

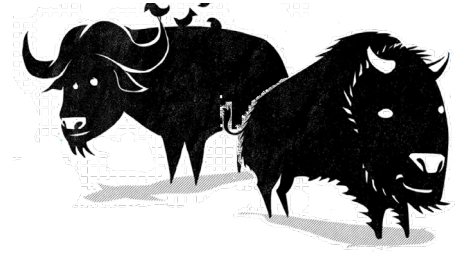
# Unit 9: *Conquest of the Plains*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Lecture 9.1 • *Tribes of the Great Plains*

### ***Background***

- By 1860, nearly all of the Indians east of the Mississippi River, and along the west coast, had been relocated, assimilated, subjugated or exterminated.
- On the Great Plains and in the Rockies however, as many as 150,000 Indians still lived as they had for thousands of years.
- The largest tribes in the West were the **Arapaho, Kiowas, Cheyennes, Crows, Lakota Sioux, Utes, and Comanches.**



**What's the difference between a "bison" and a "buffalo".**

### ***Indian Culture***

- Over the centuries, Indian cultures became tied to the rhythms and cycles of nature. The natural world was something to be revered and worshiped, not conquered and subdued.
- The Plains Indians had acquired the horse from Spanish explorers in the 1600s, and with it they became lords of the buffalo.
- It is impossible to overstate the importance of the buffalo to the Plains Indians. The entire existence of the Plains Indians was tied directly to the existence of the buffalo ... they were inseparable.

### ***The Calm Before the Storm***

- Most of the Indians had gotten along fine with the white trappers and traders that came west in the 1820s and '30s.
- Even during the era of the wagon trains, most of the plains Indians were happy to trade with the pioneers.
- It's important to remember though that none of these white were stopping on the plains.
- But even during these years of relative peace, most people — white and Indians alike — there was still a profound difference between "us" and "them".

### **Personal Reflection:**

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## Lecture 9.3 • “Let Them Eat Grass.”

### *Background*

- The first signs of conflict with the tribes of the Great Plains came in the new state of Minnesota, where thousands of white farmers had settled between 1858 and 1861.
- As more and more white settlers arrived, the Dakota, or Santee Sioux nation, agreed to settle on a reservation in exchange for money and assistance from the government.
- Despite the treaty though, white farmers continued to claim land on the Indian reservation. The **annuities** and supplies promised to the Indians were also routinely late, or flat out stolen from them by white Indian agents.

### *Uprising*

- By 1862, starvation was rampant all across the Santee reservation.
- When alerted to the fact that the Indians were starving, the local Indian agent, Andrew Myrick, was quoted as saying, “Let them eat grass.”
- In August of 1862, hundreds of Santee rose up, and attacked white settlements in search of food.
- Military reinforcements eventually arrived, but over 350 white settlers — including Andrew Myrick — had already been killed.

### *Surrender*

- Faced with fighting the U.S. Army, the Dakota surrendered. Thousands of them were imprisoned, and hundreds were found guilty of murder by military tribunals, and sentenced to death.
- 224 of the sentences were commuted, or lessened, by President Lincoln.
- However, 38 of the Dakota were hanged to death in the largest mass execution in the nation’s history.
- In 1863, all 1,600 remaining Dakota were expelled from Minnesota, and “relocated” to Nebraska. The treaty was voided, while the reservation was dissolved and opened to white settlement.



**What state’s name comes from the Dakota words for “cloudy water”?**

### **Personal Reflection:**

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#### **annuity:**

a sum of money paid to someone every year

## Lecture 9.4 • *Month of the Freezing Moon*

### ***Colorado: 1864***

- From 1862 to '64, Indian raids cut off Colorado Territory from the East. Coloradans pleaded with President Lincoln to send troops, but none could be spared due to the Civil War.
- So, in the summer of 1864, Governor John Evans authorized the creation of a 100-day Indian-fighting *militia*. Command of the Colorado 3rd Regiment was given to **Colonel John Chivington**.

### ***Sand Creek Massacre***

- On November 29th of that same year, the 700 men of the 3rd attacked a camp of 550 Cheyenne & Arapahoe Indians at Sand Creek.
- The civilian militia quickly lost control, killing Indians indiscriminately and mutilating many of the Indians for trophies. Some soldiers refused to attack the camp.

### ***After Sand Creek***

- The attack at Sand Creek united the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Lakota, who launched a rare winter war campaign which swept across the plains.
- But some people still fought for a peaceful resolution to the trouble. Most notable were Maj. Edward Wynkoop, Lt. Silas Soule, and Chief Black Kettle.
- By 1866 however, the moderates were shut out. Wynkoop was reassigned to a remote outpost, Black Kettle was losing power to the Cheyenne war chiefs, and Silas Soule was assassinated in Denver.

### ***Battle of the Washita***

- With the Civil War over, a whole new group of officers headed west to deal with the Indians. One of these officers was the dashing and arrogant **George Armstrong Custer**.
- In November of 1868, Custer's 7th Cavalry attacked the last large camp of Cheyenne near the Washita River in western Oklahoma.
- Washita marked the end of Indian resistance on the Southern Plains. Most of the Cheyenne moved onto reservations, while some of the warriors moved north to join the Lakota Sioux.



**Who is this?**

### **Personal Reflection:**

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# Lecture 9.8 • *Conquest by Kindness*

## ***The Reservations***

- On the reservations, Indians faced disease, starvation, and dishonest officials who stole their government-issued supplies.
- The Dawes Act of '87 attempted to reform the reservations by ...
  1. It gave white Indian agents the authority that the tribal chiefs used to have.
  2. It divided the reservations into small plots of land for individual Indian farmers to own.
  3. It provided money to "Americanize" the Indians by teaching them white customs and language, and converting them to Christianity.



**Some historians believe that the Nazis looked to the Indian reservations as an inspiration for what?**

## ***A New Kind of War***

- So, what started out in the 1860s as a military war, a war of direct action, by 1890 turned into a war of self-image and cultural transformation.
- The chief weapon used against the Indians was no longer the rifle. In its place came the boarding school.

## ***Boarding Schools***

- From the moment Indian children arrived at boarding school, everything from their old life was destroyed.
  1. Their clothes were taken and replaced with school uniforms.
  2. Boys and girls alike had their hair cropped short.
  3. Children were given new English names.
  4. And Christianity was forced upon them as the only acceptable religion.
- Without a new generation to carry on the old traditions, the Indian way of life came closer & closer to vanishing completely.

## ***The End?***

- But ... it's impossible to completely destroy a culture, and on the reservations, over the last 120 years, the old ways have refused to die ...

### **Personal Reflection:**

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