de posición de este guerrero por los Estados Unidos se manifiesta también en las escenas en que se interna en el fuerte, habla con los propietarios de la tienda y finalmente se une al ejército. Mas la película también presenta las figuras de Spotted Tail y Man Afraid. Un punto importante es el que habla del Fetterman Affair, contando lo que asegura la Historia y comparándolo con la representación de la película, parte que ha sido ampliamente tratada. Para hacer más fiable esta parte se ha incluido una biografía del oficial de los Estados Unidos, de forma que se viese la relación concreta de los hechos.

Una parte interesante de la película es aquella en que se relata la rendición de Crazy Horse, sus causas y el lugar en que se encuentra, así con la forma en que ésta ocurrió, aseverándose que los hechos acaecidos distan mucho de la realidad, puesto que la columna que se acercaba al fuerte era mucho más numerosa e impresionante de lo que se relata. Las causas de su rendición también son

tratadas, más concretamente la enfermedad de su mujer y el hambre que estaba sufriendo la gente que con él viajaba. En esta parte se consideran los aspectos no representados de la rendición: las primeras conversaciones, los celos entre Spotted Tail y Red Cloud, el proceso de la rendición, hablando de la búsqueda del gran jefe, entre otros por parte del guerrero Touch-the-Clouds, quien no lo encontró, el proceso mediante el cual Crazy Horse entregó su chaqueta y su penacho guerrero a Red Cloud, la puesta en marcha hacia el fuerte, su llegada con los posteriores problemas causados por la violencia de los guerreros Crow que se hallaban al servicio de los Estados Unidos, la entrada en el fuerte, su huida, así como la muerte del gran jefe, el papel de Little Big Man en su muerte y las repercusiones que esto tuvo. El capítulo seis muestra las conclusiones de los diferentes apartados, la importancia que tiene la representación de Custer en las diferentes películas y si ésta le favorece o perjudica, así como el perjuicio que se le pueda haber causado a los Indios Sioux y más concretamente a Crazy Horse.