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FROM BUFFALO TO BEEVES: CATTLE AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE OGLALA LAKOTA, 1750-1920

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

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Abbreviations

CIA	Commissioner of Indian Affairs
NARA	National Archive Records Administration
NARA-KC	National Archive Records Administration-Kansas City
RG	Record Group
SC	Special Cases
SOI	Secretary of Interior
OIA	Office of Indian Affairs

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Abstract

An exceptional dichotomy emerged within Oglala Lakota society between 1851 and 1868. During this liminal early reservation period, as buffalo numbers dwindled and tribal mobility diminished, the Oglala Lakota developed a dynamic economic strategy founded on the creation of a tribal cattle herd. They based their decision upon intimate environmental knowledge, a clear understanding of the emerging regional cattle industry initiated by white entrepreneurs, and their unfamiliarity concerning agricultural pursuits exhorted by the American federal government. Cattle formed not only the foundation of the Oglala's reservation economy; they provided an opportunity to maintain familiar cultural practices within the milieu of the nomadic equestrian society.

Obstacles such as an unyielding demand by the federal government to implement a farming economy, extensive competition from white ranchers, limited access to regional or local markets, excessive institutional control by Indian agents, and tribal factionalism failed to prevent the tribe from pressing on toward its goal. Following the Dawes Act of 1887, and the subsequent Sioux Bill of 1889 tribal leaders on Pine Ridge Reservation struggled to thwart allotment. Ultimately unsuccessful, these leaders next strove to prevent leasing of tribal lands to off-reservation cattle operations. Unfortunately, during WWI the tribe sold most of it's herd for the war effort at the strong recommendation of the federal government and its agents. With few cattle remaining on Pine Ridge leasing moved apace through the

machinations of the off-reservation cattle interests eager to utilize tribal lands. By 1920 conditions of economic impotence and poverty arose. This pernicious situation remains relatively unchanged today.

Uniquely, this study fuses Lakota oral history and extensive archival research within an ethnohistorical framework. Other topics addressed include aspects of Oglala spatial relationships to boundaries, loci of power, and whites both on and off the reservation. Moreover, Oglala connections to both regional and national economic developments are examined in order to provide a richer historical context. My work fills a tremendous void within Lakota historiography and asks scholars to reexamine nascent reservation periods within larger historical contexts as well as misconceptions concerning Native American's "resignation" to reservation life.

INTRODUCTION

During 1875 negotiations concerning the Lakota's relinquishment of the Black Hills to the United States Oglala Lakota Chief Red Cloud stated that "for seven generations to come I want our Great Father to give us Texan steers for our meat."[1] Brulé band Chief Spotted Tail stated that if the Lakota were forced to surrender *Paha Sapa* then he desired a vast amount of money. "The amount must be so large that the interest will support us…I will trade some of it for stock to raise cattle…we want some good cattle every year."[2] These two statements reveal the beginning of significant evolutions in Lakota political economy during the early years of the tribes' confinement on The Great Sioux Reservation. Both Red Cloud and Spotted Tail understood that the familiar buffalo-centered culture enjoyed by the Lakota was coming to an end. The Lakota needed to create a new tribal economy if they wanted to maintain their way of life autonomously within reservation boundaries. To this end cattle came to occupy the center of economic hope in a world of restricted mobility and marked by increased federal interference.

This study will examine the Oglala Lakota's political economy during the liminal period between 1750 and 1920 when the tribe experienced dramatic cultural transformations. First, the tribe embraced an equestrian nomadic lifestyle upon the northern Great Plains and subsequently tapped into

[1] Robert W. Larson, *Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 192.
[2] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 44th Cong., 1st sess., 1875-1876, Serial No. 1680, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1876) The Oglala's council with the federal government's representatives is found on pp. 690-693.

the greatest resource available within the thermodynamic ecology of the Great Plains, buffalo. However, the tribe then faced the concomitant pressure of a quickly expanding United States and the loss of the buffalo during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Finally, as the Oglala came to grips with both events they sought to maintain cultural continuity through the creation of a self-sustaining communally owned cattle herds. This dissertation will provide new insights into both Native American and Oglala tribal historiography.

The historiography of both Lakota specific studies, and more general Native American studies, is filled with tribal and reservation monographs. Early narratives pertaining to the Lakota, such as George E. Hyde's 1937 classic, *Red Cloud's Folk,* portrayed themes of tribal grandeur, military victories, and ultimate defeat to ineluctable United States expansion.[3] Grand narratives such as this epitomized the consensus era of history dominated early histories pertaining specifically to the Lakota, or Sioux, as they are more popularly known. These works often related the stories of Lakota bands by focusing on the tribe's great leaders during the latter half of the nineteenth century. While these monographs focused on these great Lakota chiefs they sought to detail each band's struggle for independence against the invading white men. Stanley Vestal published, *Sitting Bull: Champion of the Sioux*, in 1932, while George Hyde introduced *Red Cloud's Folk* in 1937, *A Sioux Chronicle* in 1956, and *Spotted Tail's Folk* in 1961.[4] These books were all

[3] George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1937).
[4] Stanley Vestal, *Sitting Bull: Champion of the Sioux* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1932); George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians* (Norman:

well written, popular, and portrayed the Lakota as noble warriors struggling to control events that inexorably carried the tribe towards destruction. However, the end of the tribes' power is noted to be an acceptable, if tragic, sacrifice in the wake of American progress and the nation's climb towards greatness. Other authors sought to use an examination of one individual's life as a vehicle to reveal tribal history.

Stanley Vestal set out to rediscover the real story of Sitting Bull in, *Sitting Bull*. At the time of the book's publication the great chief possessed an unflattering image in American History. In a beautifully written and enjoyable style Vestal recounts the life of a great Hunkpapa Lakota chief. He found Sitting Bull worthy of praise rather than vilification for his actions, and wondered when the state of South Dakota would erect a memorial for its greatest son. (That event is long overdue!)

In, *Red Cloud's Folk* and *A Sioux Chronicle*, Hyde tells the story of the Oglala Lakota between the mid-eighteen hundreds and 1890. The first book examines the Oglala's rise to dominance on the Northern Great Plains until their crowning victory over Custer at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. The second account picks up where the first left off, and looks at the early reservation years and the hardships the tribe faced that led to the final confrontation of Wounded Knee in 1890. Much like Vestal, Hyde tells an exciting and gripping story meant to entertain as well as enlighten. Hyde's other work, *Spotted Tail's Folk*, is written in much the same vernacular.

University of Oklahoma Press, 1937); George E. Hyde, *A Sioux Chronicle* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956); and George E. Hyde, *Spotted Tail's Folk: A History of the Brule Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961).

However, the latter two works, published in 1957 and 1961, presented a more objective picture of Indian-white relations.[5] Despite this historiographic evolution Native American's perspective concerning history remained absent from Vestal and Hyde's works. Nonetheless, the Lakota were beginning to lose the moniker of the "noble savage," and be studied as fellow citizens of the Great Plains rather than saints on horseback. This realignment of historical perspective continued during the 1960s as historical scholarship sought new avenues of exploration.

One such study emerged in 1963 in Robert Utley's, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation*, which marked 1890 and the Battle of Wounded Knee as the end of the Lakota tribe for two reasons.[6] First, it was the tribe's final military action and resulted in a devastating defeat. Secondly, and more importantly, Utley believes that the disintegration of the Ghost Dance religion provided the United States a psychological victory over the tribe. The Oglala no longer believed that they could return to their old ways once Wovoka's predictions of the great millennium proved false. Unfortunately, in this work Utley presented Lakota history from a non-Indian perspective and implied the tribe "vanished" after 1890. By doing so he unintentionally relegated both Lakota, and all 20th century Native American History, to historical irrelevance. This is understandable considering contemporary works of the time universally viewed Indian history as existing only when they fought valiantly against American westward expansion.

[5] Hyde, *A Sioux Chronicle*, and Hyde, *Spotted Tail's Folk*.
[6] Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).

Three decades later Utley published a fundamentally different study concerning the Lakota, *The Lance and the Shield: The Life and Times of Sitting Bull*. Utley's work, along with Robert W. Larson's, *Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioux*, again used noted tribal leaders as a vehicle to provide a richer and more balanced tribal history from an Indian perspective.

While both authors provide their readers with a well-written and sometimes fascinating account of Sitting Bull and Red Cloud's lives they fail to fully examine Lakota cultural. Missing from both manuscripts is an examination of Lakota social structure and kinship relationships in relation to both their relation to and influence on tribal political and economic strategies within a reservation setting. Moreover, both studies fundamentally end their stories shortly after the Ghost Dance revival and the subsequent Battle of Wounded Knee. Utley deserves some leeway concerning this flaw because Sitting Bull, the focus of his study, died shortly after the late November conflict. As for Larson, he provides about ten pages of his final chapter to Red Cloud's life after 1890. This despite the fact Red Cloud lived until December 10th, 1909 while maintaining his leadership role within the Oglala Lakota the entire time.[7]

[7] Robert Utley, *The Lance and the Shield: The Life and Times of Sitting Bull* (New York: Holt Press, 1993); and Robert W. Larson, *Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997). Interestingly, the subtitle of Larson's study provides a subtle example of the misunderstanding many historians cause within the general public concerning the tribe's name. The term "Lakota Sioux" is redundant. Sioux being the Ojibwe name bastardized by the French to refer to the Lakota, and Lakota being the name the tribe used to refer to itself. A more accurate subtitle would have been *Warrior-Statesman of*

The most recent monograph concerning the Lakota provides a wonderfully argued thesis regarding the 1890 battle of Wounded Knee. Jeffrey Ostler, in *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee*, refutes the accepted belief that Lakota Ghost Dancers developed a military aspect toward their ceremonies and sought to defeat the whites through force of arms. In this work Ostler superbly provides a narrative of events from a Native perspective. He employs a sound theoretical framework to emphasize his extensive research, and in doing so make an invaluable contribution to both Lakota and Native American historiography. However, this work demonstrates a continued fascination with the importance of Wounded Knee as being either the "end" of Lakota history or the most notable turning point in Lakota history. Neither is accurate. As my study will reveal the themes of identity, spatial perceptions of power, and political economy reveal far more concerning the Oglala Lakota's early reservation existence.[8]

Oglala tribal identity emerged as a tremendously important issue as the tribe sought to implement its new economic designs. A division occurred between factions within the tribe based primarily upon blood quantum. Mixed blood members of the tribe, often allied with white men married to Native women, sought to redirect and control reservation economies. While this bifurcation was not universally delineated by blood the division between

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the Oglala Lakota, which refers to Red Cloud's tribe, the Oglala, and his "national" affiliation of Lakota. It is like saying "George W. Bush: President of America and the United States."

[8] Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

mixed bloods and full bloods remained a constant point of contention throughout the period of this study.[9]

Dramatic cultural changes also occurred between 1750 and 1920 pertaining to Oglala concepts of both geographical space and its relation to political and economic power centers. The Lakota's westward migration to the open expanses of the Great Plains, and their acquisition of the horse, reshaped the way the tribe conceived geographic space.[10] The mobility provided by the horse greatly expanded their immediate view of the size of both the world itself and their own territorial boundaries. One became much larger, while the

[9] For an examination of the complexities and manifold effects of the topic of blood quantum as a defining aspect of Native American culture and identity see, Pauline Turner Strong and Barrik Van Winkle's, "'Indian Blood'": Reflections on the Reckoning and Refiguring of Native North American Identity," *Cultural Anthropology,* Vol. 11, No. 4, Resisting Identities (Nov. 1996), 547-576; Alexandra Harmon's, "Lines in the Sand: Shifting Boundaries between Indians and Non-Indians in the Puget Sound Region," *The Western Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 26, No. 4 (Winter, 1995), 429-453, explores Native American identity as juxtaposed against neighboring Anglo society; the idea that Native American identity is both persistent and constantly evolving is examined in both, Morris W. Foster's, *Being Comanche: A Social History of an American Indian Community* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991) and Loretta Fowler's books, *Arapahoe Politics, 1851-1978: Symbols in Crises of Authority* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982) and, *Shared Symbols, Contested Meanings: Gros Ventre Culture and History, 1778-1984* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); the differing effects of blood quantum coupled with concepts of private property and material culture in the development of tribal identity are revealed in Thomas Biolsi's, "The Birth of the Reservation: Making the Modern Individual among the Lakota," *American Anthropologist,* Vol. 22, No. 1 (Feb. 1995), 28-53, and David Rich Lewis's, "Reservation Leadership and the Progressive-Traditional Dichotomy: William Wash and the Northern Utes, 1865-1928," *Ethnohistory,* Vol. 38, No. 2 (Spring 1991), 124-148; a superior study that explores the concept of identity and its relationship to evolving Native American political economy in the face of market capitalism is found in Brian C. Hosmer's, *American Indians in the Marketplace: Persistence and Innovation Among the Menominees and Metlakatlans, 1870-1920* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999).

[10] For an noted study of Lakota cultural delineation before their migration to the Great Plains see, Gary Clayton Anderson's, *Kinsmen of Another Kind: Dakota-White Relations in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1650-1862* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); for a insightful examination of the cultural evolution that occurred when Native American tribes sought a nomadic equestrian way of life see, Elliott West's, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); for an account of the migration itself see, Richard White's, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *The Journal of American History,* Vol. 65, No. 2 (September, 1978), 319-343.

other could be more easily negotiated and thus flexible.[11] The Oglala's return to the Black Hills, or *Paha Sapa,* meant the emergence of cosmological power centers that were geographically fixed. At the same time tribal shamans represented mobile conduits to of *Wakan Tanka*, or the Great Mystery, as they sought to bring order out of chaos.[12] Concurrently, economic and political power became more diffuse as Oglala population spread across the increasingly vast landscape. Confinement on a reservation significantly altered geographical relationships and concepts regarding political and economic power.[13]

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[11] For a general discussion that examines the inevitable evolution of spatial concepts during the early reservation period see, James Taylor Carson, "Ethnogeography and the Native American Past," *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 49, No. 4, (Fall, 2002), 769-788; an overall context of spatial theory is outlined in, Stephan Graham and Patsy Healey's, "Relational Concepts of Space and Place: Issues for Planning Theory and Practice," *European Planning Studies,* Vol. 7, No. 5 (1999), 623-646, and Chapters 7-9 in Juan Cole's, *Sacred Space and Holy War: The Politics, Culture and History of Shi'ite Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2002); for an early study concerning spatial continuity during a period of significant cultural and geographical evolution see, Jesse O. McKee's, "The Choctaw Indians: A Geographical Study in Cultural Change," *The Southern Quarterly,* Vol. 9, No. 2 (January, 1971), 107-141; an examination of attempts by the United States government to control the Oglala through spatial fixing can be found in Matthew G. Hannah's, "Space and Social Control in the Administration of the Oglala Lakota ("Sioux"), 1871-1879," *Journal of Historical Geography,* Vol. 19, No. 4 (1993), 412-432.

[12] For studies concerning Lakota religion see, Raymond J. DeMallie and Douglas R. Parks, eds., *Sioux Indian Religion: Tradition and Innovation* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987); Raymond J. DeMallie and Elaine A. Jahner, eds., *Lakota Belief and Ritual* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991); Joseph Epes Brown, ed., *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953); and for a syncretic take on Christian-Oglala-Peyote religions see, Paul B. Steinmetz, *Pipe, Bible, and Peyote Among the Lakota: A Study I Religious Identity* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990); for more dialectical studies concerning Catholicism and Oglala spirituality see, Clyde Holler, *Black Elk's Religion: The Sun Dance and Lakota Catholicism* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995); Raymond DeMallie, ed., *The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); Michael F. Steltenkamp's, *Black Elk: Holy Man of the Oglala* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993); and Linea Sundstrom's, "Mirror of Heaven: Cross-Cultural Transference of the Sacred Geography of the Black Hills," *World Archaeology,* Vol. 28, No. 2, Sacred Geography (October, 1996), 177-189.

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[13] Price, Catherine, *The Oglala People, 1841-1879 A Political History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).

Other studies have begun to explore the evolution of political economies as tribes made the transition to reservation life. Thomas Biolsi's, *Organizing the Lakota,* examines the political economy of the Brulé Lakota on Rosebud Reservation during the New Deal. In his work he presents a thesis of rapid tribal resignation to Office of Indian Affairs control because of economic impotence of reservation Indians and increased technologies of control. Such assessments minimize or ignore Native American's understanding and foresight regarding their future reservation existence and their persistence in their realization.

Works such as, *Parading Through History,* by Frederick Hoxie, and Melissa Meyer's, *The White Earth Tragedy,* seek to provide a native perspective to the transition from autonomous and independent Indian nations to a culturally restrictive reservation life.[14] Both of these studies brilliantly demonstrate both cultural continuity and agency during these liminal periods. However, Hoxie and Meyer, as well as others, overemphasize the abruptness of this transitional process. As a result, early reservation decisions concerning various tribes' economic and political future appear either reactive or determined by environmental factors, as Hoxie and Meyer respectively portray. The most notable studies concerning the evolution of political economy for tribes newly confined to reservations remain the classic work of Gary Clayton Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind,* first published in 1984,

[14] See, Frederick E. Hoxie's, *Parading Through History: The Making of the Crow Nation in America, 1805-1935* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Melissa L. Meyer's, *The White Earth Tragedy: Ethnicity and Dispossession at a Minnesota Anishinaabe Reservation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

and the more recent work of Brian Hosmer, *American Indians in the Marketplace,* published in 1999. These monographs provide comprehensive detail concerning the Dakota and Menominee/Metlakatlans' transformation as they faced confinement upon reservations. Both studies explore themes of identity and economic evolution as the tribes fought to maintain their culture. While these books provide important answers concerning the aforementioned themes, there are many questions pertaining to early reservation life that deserve exploration.[15]

My dissertation reveals that the Oglala Lakota developed and implemented a reservation economic strategy founded upon the creation of a tribal cattle herd. Their economic plan emerged because of both their recent historical experience and their societal structure, and through reasoned preparation. Through it they hoped to maintain social, political, and economic structures and relationships within their equestrian nomadic culture. Significantly, the Oglala strove to create a new life for themselves while facing significant alterations concerning their perception of space and place as it pertained to concepts of power and identity, and increased obstacles presented by an assimilationist United States government.

This study is an ethnohistorical study of Pine Ridge Reservation from 1868 to 1920. I believe the most effective method for revealing the cultural

[15] Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*; Hosmer, *American Indians in the Marketplace*; and for further study of the influence of capitalistic marketplace influences see, Alice Littlefield and Martha C. Knack's, eds., *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); and John H. Moore, "Kinship and Division of Labor in Cheyenne Society," in Alice Littlefield and Hill Gates, eds., *Marxist Approaches in Economic Anthropology: Monographs in Economic Anthropology, No. 9* (New York: University Press of America, 1991).

evolution on Pine Ridge during this period of societal metamorphosis is by studying the economic challenges, options, and strategies of the Oglala Lakota. Extensive research revealed both change and continuity with the Oglala society that resulted from the truncation of the tribe's nomadic way of life and subsequent emergence of the reservation culture. This work, which centers on the emergent cattle industry, will reveal that the Oglala responded to economic dependency with flexibility, adaptability, and a desire to provide for their own economic subsistence in order to maintain social and political autonomy. Moreover, the Oglala strove to maintain kinship and band ties, societal roles, and traditional leadership while concomitantly entering the regional and national marketplace during this liminal period.

The theoretical framework for this work is based on ethnohistorical methodologies and practices. This work employs an interdisciplinary approach through the inclusion of several fields of study—history, anthropology, ecology, geography, and spatial theory—in order to better analyze and contextualize my findings and then present them from the Native American point of view. Moreover, it ties such studies to larger historical themes and movements throughout the United States during the same period in order to incorporate Oglala history, and Native American history in a larger sense, as part of the larger narrative of American history. More importantly, this study tells the stories of individual inhabitants of Pine Ridge Agency/Reservation through federal records and accounts and reveal the

successes and failures, triumphs and tragedies, of Oglala Indians during these fifty odd years.

This study will reveal how the Oglala used concepts and practices of labor and capitalism to adjust to changing economic conditions and how that in turn affected the Oglala's cultural evolution within the reservation system. It will also show how concepts of gender, class, space, and religion changed as the federal government attempted to first socially and economically assimilate and acculturate the tribe, and then marginalize and ostracize the Oglala from white society and markets. The application of ethnohistorical methodology concerning my specific topic remains unexamined in the vast Lakota historiography. Moreover, this study will provide a historical narrative and methodological model to demonstrate how Native Americans responded to inevitable and wrenching cultural changes during such liminal periods.

Chapter One discusses the tribes transformation from a pedestrian woodland tribe to an equestrian nomadic tribe of the Northern Great Plains from 1750-1868. During the centuries prior to spatial confinement within reservation boundaries the Oglala possessed an incredibly complex, flexible, and yet well-defined relationships with the world in which all things were unified by their possession of *wakan,* or power. Cultural order was maintained, and chaos averted, by appeasing the myriad of *wakan* that inhabited the world. These powers existed both within the physical realms (horizontal geography) and metaphysical realms (vertical geography). Within their "vertical geography" the Oglala viewed space around them as inhabited

by beings of power stretching in all six directions. For example, the *wakan* of the four horizontal directions possessed vitally important cultural qualities: the west provided finality and power, the north wisdom, the east enlightenment and rebirth, and the south innocence and youth.

As the Lakota entered the reservation era and saw the buffalo, the foundation of their tribal economy, quickly disappearing they faced serious and decisive choices concerning their future. How would they provide for their survival and maintain their autonomy on the northern plains? For the Oglala band the choice seemed clear, make up for shortages in buffalo through the acquisition of cattle. But how and why did they come to that decision, and did all bands of the Lakota react to mounting economic pressure in a similar fashion? In order to answer this question one must examine both their economic options and tribal experiences over the preceding century, and compare it to another bands economic strategy during the period.

The core theme of this chapter states that the Oglala and Hunkpapa chose very different economic strategies during the early reservation years because of their very different historical experiences after the 1780s. The answer lies both in their historical experiences during the 19th century and their tribal structure. Lakota culture consisted of a loose confederation of seven tribes, themselves made up of various bands whose societal foundation consisted of patriarchal led family units called *tiospaye*.[16] Despite sharing the same language and culture these tribes operated independently of one another,

[16] Tiospaye are "sometimes defined as flexible exogamous residential units organized around a core of bilaterally related kin." See Paul M. Robertson, "The Power of the Land: Identity, Ethnicity, and Class among the Oglala, Lakota," (Ph.D. dissertation, Union Institute, 1995), 4.

which created a political atmosphere that promoted independent decision-making.[17] For example, after a brief flirtation with an agricultural way of life near the Missouri River in the 1770s the Oglala advanced west with the Brulé tribe in search of buffalo for an increased robe trade.[18]

As the Oglala moved west and south they removed themselves from contact with sedentary horticultural tribes, such as the Arikara and Hidatsa, and became ensconced within a nomadic buffalo-hunting milieu. However, the Hunkpapa remained near the Missouri River until the 1840s, when part of the tribe moved west to join in resting hunting grounds from the Crow. Most of the Hunkpapa remained near the Missouri River and remained in close contact with many sedentary agricultural tribes. Thus, by 1868 when the second Treaty of Fort Laramie was promulgated the Oglala tribe very likely had no living member that had any practical knowledge of horticulture. While the Hunkpapa undoubtedly viewed farming as a viable option to counter the dwindling buffalo numbers and an increasingly restricted nomadic lifestyle.

Nineteenth century tribal experiences greatly influenced the economic strategies for the Oglala and Hunkpapa. The Hunkpapa, who experienced intimate connections with sedentary horticulturalist tribes within their recent memory, preferred farming as a reservation economic foundation. Conversely, the Oglala, isolated from such sedentary societies since the

[17] See, George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1937), 21. This text offers an outstanding history of the Oglala, Lakota before 1877, their movements and inter and intra-tribal relations.
[18] Richard White, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 65, Issue 2 (September, 1978) 319-343.

1790s, overwhelmingly rejected a future of planting and harvesting as their economic hope. Instead they sought more immediately familiar economic strategies that involved riding herd and driving teams. Unfortunately, in the end neither achieved its goal of economic self-sufficiency and independence.

Chapter Two explores the transitional period in Oglala culture between 1869 and 1876 when the tribe first understood the need to seek new economic strategies in the face of reservation confinement and an increasingly intrusive United States government. With the creation of the Great Sioux Reservation the Lakota sought to maintain control of much of the northern plains and the resources available within that vast region. However, as buffalo began to disappear from the Northern Plains, the federal government, through a series of treaties, accepted responsibility for providing the Lakota with an adequate food supply.[19] For the Lakota, cattle came to represent an opportunity to continue their equestrian and nomadic way of life as a self-sufficient and independent people while reaching an accommodation with the expansionist and capitalistic United States. Despite the Oglala's ability to adapt, they met with many obstacles—including the ideology of assimilation and non-Indian

[19]*The Statutes at Large, Treaties and Proclamations, of the United States of America, from December 1867, to March 1869,* Edited by George P. Sanger, Counselor at Law, Vol. XV, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1869), 639. It was stated in the Treaty of Fort Laramie, Article X, concluded on April 29, 1868 that, "each Indian over the age of four years, who shall have removed to and settled permanently upon said reservation and complied with the stipulations of this treaty, shall be entitled to receive from the United States, for the period of four years after he shall have settled upon the reservation, one pound of meat...provided the Indians cannot furnish their own subsistence at an earlier date."

cattle interests—in their attempts to create a tribal cattle herd and negotiate a new way of life following the truncation of military options.[20]

Federal Indian policy, based upon assimilation ideology founded on the superiority of the yeoman farmer and carried out by "reformers" such as Richard Henry Pratt, negatively influenced the burgeoning Lakota cattle industry.[21] For example, in 1865 the United States government agreed to pay each individual Lakota, "at the rate of about fifteen dollars per head per annum in view of the fact that the buffalo and other game, by means of which

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[20] The historiography pertaining to Native American economies has evolved significantly over the last twenty years. Richard White's dependency theory stated Indian economic dependency upon the federal government stemmed from Native cultures introduction to the market economy and the resultant commodification of land, labor, and tribal resources. However, Brian Hosmer found within the Menominee and Metlaktlans a dynamic ability to adapt to a changing market economy without losing their cultural identity. David Rich Lewis also noted cultural adaptability in the face of an encroaching market economy for the Northern Ute, the Hupa, and the Tohono O'odham. However, Lewis also noted that these tribes found themselves severely restricted economically by their relegation to the periphery of American society, the loss of their land and resources, and the government's agrarian Indian policy. Much like the tribes studied by Lewis, the Oglala sought to create a subsistence economy that acculturated aspects of Native and American cultural constructs while facing the same economic limitations. The works cited here are in order—Richard White, *Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); Brian C. Hosmer, *American Indians in the Marketplace: Persistence and Innovation Among the Menominees and Metlaktlans, 1870-1920* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999); and David Rich Lewis, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog: American Indians, Environment, and Agrarian Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). My study is also significantly influenced by Peter Iverson's, *When Indians Became Cowboys: Native Peoples and Cattle Ranching in the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), which reveals that Native Americans used cattle ranching as a strategy to confront changing times, how it was an attempt to redefine themselves as a culture while maintaining tribal identity and individual self-esteem. However, while Iverson states, "cattle ranching emerged, therefore, as a symbol of a new day," (14) my study reveals the "new day" for the Oglala never found a chance to burst forth and fulfill its promise.

[21] Bernard Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974). See "Part Two" for a discussion of this ideology and belief system. Frederick Hoxie proposes a fundamental shift in American concepts pertaining to assimilation after 1880. He found a change from the desire for complete assimilation and eventual homogenizing of races, to a new concept of coexistence of diverse races, with Native Americans occupying a fixed place on the bottom of the new social scale and on the periphery of American civilization. Frederick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); and David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995), 39.

these nomadic tribes subsist, are being driven from the country by the whites who traverse it."[22] However, the federal government misguidedly favored farming over ranching on the arid Great Plains. The federal government stated in an 1865 Treaty that its policy toward the tribe centered on cultivation rather than ranching despite environmental realities.[23] For example, in 1865 the United States stipulated the Lakota promise not to impede tribal members from pursuing agricultural interests. Moreover, the federal government promised twenty-five dollars per person for Indians engaged in cultivation, ten dollars more than Indians otherwise inclined. The treaty also promised the Oglala if one hundred lodges gathered in one area for agricultural reasons the U. S. must provide an agency and employ a farmer for their instruction.[24]

Events in the eastern United States also conspired to impede the establishment of a viable Lakota cattle industry. The Depression of 1873 greatly increased the demand for gold in order to bolster a flagging economy and further finance a growing Industrial Revolution. Such demands ultimately led to Colonel Custer's illegal expedition to the Black Hills in 1874, where gold was discovered. During an 1875 meeting to discuss relinquishment of the Black Hills the Lakota evinced their own understanding of the value of cattle and the future benefits offered by a tribal herd. The United States offered $25,000 total for tribal hunting rights, the Oglala

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[22] Executive Documents, The House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 39th Cong., 2nd sess., 1866-1867, Serial No. 1284 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867), 5.
[23] Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction*, 7-12.
[24] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 39th Cong., 2nd sess., 1866-1867, Serial No. 1284, (Washington: Government Printing Office), 5.

demanded the equivalent of the money to be paid in cattle, horses, harnesses and wagons. Chief Spotted Tail stated, "I want to live on the interest of my money. (Received for the loss of the Black Hills)…I will trade some of it for stock to raise cattle…we want some good cattle every year." According to the "Final Proposition of Council IV of 1875" the United States government promised to pay the Lakota for the loss of the Black Hills, "$50,000 for ten years to be paid in good American cows and other livestock, and in such implements of husbandry as are convenient to stock-growing and as may be deemed advisable by the President."[25] While these negotiations failed, the United States later forced the Lakota to cede the Black Hills by threats of withholding annuities and military action.

Early attempts of the Lakota to establish a tribal cattle herd failed in the face of various governmental policies. Farming continued as the focus of federal policy despite the local Indian Agent's own objections. In 1875 Agent J. J. Saville stated in his report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that, "the primary question of civilization is subsistence. This question presents peculiar difficulties in this country. If the Indians become self-supporting, it must be by the same pursuits that the white people engage in, viz, stock-raising."[26] Nonetheless, cattle continued to be supplied to the Lakota only for slaughter in order to meet the government's obligations. [27]

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[25] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 44th Cong., 1st sess., 1875-1876, Serial No. 1680, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1876) 690-693.
[26] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 44th Cong., 1st sess., 1875-1876, Serial No. 1680, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1876) 753.
[27] *Statutes at Large*, 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, 639.

Chapter Three looks at the first concerted efforts of the Oglala to create a self-sustaining communal cattle herd and the effects of further United States governmental manipulation of Oglala culture between 1877 and the Sioux Bill of 1889. During this period the Lakota experienced both increased success at building a tribal herd and further obstacles to the herd's stability and growth. The numbers of tribally owned cattle steadily increased during this period, both from breeding efforts and government issued stock, to approximately 7,000 head by 1888. Agent V.T. McGillycuddy noted that the, "Indians have almost invariably herded their cattle well, and have raised young stock in considerable numbers."[28]

However, new obstacles appeared to hinder the establishment of a sustainable herd. These included increased factionalism between full blood Lakota and "white-husbands" and mixed blood Lakota, the divergent aims of these two groups.[29] Full bloods wished to maintain a common herd to provide for all Lakota, while the others increasingly sought personal gain at the expense of the tribe. Many of the latter groups aided off-reservation white cattle operations by trespassing their cattle on tribal lands. Moreover, increased governmental control of tribal cattle operations sought to institute an individually owned market based system on the reservation. The most significant event to hinder tribal cattle operations occurred in 1889. The

[28] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., 1879-1880, Serial No. 1910, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), 75, 104, 145, and 355.

[29] "White-husbands" is a term I will use to replace the historic term "squawmen," which my tribe finds exceedingly offensive. I chose this term because the white men who married Indian women to gain access to Indian lands, ration, and annuity rights were taking advantage of both the situation and the tribe as a whole.

Sioux Bill passed on March 2nd, due mostly to pressure from surrounding white cattle interests, which reduced the Great Sioux Reservation by nine million acres and separated the tribe onto six smaller reservations, with the Oglala remaining in southwestern South Dakota on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.[30]

For the ceded land the entire Lakota nation received a twenty year extension of the educational provisions of the 1868 Treaty, thirty new day schools, farm equipment, $1,000,000 of excess money from ceded land sales, and 26,000 head of stock cows and 1,000 bulls.[31] The Oglalas' share of stock came to 7,520 cows and 300 bulls.[32] The tribe's request for such large numbers of cattle revealed the vital role the Oglala hoped cattle might play in their economic future.

Chapter Four details the Oglala's attempt to thwart the allotment plans of the federal government despite increased tribal division and economic interference. Between 1890 and 1904 the tribe managed to postpone allotment through various political and economic strategies. The disparity between the goals of the full blood majority and a mixed blood minority continued to widen during these years. The beef ration had been cut in half in 1886 because of a new census and many Indians, mostly full bloods, ate their

[30] Frederick Hoxie argues correctly that western politicians as well as eastern reformers led the drive for allotment in order to gain access to Indian land and resources. See, Hoxie, *A Final Promise*.
[31] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 50th Cong., 2nd sess., 1888-1889, Serial No. 2637, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), LXXIII.
[32] Letter received by Captain Penney from Commissioner D. Browning, March 13, 1895, General Records, Box 17, Jan. 6, 1891-march 28, 1895, Subject Arrangement: Finance, RG 75, NARA-KC.

beef issue. While in 1889 the number of tribally owned cattle stood at 10,968 head, by 1891 it dropped to 7,982.[33] This decrease occurred because Oglala often slaughtered their stock animals in order to survive, such as in 1890 when the tribe was forced to eat 700,000 pounds of their own stock to survive the winter.[34] The loss of almost 3,000 head occurred predominantly in herds owned by full bloods. The numbers also offer a view into the growing economic disparity on the reservation between the two groups. The mixed bloods and "advantage-men" owned 80% of the cattle on the reservation yet made up only 20% of the overall population. Moreover, mixed bloods and "advantage-men" received the lions share of governmental supplies and either legally or illegally sought to control reservation resources supporting the cattle herds, such as cedar posts, water, grazing lands, and wire.

Government Indian Agents and other bureaucrats exacerbated this growing economic and social division, either knowingly or unwittingly, by favoring "the more progressive" sorts of Indians, who were inevitably mixed bloods operating in the regional market economy. Evidence of this appears in letters, invoices, and receipts that reveal that not only were mixed bloods better supplied but they also provided 75% of the Indian cattle sold to the government to meet its ration obligations during this period. Nonetheless, the Oglala as a tribe, both full blood and mixed blood, continued to either labor,

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[33] The 1889 herd size can be found in, Executive Document, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1889-1890, Serial No. 2725, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 156. The 1891 herd size can be found in, Paul M. Robertson, "The Power of the Land," 56.

[34] Executive Document, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 51st Cong., 2nd sess., 1890-1891, Serial No. 2841, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891), 50.

raise stock or crops, and hunt in order to supplement the government's notoriously meager rations.

Chapter Five examines the last struggles of the Oglala on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation to implement their economic vision. The final threat to their vision emanated from the desire of the federal government to lease tribal lands to off-reservation cattle businesses. Two economic developments largely inform this era: the simultaneous threats of allotment and leasing on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The passing of the Dawes Allotment Act of 1889 had yet to greatly affect the Oglala on Pine Ridge before the Burke Act, which declared that the Secretary of the Interior could deem Indians "competent" and thus be granted fee simple title to their allotments. Shortly following the Burke Act allotment on Pine Ridge moved at a greatly increased rate because white farmers and ranchers desirous of Indian lands saw a golden opportunity. Once and Indian was granted fee simple title to land he or she could sell the land immediately, and avoid the 25 year trust period implemented by the 1889 Dawes Act. As a result the Lower Brulé, Rosebud, and Pine Ridge Reservations were soon divested of large tracts of land. Allotment proceeded on Pine Ridge until the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934.

Despite many obstacles the Oglala remained dynamic agents of their own futures throughout the early reservation era. They consciously sought to implement a sustainable Lakota cattle herd as their new economic foundation, and when thwarted by various obstacles they diversified their economic strategies in order to provide for their tribe. The Oglala dynamically strove to maintain both their culture and tribal identity through the establishment of a sound reservation economy. And while they ultimately failed to maintain economic and political autonomy within the reservation system their culture

and tribal identity remain indelibly to this day.

CHAPTER ONE

Coming Home: The Return to *Paha Sapa*, 1750-1868

Beginnings are important. Our beginning is a simple one: there was only *Inyan* and *Han*, substance and blackness, one straining with the power of *Wakan Tanka* (The Great Mystery) the other only darkness. *Inyan* then poured his azure blood from his veins to create *Maka*, the earth. By the time the Lakota people emerged from beneath *Paha Sapa*, or the Black Hills, the world and its myriad powers and spirits and flora and fauna, already inhabited the earth. As the tribe's place of birth, the Black Hills, located in southwestern South Dakota and northeast Wyoming, occupies a vital spiritual and spatial place within Lakota culture. These dark and powerful peaks marked both the geographical location of life's genesis and the womb from which the tribe sprang. In other words, these hills are both the Lakota's primordial mother and home. It is the conduit and place of cultural birth. However, the emergence of the Lakota people upon the earth was a wrenching experience, much like any birth experience.[35]

The Lakota, like the buffalo, existed originally in the heart of the earth. Then one day *Iktomi*, the trickster god who possessed great wisdom and yet greater mischief, sought to bring *Pte*, or people, to the surface. You see, *Iktomi* grew tired of tormenting the animal peoples of the world. Their reactions to his pranks failed to satisfy the jokester because they lacked the capacity for embarrassment and humiliation. Humans seemed the perfect answer. Iktomi sought out Tokahe of the human people, and promised him a wonderful life in the world. As a demonstration of his credibility Iktomi had

[35] James R. Walker, Raymond J. DeMallie and Elaine A. Jahner, eds. *Lakota Belief and Ritual* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991) 50-54.

wolves leave a quantity of meat and hides in a cave near the surface of the earth and told Tokahe to partake in their sensual rewards. He convinced the wolves to do this by promising never to torment them again with his malicious pranks.

Once Tokahe partook in the meat and wore the furs he decided to take his family to live on the surface. *Iktomi* promised to provide for the people once they inhabited the earth. A debate ensued among the people, and finally Tokahe convinced six other families to venture to the surface to enjoy their new life. These seven families eventually grew into the seven tribes of the *Oćeti Śakowin,* or "Seven Council Fires", which made up the entire nation: the Mdewakanton, Wahpeton, Wahpekute, Sisseton (Dakota), Yankton, Yanktonai (Nakota), and Teton (Lakota).

Of course once *Iktomi's* plan came to fruition he abandoned the Lakota and reveled in their misery as they wondered the earth hungry and naked. Fortunately for the people, *Wazi* and *Kanka*, or the wizard and the witch, took pity upon the human people and showed them how to care for themselves in a chaotic and troublesome world. As the humans wandered across the earth much conflict existed between humans and other peoples, including the buffalo. Centuries later an Oglala Lakota named Left Heron noted that during this time "there was no social organization and the people ran around the prairie like so many wild animals."[36]

Thus ensued a time of great wondering as the Lakota left the region of *Paha Sapa* in order to make a life for themselves above ground. According to Lakota beliefs the tribe moved north and east, eventually reaching present day

[36] Raymond J. DeMallie and Douglas R. Parks, eds., *Sioux Indian Religion: Tradition and Innovation* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 30, 52.

Canada and the eastern United States. From there the Lakota migrated to the Ohio River Valley and Great Lakes regions near the headwaters of the Upper Mississippi River. It is location that historians first find reference to the Dakota tribe from observations of early fur traders. Spurred by a growingly remunerative trade in furs the French ventured as far west as present day Green Bay in search of pelts by 1639. There while trading with the Oupegon (Winnebago) a Frenchman named Nicollet first heard of a powerful nation 18 days journey west called the Dakotas. Within several decades of this encounter the Teton branch of the Dakota commenced their migration westward across the Great Plains to the Black Hills, back to the place of their birth. It would be a long and difficult journey, but one that led the Lakota to the zenith of Native American iconoclasm within American historical consciousness. However, most archaeologists and historians disagree considerably concerning the Lakota's place of origin.[37]

Contemporary academic studies argue that Siouan-speaking peoples originally migrated across the Bering Straits between 9,000 and 12,000 years ago. Recent studies also speculate that the groups that one day formed the tribes of the "Seven Council Fires" once belonged to the periphery of the great Mississippian Culture that dominated the Mississippi River valley and traded actively with tribes from the Atlantic Ocean to the Rocky Mountains, and from Canada to the Gulf Coast. This culture arose during seventh century and lasted until the fifteenth century when a combination of resource depletion and warfare (either internal, external, or both) ended the last and greatest of

[37] Daniel Buck, *Indian Outbreaks* (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, Inc., 1965) 11-15. See also, Gary Clayton Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind: Dakota-White Relations in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1650-1862* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1997); and Royal B. Hassrick, *The Sioux: Life and Customs of a Warrior Society* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964)

the mound building societies.[38]

Upon the collapse of the Mississippian Culture a significant period of tribal reorganization and regrouping occurred. Core societies closest to the center of Mississippian Culture at Cahokia near present day St. Louis, suffered the most wrenching adjustments. Out of the fragmentation of these groups arose tribes such as the Natchez and Caddo, Apalachee and Alabamos. Peripheral groups, those connected primarily through trade or language, struggled against one another for regional resources once the great trade network collapsed. These tribes included the Hodenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy) and Susquehannocks, and the Anishinaabe (Chippewa) and Dakota (Sioux). During the centuries following the collapse of the Mississippian Culture the *Oćeti Śakowin* are believed to have inhabited lands just west of the Great Lakes region. What is agreed upon by both the Lakota and historians is that following the Mississippian's collapse the Dakota culture of the "Seven Council Fires" developed a complex society well-adapted to this region. There they established themselves as a significant presence in what is today the state of Minnesota.[39]

It is important to note that the *Oćeti Śakowin* did not represent a true national political entity. Historically, the Iroquois occupy the most familiar model of political unity and connection at that level. The five tribes of the

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[38] Joseph B. Thoburn, "The Tropical and Subtropical Origins of Mound-Builder Cultures," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (March 1938), 97-117; John R. Swanton & Roland B. Dixon, "Primitive American History," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 16, No. 3 (September 1914), 376-412; Lyle Campbell, *American Indigenous Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), See chapter three for his discussion concerning Siouan language patterns.

[39] Thomas E. Emerson, *Cahokia and the Hinterlands: Middle Mississippian Cultures of the Midwest* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1991); John F. Scarry, ed., *Political Structure and Change in the Prehistoric Southeastern United States* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996); and Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., *500 Nations: An Illustrated History of North American Indians* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Publishers, 1994), 35-45.

Iroquois Confederacy (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk) created a central council of 250 men who sought a political consensus on decisions that affected the entire Iroquois Nation. This council was made up of 50 men from each tribe who had to weigh the concerns of their tribe against those of the entire nation. This type of political infrastructure and solidarity never emerged between the seven tribes of the *Oćeti Śakowin.* Undoubtedly, the tribes that comprised the "Seven Council Fires" consulted one another on topics of diplomacy, warfare, and trade; they did not function as one nation. Each tribe possessed the freedom to choose another path because no political consensus was ever sought at that level. Instead, the "Seven Council Fires" existed as a nation of people who shared a common language, religion, history, and social structure founded upon kinship relationships.[40]

This complex and adaptable society operated within a stratified political structure designed to provide both efficient economic production and effective political protection from disparate outside groups. Both villages and tribes formed councils to direct their affairs. Early historical records indicate that tribal councils focused mainly on diplomatic relations with other tribes. Council decisions required strong consensus among its members, usually arrived at after long discussion. As one may imagine, a chief's oratory skills played a central role in his success or failure as a leader of his people within this political framework. While it is worth noting that these accounts offer glimpses only into late 17th and early 18th Dakota culture, it is doubtful notable changes had yet occurred to political workings following contact with Europeans.

[40] The seminal work regarding the colonial era of the Iroquois Nation is, Daniel K. Richter's, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

Interestingly, most civil chiefs arose to their leadership position through paternal descent. However, this hereditary turnover of power rested solely upon each man's individual societal skills. A young man being groomed for power first needed to demonstrate his skills as a hunter and warrior, and then as a leader of these enterprises. He must also show a willingness to think first of the needs of his family and tribe over his own. To provide for his family and protect them from danger were his primary duties. Only after proving his worth in those tasks could he gain the ear of the tribal elders who led the council.[41]

The political and social foundation of *Oćeti Śakowin* culture lay with extended family units that, when they worked and lived together, formed larger and more politically complex villages and tribes. At the village level the councils of civil chiefs primarily discussed resource acquisition, development, allocation, and distribution, as well as both intra and inter-tribal diplomacy. At all political levels, extended family, village, and tribal, social relationships connected and maintained both a strong group affinity and identity. Blood, affinal, and fictive kinship ties provided reciprocal obligatory ties that helped alleviate intra-tribal conflicts and engender a communally focused outlook on life. This communal outlook aided considerably the economic wellbeing of the tribe following the loss of the considerable trade network that once emanated from Cahokia, the central and largest city within the last and greatest mound building culture.

Undoubtedly influenced by the political economy of the Mississippian Culture the Dakota developed a diverse economy founded upon trade, hunting by men, and both gathering and nominal agricultural production by women.

[41] Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind.*

The Dakota did not pursue agriculture more intensively because of the consistent availability of corn and other crops through active trade networks with tribes from both the Missouri River and Wisconsin areas. It is not clear if these trade networks were remnants of the fallen Mississippian Culture or newly formed regional links. In either case, this trade provided the Dakota sufficient corn and other crops to make extensive horticultural pursuits unnecessary to for the tribe.

Moreover, the ecological diversity of the region provided a wide variety of hunting and gathering opportunities. Numerous lakes and rivers yielded fish and waterfowl and the woods provided a bounty of game animals such as deer, moose, bear, beaver, elk, rabbit, and more. As the men and boys hunted the women gathered roots, nuts, berries, and during the early fall wild rice and corn. This environmental variety also influenced the Dakota's spatial mobility.

Because each ecosystem yielded its bounty at a different time of the month or year the Dakota remained perpetually on the move. One early account by André Pénigault noted that the tribe was, "always wandering," and rarely settled in one spot for more than eight days.[42] More significantly, the tribe's mobility allowed both flora and fauna time to recover their numbers once the Dakota moved toward new territory. Once the Dakota entered the market economy of the fur trade in the early eighteenth century their willingness to travel gave them access to both more numerous and diverse game. The Dakota widened their catch to include far more otter, mink, fisher, raccoon, badger, wolverine, martin and fox. Unfortunately, the Dakota hunted out most of the more valuable fur bearing critters within their territorial

[42] Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*, 2.

control by the late 1700s. By the early nineteenth century the vast majority of pelts acquired by the tribe came from muskrats, which failed to provide adequate resource exchange to significantly contribute to tribal sustenance.[43]

The Dakota tribe's mobility and need for large hunting areas in which to acquire sufficient foodstuffs may have expedited the geographical dispersal of the original tribes of the "Seven Council Fires": the Mdewakantons, Wahpetons, Wahpekutes, and Sissetons (known collectively as the Santee or Dakota) who remained near the headwaters of the upper Mississippi; the Yankton and Yanktonai (collectively called the Nakota) who migrated to the northern Great Plains territories in western Minnesota and eastern North Dakota, and the Teton (the Lakota) who eventually moved westward across the Great Plains and their eventual homecoming to the Black Hills region.[44]

During the period following the collapse of the Mississippian Culture the Oglala Lakota, members of the Teton branch of the Siouan peoples and the focus of this work, dwelt in the Ohio River Valley. The Lakota were comprised of seven different tribes. These were the Oglala, Brule, Hunkpapa, Minniconjou, San Arc, Two Kettles, and Sihasapa. It is the Oglala Lakota who will be the subject of the remainder of this study. They were forced to migrate westward by the wars prosecuted by the more organized and better-armed Iroquois in the early seventeenth century.[45] The Oglala then settled near the headwaters of the Mississippi River. They remained in this region until approximately 1670 when "abundant beaver and the ready food supply

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[43] Mary K. Whelan, "Dakota Indian Economics and the Nineteenth-Century Fur Trade," *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Spring, 1993), 246-276.
[44]Ibid; Richard White, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *The Journal of American History,* Vol. 65, No. 2 (September, 1978), 319-343.
[45]Herbert S. Schell, *History of South Dakota* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), 18.

provided by the buffalo herds lured them into the open lands."[46]

Continued migration of various bands of the "Seven Council Fires" bolstered both the numbers and momentum of the Lakota westward move. These bands sought both the new opportunities emerging on the plains and safety and peace from continued pressure of both the Anishinaabe, formerly referred to as the Chippewa, and Ohio River Valley migrants fleeing continued Iroquois attacks. A devastating defeat at the hands of the Anishinaabe in 1737 possibly provided even more incentive to other members of the "Seven Council Fires" to seek the trading opportunities offered by plains buffalo and beaver and the relative safety of the prairies. According to French records, over 500 Dakota died in a three day battle with the better armed Anishinaabe. Undoubtedly, facing such options many bands chose to follow the Lakota migration west.[47]

However, the Lakota's westward migration altered more than the tribe's geographical location. As the Lakota entered a new ecological and environmental reality it led to significant political, social, and economic changes within their culture. The acquisition of horse in the early eighteenth century more than any other factor influenced much of the Lakota's cultural transformation. As the Lakota moved across the Great Plains tribal population concentration dissipated as groups sought out the widely scattered buffalo herds. This population diffusion led to a political decentralization. Lakota political connections within the tribe, rooted in kinship relationships, remained in place, but became more egalitarian as mobility became more

[46] White, "The Winning of the West," 322.
[47] Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind, 47.*

necessary with the acquisition of the horse.[48]

As the Lakota transformed into an equestrian nomadic culture a pastoral way of life became necessary. Horses, like the buffalo, needed to move about almost constantly in order to find fresh grass and water after they had denuded an area of those resources. More importantly, horses greatly increased the tribe's geographic mobility. They moved farther and faster than they ever had before. This movement led Lakota political system to adapt to new demographic realities. As smaller concentrations of Lakota spread across the plains the chiefs lost physical connection to a significant portion of the tribal population. As a result there was not a need or inclination to either listen to or seek guidance concerning everyday life for tribal members. In other words, the demographic transformation that occurred following the migration from the Minnesota territory facilitated the evolution toward a more egalitarian political structure.

The transformation to a buffalo centered economy fundamentally altered the Lakota's political economy. As previously mentioned, the tribe became highly mobile as it shifted to a pastoral existence. However, the tribe also divested itself from its agricultural trade network and put less importance on the gathering or harvesting of the flora. The most significant practice that the Lakota abandoned centered on their fall harvesting of wild rice and corn in the months of September and October. This cultural transformation is most vividly seen in the differences that developed concerning the naming of the moons, or months, of the year. As demonstrated in Table No. 1, a clear

[48] For information concerning the dispersal of horses on the Great Plains see, Pekka Hämäläinen, "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Culture," *The Journal of American History* Vol. 90, No. 3 (December 2003), 833-862; and James F. Brooks, *Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), Chapters 5, 6.

environmentally influenced demarcation developed between the Dakota who remained in Minnesota territory and those who moved west onto the Great Plains.

The most notable differences occurred in spring and fall during the months of March, April, May, June, August, September, and November. All of these months reveal a dramatic shift from a horticultural focused economy to one centered on hunting buffalo. March shifted from a time of snow blinding conditions to a time when buffalo give birth. The month of April reveals a transportational change from canoe to horse. May changed dramatically from agriculture, The Planting Moon, to a pastoral focused month, The Moon When Ponies Shed. In June Strawberries are replaced by the rendering of fat from buffalo carcasses. And finally, August and September also marked a shift to pastoral, The Moon of Drying Grass and the Moon When Calves Grow Hair, from an agricultural, The Harvest Moon and the Moon when Rice is Laid up to Dry. Clearly, as the Lakota evolved they moved away from the more hierarchical political system they employed previously.[49]

[49] For reference to Dakota moons see, Whelan, "Dakota Indian Economics and the Nineteenth-Century Fur Trade," 249-250; For Lakota moons see, Hassrick, *The Sioux,* 174; and Walker, *Lakota Belief and Ritual*, 201-203.

Table No. 1: Calendar Comparison

Gregorian Calendar	Dakota Calendar	Lakota Calendar
January	The Hard Moon	Moon of Frost in Tepee
February	Raccoon Moon	Moon of Dark Red Calves
March	Sore-Eye Moon	Moon when Buffalo Drop Calves
April	Moon when Geese Lay Their Eggs *Or* Moon when Streams are again Navigable	Moon of Red Grass Appearing *Or* Moon when the ducks come back
May	The Planting Moon	Moon When Ponies Shed
June	Moon when Strawberries are ripe	Moon of Making Fat
July	Moon when the Choke Cherries are Ripe *Or* Moon when the Geese Shed their Feathers	Moon when Cherries are Ripe
August	Harvest Moon	Moon of Drying Grass
September	Moon when Rice is Laid up to Dry	Moon when Calves Grows Hair
October	Drying Rice Moon	Moon of Falling Leaves
November	Deer Rutting Moon	Moon of the Hairless Calves
December	Moon when Deer Shed Their Horns	Moon when Deer Shed Their Horns *Or* Tree Popping Moon

It should be noted that sources sometimes disagree as to which Gregorian months belong with which Dakota and Lakota moons. However, the differences are in wording with the exception of sometimes switching the Lakota naming for the months of December and January.

The devolution of the Lakota from a village or regional polity to a family centered society inherently brought about a shift toward political

egalitarianism. As a result of this political leveling Lakota bands became more politically flexible and adaptable. *Tiospaye* (extended family units) or bands possessed both the freedom to go their own way and choose their own strategies as well as the option of uniting for coordinated action against outside groups. For the Lakota's perception of the world viewed people as either kin or enemies.[50]

The Lakota's bifurcated perception of the world made them disagreeable neighbors for the tribes they came into contact with as they migrated west. For the Lakota, in fact for all *Oćeti Śakowin,* the world was comprised of either friends or enemies. Friends of the Lakota included only those with kinship ties, such as the Nakota and Dakota, or those with whom they traded. And the exchange of goods occurred only after first establishing social bonds through gift giving and reciprocal exchanges. Tribes such as the Otoe, Ponca, and Omaha enjoyed none of these positions and were forced to flee either southward or westward in the face of the Lakota advance.[51]

Unfortunately for these tribes, the Lakota followed, settling in the regions east of the Missouri River by the mid-eighteenth century. However, at this time the powerful Arikara nation temporarily halted the Lakota's westward advance. These more sedentary peoples at first fled before the Lakota during the first half of the century; however, bolstered by the acquisition of horses and metal weapons they successfully withstood the encroachment of the ambitious Lakota. The Arikara remained an obstacle to westward expansion until a smallpox epidemic swept away approximately

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[50] Allen W. Johnson & Timothy Earle, *The Evolution of Human Societies: From Foraging Groups to Agrarian State* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).
[51] Raymond DeMallie, ed., *Lakota Society* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 13-15, 84-86. See also Whelan, "Dakota Indian Economics and the Nineteenth-Century Fur Trade," 246-276.

80% of their population from 1772 to 1780. During the first half of the eighteenth century the Oglala Lakota, who with the Brulé spearheaded the Lakota advance, also obtained horses and began their journey toward western legend. Notably, when the Oglala crossed the Missouri River they numbered no more than twenty to forty lodges. Yet, "once across the Missouri their small numbers did not deter them from pushing boldly out into the open plains where they quickly obtained horses and were soon roving widely, hunting buffalo, and fighting enemies on all sides."[52]

Toward the end of the eighteenth century the Teton, Yankton, and Yanktonais remained on the eastern prairies. They maintained relations with the Dakota and attended their trade fairs, first at Blue Earth River and later at the Yanktonai settlements near the James and Cheyenne Rivers. While trade remained a significant part of Lakota political economy during this time the tribe turned more consistently toward buffalo hunting as their primary economic resource. They led a bi-annual existence centered on winter beaver trapping and summer buffalo hunts. The Lakota quickly came to dominated the territory east of the Missouri River, but well-armed and numerous agricultural tribes blocked further westward advancement.[53]

The powerful Arikara, and their northern neighbors the Mandan and Hidatsa, proved such a formidable obstacle that some bands of Lakota briefly settled near the Arikara and farmed. Moreover, further south on the Missouri River drainage the Omaha blocked a Lakota southern push. The Lakota

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[52]George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1937), 21. This text offers an outstanding history of the Oglala, Lakota before 1877, their movements and inter and intra-tribal relations.

[53] White, "The Winning of the West,"; and Pekka Hämäläinen, "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures," *The Journal of American History,* Vol. 90, No. 3 (December, 2003), 833-862.

continued to both trade for and raid for horses from these tribes; nonetheless, they lacked the strength to force a corridor across the Missouri River. Unfortunately for the sedentary agriculturalists, between 1780 and 1795 a smallpox epidemic swept through the Missouri River Valley. It especially devastated the more sedentary village tribes and as a result the Lakota pushed the remaining few Arikara villages north and opened a wide path for further westward migration.[54]

Shortly after the turn of the century French and Spanish traders demanded more buffalo hides, which led the tribe to turn further away from trapping and seek greater access to the vast buffalo herds of the northern plains. The conflicts that arose between the Lakota and other regional tribes evolved into a territorial war. As the Lakota turned more fully toward a buffalo-centered culture they inherently required access to both fertile hunting grounds and pasturage for their growing horse herds. For the Arikara, Mandan, and Hidatsa this eventually meant a form of servitude to the dominant Lakota tribes. For decades the Lakota demanded corn and other agricultural products from these tribes with either no, or very little, recompense. Moreover, after a rough introduction the Lakota found a new ally in their move toward regional control.[55]

In September of 1804 the Lewis and Clark Expedition had a rather tense meeting with a group of Lakota on the banks of the Bad River. Unimpressed with the threats or demands of the expedition the Lakota Chiefs firmly asked for tobacco and other goods. Tragedy was averted when the

[54] Ibid.
[55] White, "The Winning of the West," 1978; and Hämäläinen, "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures," 2003. James O. Gump, *The Dust Rose Like Smoke: The Subjugation of the Zulu and the Sioux* (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

Lakota Chief Black Buffalo allowed the American party to continue on its way despite what the tribe viewed as rather meager gifts of tobacco and a few medals and a hat. Despite this less than peaceful introduction the United States eventually became close allies of the Lakota through both trade and military aid. For example, the Lakota aided at least two punitive American expeditions against the Arikara during the first quarter of the 1800s. Moreover, in 1838 Joshua Pilcher, the upper Missouri agent for the United States, sent his report to Congress claiming that no greater friend to the Untied States existed within his jurisdiction.[56]

By the 1830s the Oglala and Brulé tribes reached the Black Hills and formed an alliance with the Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapahoe. The Lakota continued to maintain access to American goods; the most important being guns, powder and shot, through trade with the American Fur Company, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, or free traders. However, tensions on the northern plains rose as the fur trade dwindled and competition between tribes led to almost constant warfare over hunting and grazing territory.[57]

These tensions were exacerbated with the opening of the Oregon Trail and flow of migrants across the Great Plains. The American settlers brought disease and hunger to several bands of Lakota. By 1845 the Oglala complained that the settlers had hunted out the buffalo north of the Platte River. The United States government, hoping to lesson these growing tensions and protect American lives purchased Fort Laramie from the American Fur Company and turned into a military post. The United States

[56] Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 165-175; White, "The Winning of the West," 1978; and Hämäläinen, "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures," 2003.
[57] Robert W. Larson, *Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

Congress provided funds for a peace conference at Horse Creek in 1851, after considerable lobbying from Colonel David D. Mitchell, in order to bring peace to the region. Eight tribes, including the Lakota, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Shoshone, and Crow signed the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie. However, from the Lakota perspective the treaty merely confirmed their territorial conquests and did not require that they cease their expansion. As a result inter-tribal warfare continued unabated.[58]

This shift toward almost constant warfare meant that warrior societies and war chiefs gained considerable political influence within Lakota culture. While the tribe's social structure remained centered around the *tiospaye* the flexible nature of this system allowed larger groups to gather either for the purpose of defense or raiding. In these cases tribal war chiefs possessed unusual power over these extended gatherings. Other cultural evolutions are worth examining in relation to the Lakota's migration to the Great Plains.[59]

As previously mentioned, as the tribe changed their geographical location a concomitant evolution occurred within Lakota society itself. The beginning of the eighteenth century saw dramatic shifts in Lakota economic and political structure as the tribe migrated to the prairies and plains and started hunting the vast herds of buffalo that occupied these grasslands. Prior to this migration the Lakota occupied deciduous woodlands forests spider-webbed with abundant waterways. The Dakota used canoes as their primary method of transportation, and proceeded on foot otherwise. They harvested wild rice, maple sugar, and corn, and hunted the disparate variety of game animals that occupied headwaters of the Mississippi River. Furthermore, they

[58] Larson, *Red Cloud,* 1997; and White, "The Winning of the West," 1978.
[59] Hassrick, *The Sioux,* 1964; Larson, *Red Cloud,* 1997; Catherine Price, *The Oglala People, 1841-1879 A Political History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).

possessed a stratified political structure where leadership was often hereditary. After the western migration toward the Great Plains from Minnesota, the Lakota could be characterized as loosely organized pastoral equestrian nomadic hunters who depended upon vast herds of buffalo.[60]

From the period between 1750 and 1868 the Oglala people also experienced dramatic changes within their material culture. In the mid-eighteenth century the tribe used dog and human power to traverse the open plains. With the acquisition and utilization of horses as beasts of burden the tribe dramatically increased its range. An Indian pony could carry eight times more than an Indian dog and travel three times farther in a single day. As a result the tribe possessed the ability to greatly expand their material possessions. Trade items acquired from various operations, including the Hudson Bay Company, accumulated within Lakota families. [61]

However, the most significant contribution made by the horse was as a hunting tool. Mounted hunters provided the tribe far greater accessibility to the vast herds of buffalo that roamed the plain's oceans of grasslands. It was during this century and a half that buffalo became the center of Lakota culture and economy. Buffalo provided the tribes with food from the meat and organs, shelter and clothing from its hides, and much more. Without the vast herds of buffalo it is doubtful that the Lakota, or any other Great Plains tribe, such as the Blackfoot or Comanche, would have possessed such great numbers or power in their respective territories. It is also significant to note

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[60] Whelan, "Dakota Indian Economics and the Nineteenth-Century Fur Trade," 246-276; Kathleen Pickering, "Decolonizing Time Regimes: Lakota Conceptions of Work, Economy, and Society," *American Anthropologist,* Vol. 106, No. 1, New Series (March, 2004), 85-97;Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*; Royal B. Hassrick, *The Sioux: Life and Customs of a Warrior Society* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964).

[61] H. Clyde Wilson, "An Inquiry into the Nature of Plains Indian Cultural Development," *American Anthropologist*, (1963, vol. 65), 355-369.

that buffalo played a central role within Oglala religion, and the sudden loss of the great herds undoubtedly brought about significant societal and cosmological angst.

Interestingly, while cattle later were used by the Oglala to replace buffalo as a food source, they never joined the phalanx of animals which occupied Lakota religious beliefs and cosmology. Both the rapidity of the Lakota's loss of both the buffalo and their independence, coupled with cattle's association with whites, provided the tribe little opportunity or desire to find religious significance within cattle. Nonetheless, with the addition of the horse the tribe's energy production and mobility increased dramatically, and the Oglala grew more numerous and powerful. However, during this period the tribe's concepts of space and place, both spiritually and geographically, evolved as well.

Oglala perception of space and place involved a complex duality between the spiritual realm and the physical world in which the two both affected, and were affected by, the other. Therefore, in order to more clearly articulate this evolution one must differentiate between perceptions of "horizontal geography," or physical geography-power and identity, and "vertical geography," or the tribe's religious and cosmological perceptions of space and place. In order to reveal the changing aspects of "vertical" and "horizontal geography" during the early reservation period one must first explore Oglala concepts of space and place before the reservation years.[62]

[62] The "schema theory" promulgated by Michael E. Harkin, in "Carnival and Authority: Heiltsuk Cultural Models of Power," *Ethos*, vol. 24, No. 2. (June, 1996), 281-313, brilliantly delineates the duality inherent in many Native American cosmologies. In his essay he presents a nuanced study of what he believes is a dialectical struggle between "sacred power" and "power of authority or law."

During the centuries prior to spatial confinement within reservation boundaries the Oglala possessed an incredibly complex, flexible, and yet well-defined relationships with the world in which all things were unified by their possession of *wakan,* or power. These powers existed both within the physical and metaphysical realms. Within their spatial cosmology the Oglala viewed the world around them as inhabited by beings of power stretching in all six directions. For example, the *wakan* of the four horizontal directions possessed vitally important cultural qualities: the west provided finality and power, the north wisdom, the east enlightenment and rebirth, and the south innocence and youth.[63]

Yet it was the vertical relationships to the sky and the earth the Oglala viewed as possessing the most significance. For it was *Inyan,* the rock, who bled himself dry to create the world, and *Maka*, the earth herself, who became the mother and provider of all and from whose womb both mankind and buffalo emerged, and *Skan,* the sky, who ultimately created the Lakota.[64] Within this intricate cosmology the Oglala strove to find order within a universe filled with chaos. They sought order from a deeper understanding of *Wakan Tanka*, or the Great Mystery, universally defined by its incomprehensibility.

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[63] Raymond J. DeMallie and Douglas R. Parks, eds., *Sioux Indian Religion: Tradition and Innovation* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 79; (http://wolf.mind.net/native/4dir.htm) Martin Red Bear, Sinte Gleshka Rosebud Reservation Lakota University, from a beadwork design of the 1800s. While colors attributed to the four directions vary from source to source the fundamental meanings of each indicates religious homogeneity concerning their meaning within Lakota culture.

[64] Raymond J. DeMallie and Elaine A. Jahner, eds., *Lakota Belief and Ritual* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 50-54.

Toward this end, the tribe turned to *wicaša wakan,* or shamans. These Oglala spiritual leaders possessed a special connection to one or more aspects of *wakan,* such as *Tate,* the father of the four winds. This connection enabled the *wicaša wakan* to interpret and therefore placate, entreat, or please specific *wakan*.[65] What is notable culturally is that tribal dependence upon *wicaša wakan* and the rituals, dances, and the ceremonies they provided required a significant amount of cultural and cosmological flexibility. New methods of appeasing *wakan,* gained by visions and vision quests, needed immediate incorporation into Oglala spiritual frameworks.

The most notable example of this is the gift of the buffalo calf pipe brought to the tribe by White Buffalo Women. This gift cemented a kinship relationship between the buffalo and the Oglala, thus ending a period of chaotic warfare between the two peoples. As the buffalo and Oglala united in kinship much of the chaos in the universe was extinguished because the pipe offered a direct connection to *Wakan Tanka,* and the power of the White Buffalo Women herself was found in its smoke.[66] Other significant spiritual adaptations included the Sun Dance and Ghost Dance, each seeking to instill order in a complex world. Black Elk elucidated this vertical relationship clearly when he stated, "we know that we are related and are one with all things of the heaven and the earth, and we know that all things that move are a people as we." As the Lakota were experiencing these dramatic cosmological

[65] DeMallie and Parks, *Sioux Indian Religion,* 28-30.
[66] Ibid, 31.

and cultural changes during the years between 1750 and 1868, so to did another rapidly expanding regional power.[67]

The recently formed United States of America came to occupy a significant place within Lakota diplomatic discussions. Once the United States gained independence from England it quickly and significantly expanded its borders through treaties with both European and Indian nations. (It should be noted that most treaties with Indian nations occurred either through trade dependency or through the threat of military conquest). The United States greatly expanded its borders while concomitantly developing an Indian policy based on a complex combination of intellectual ideologies, political developments, popular mien, and emerging anthropological theory.[68]

The beliefs and popular attitudes that would soon so greatly influence the Oglala coalesced from decades, if not centuries, of European contact with other indigenous tribes scattered across the Americas. By the turn of the nineteenth century many American intellectuals believed that Native Americans must be absorbed into white society, and ultimately through miscegenation they might eventually become white skinned men and women. This process entailed the transformation of barbarous heathens into sedentary and industrious Christians. It mattered little to American policy makers what disparate types of culture these various tribes might enjoy. Their existence depended on accepting incorporation into white society. The ideas and actions of American leaders who delineated early United States federal Indian

[67] Joseph Epes Brown, ed., *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), 79.
[68] Frederick E. Hoxie redefined the historiography concerning the importance of policy experts and reformers in shaping American Indian policy in the mid and late nineteenth century by noting Indian policy derived from the broad landscape of American culture experience in *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press, 1984).

policy during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries evolved from a seventeenth century intellectual movement in Europe.[69]

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries European civilization functioned under the influences of the Enlightenment. Belief in the attributes of science superseded those of religious dogma in the minds of most European leaders. In the eyes of most occidental societies nineteenth century western civilization represented the culmination of thousands of years of human development. This firm belief in the superiority and righteousness of western society led to the inevitable conclusion that any culture that differed from theirs possessed inherent flaws. It also implied that the leaders of western civilization possessed a moral obligation not only to themselves but to their descendants to insure the Indians' survival and inclusion into western culture. And since Native American societies appeared hopelessly inferior they by default must be aided in their evolution toward civilization. But how did one go about repairing, or elevating, these unfortunate people? One did so by reshaping Native Americans into a model of one's own citizens.[70]

In order to complete this seemingly benevolent and necessary task the intellectual philanthropists needed to gain the support of the newly formed

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[69] Bernard Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974). See Part Two: Program for a discussion of this ideology and belief system.

[70] For leading studies concerning the ideological roots of race in America see, Barbara Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History," in, *Region, Race and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward,* J. Morgan Kousser and James McPherson, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 143-177; and Winthrop D. Jordan's, *The Whiteman's Burden: Historical Origins of Racism in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974) and, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968); for an examination of race and identity as a negotiated concept within a European/Native American context see, John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story From Early America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994) and, James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999).

government of the United States of America. This task was made easier by the fact that most American intellectuals gained some form of political power following the American Revolution. Thomas Jefferson for example, was a great proponent of the transformation of native peoples into productive American citizens. Because of the beliefs of Jefferson and his contemporaries the federal government sought to create a system that would allow Indians to evolve so they might one day join mankind's march to perfection. In other words Native Americans might survive, but only by forsaking their own culture for another.

For most of the nineteenth century one word characterized Indian policy and the goal of the federal government towards Native Americans—*assimilation*. The American government pursued a policy that attempted to transform Native American cultures into a mirror image of American society centered upon the yeoman farmer as a model. Native Americans were encouraged not only to pursue farming as a vocation but also to do so using accepted European or American methods of horticulture. This meant that tribes such as the Iroquois of the north, and the Creek of the south, who already practiced extensive agricultural pursuits, needed to adopt new methods of farming. However, this seemingly innocuous reorganization of the physical labor needed to harvest an adequate crop entailed dramatic cultural adjustments for Native Americans.

Tribes such as the Creek, Cherokee, and others maintained matrilineal social systems. This cultural characteristic gave women control over both the land and crops, which they controlled and tended respectively. This allowed tribal women far greater political and economic influence than their Anglo counterparts. For example, women of the Iroquois tribe made decisions about

when and where to plant and harvest their crops, which effectively gave control of the tribe's economy to them. They also maintained the ability to call their men to war in order to revenge an attack from a neighboring tribe, options unavailable to white women. Men on the other hand were expected to provide protection and meat for the tribe, and maintain diplomatic relations with both surrounding tribes and then whites, occupations that often found them away from home for extended periods.

White perceptions of Iroquois culture, heavily influenced by Euro-centrism, were of lazy men who lay about the village while the women slaved away in the fields. Interestingly, the popular conception that European women did not work the fields along side their men has been refuted by studies from such noted historians as Laurel Thatcher Ulrich. She noted that the lives of frontier women in America were extremely arduous. Besides caring for the children and home, spinning cloth, churning butter and the hundreds of other difficult tasks associated with "women's work" during that time, they also carried seed and plowed fields when necessary. The hypocrisy of this situation failed to influence European policy and the program of assimilation proceeded. However, assimilation of Native Americans into European society as yeomen farmers, or any other occupation, faced the insurmountable obstacle of racism. Unfortunately, the malignant stain of racism would prevent Native American assimilation in the manner proposed by such philanthropists as Thomas Jefferson. The pall of racism, coupled with both political and economic difficulties often present when two vastly different cultures meet, would prevent the Iroquois, Cherokee, and eventually the

Lakota from participating equally with whites in American society.[71]

By the mid nineteenth century United States Indian policy experienced significant conceptual and practical alterations. The belief in the eventual assimilation of Native American peoples evolved as Indian peoples showed little or no interest in completely rejecting their own cultures in favor of another. The reservation system was implemented in order to allow Native Americans more time to more fully understand the benefits offered by the superior American culture. It also acted as a method to both spatially and physically control Native Americans and a tool to prevent native/white interaction, which often led to conflict. Ironically, by isolating Native Americans from western culture reservations actually served to reinforce Indian identity rather than break it down. Later in the nineteenth century well-intentioned "reformers" such as Richard Henry Pratt, who founded the Carlisle Boarding School for Indians in 1875, and Henry L. Dawes, author of the Dawes Severalty Act, attempted to complete the transformation of Native Americans into American citizens[72]. Pratt and his fellow reformers believed "that there was only one way for the Indians to survive the onslaught of progress: they would have to be swallowed up in the rushing tide of American life and institutions."[73]

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[71] For details of Iroquois society and the roles women played see the texts by Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 27-31, 65-74; and the classic work of Anthony F.C. Wallace. *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), 21-48. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich brilliantly depicted the complex economic roles early American women played in *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (San Francisco: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1990).

[72] For studies pertaining to federal Indian policy see, Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great White Father: The United States Government and the American Indians,* 2 Vols.(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); and Robert Trennert, *Alternative Reservation Policy, 1846-51* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975).

[73] David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995), 39.

During the period between 1750 and 1868 the Oglala struggled with both an expansionist American nation who threatened their regional hegemony and with the increasingly rapid destruction of their buffalo centered culture. The first half of the nineteenth century saw two expansionist powers coexisting peacefully. The Lakota saw their population grow to approximately 20,000 and they emerged as the dominant native power on the Great Plains. The tribe enjoyed the zenith of its regional power as it fully evolved into an equestrian nomadic society whose political economy depended upon the buffalo. However, this complex process did not take place in a regional vacuum, for the attitudes and ideologies brought by the white invaders played a crucial role in the political and economic actions of the Oglala Lakota.[74]

As noted above, tensions on the northern plains rose significantly with the opening of the Oregon Trail and the reduction in trade. As the Lakota developed an increasingly influential military cultural milieu concepts of masculinity altered. Men who demonstrated martial abilities increasingly rose to positions of power. On one fateful day the men of the Lakota and the United States military, itself possessed of large quantities of masculine bravado, came to blows over a Mormon's sick cow. On August 19th, 1854 the agreeable relationship that existed between the United States and the Lakota were shattered by a volley from Lt. John L. Grattan's howitzer. The battle that followed came to be known as the Grattan Massacre.[75]

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[74] Lakota population estimates vary, but 20,000 is probably a reasonable number considering the tribe's territorial and resource control. Jeffrey Ostler estimates 15,000 in, *The Plains Sioux,* 2004; Richard White reported 20,000 Lakota in his study, "The Winning of the West," 1978.

[75] A superior examination concerning the confluence of concepts of masculinity was provided by Stanley M. Despain in his paper, "With blood in her tracks and meat like rawhide," presented at the Annual Meeting of the Pacific Coast Branch-American Historical

The unlikely and foolhardy string of events that occurred to cause this fight is worth noting. On August 18th a sick and footsore cow belonging to Lar Domgaard, a Mormon migrant heading west, wandered away and was subsequently killed and eaten by a Minniconjou warrior named High Forehead. Mr. Domgaard sought recompense for his loss at Fort Laramie. Despite considerably generous offers by the Brulé Chief Conquering Bear to replace the cow with horses, Domgaard was unsatisfied. He called for the arrest of High Forehead. However, as a guest in the Brulé camp and Conquering Bear was powerless to turn him over to American authorities as demanded. As a result of Domgaard's obstinacy a young and inexperienced officer was dispatched to arrest High Forehead. Lt. Grattan boldly headed to a well-prepared and increasingly hostile camp of Brulé and Oglala warriors with 28 men, two howitzers, and a drunken hostile interpreter.[76]

Once again Conquering Bear offered to pay for the cow, and stated that he could not order High Forehead to surrender. Grattan and Conquering Bear argued for about 45 minutes. During this time about 200 or 300 Oglala warriors moved around Grattan's force and closer to the two howitzers. Then unexpectedly, one of the infantrymen guarding the guns, undoubtedly scared stiff, fired and wounded one of the Oglala horsemen. The shot led to the big guns being discharged, with the rounds landing harmlessly over the camp, and then a determined attack by the Lakota warriors. In the fight all 29 United States soldiers died, along with the interpreter. The American reacted by

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Association, August 5-8, 2004. Matt Despain is currently an instructor at The University of Oklahoma and editor of the Chickasaw Cultural Journal. Also see, Paul N. Beck's, *The First Sioux War: The Grattan Fight and Blue Water Creek, 1854-1856* (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 2004); and R. Eli Paul's, *Blue Water Creek and the First Sioux War, 1854-1856* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004).

[76] Ibid.

eventually sending a force against the offending tribes, which ultimately resulted in the Battle at Blue Water Creek in 1856. Thereafter, relations between the United States and the Lakota deteriorated.[77]

Over the next dozen years the two expansionist powers fought one another in two significant campaigns. The first was the Sioux wars along the Platte River road in 1864-65, which led to an ineffectual treaty signed by very few Lakota chiefs.[78] The second conflict was the Bozeman Trail Wars, or what came to be known as Red Cloud's War, from 1866-68. The central concern of the Lakota involved the establishment of the Bozeman Trail, which led from the Oregon Trail to the newly discovered Gold fields of Montana. Moreover, Forts C.F. Smith, Phil Kearny, and Reno quickly appeared in Lakota territory in order to protect the miners flocking to Montana by way of the Bozeman Trail.[79]

Oglala forces led by Red Cloud and Old-Man-Afraid-Of-His-Horses, accompanied by a young Crazy Horse, isolated the Bozeman Trail forts by camping within several miles of them and preventing re-supply. The Oglala under Red Cloud's leadership, and bolstered by a contingent of Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapahoe, camped very near Fort Phil Kearny. On December 21st, 1866 a wood gathering party from the fort came under attack. Colonel Henry B. Carrington, after considerable pleading, sent Captain William Judd Fetterman out to rescue the party with a force of about 80 men. Despite orders not to pursue the Indians beyond Lodge Trail Ridge Captain

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[77] Ibid.
[78] Executive Documents, The House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 39th Cong., 2nd sess., 1866-1867, Serial No. 1284 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867).
[79] For accounts of Red Cloud's War see, George E. Hyde, *Spotted Tail's Folk: A History of the Brulé Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 133-141; and Larson, *Red Cloud,* 1997, 74-104.

Fetterman gave chase to a small number of warriors who taunted him from a short distance. As his command became stretched thin, his infantry could not keep up with his cavalry; his men came under attack from a concealed force of Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe warriors. Within thirty minutes the entire detachment was slain in what the Lakota refer to as the Battle of the Hundred Slain. Captain Fetterman fell under the club and knife of American Horse, who knocked him down and then cut his throat as he lay on the cold prairie ground.[80]

Over the next year and a half the United States sought to end the hostilities many easterners believed started because of continued American pressure on the tribe. Moreover, the expansion of railroads across the west soon made the Bozeman Trail obsolete. As a result, the United States agreed to shut down the trail and close the forts when Red Cloud made that a condition of peace. In the spring of 1868 the Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapahoe gathered to meet with an American peace commission. The result was the creation of the Great Sioux Reservation.

The Treaty of Fort Laramie, which was promulgated on April 29, 1868, established The Great Sioux Reservation that occupied the western half of the present state of South Dakota, parts of Wyoming, Montana, and Nebraska, with the eastern boundary located at the Missouri River. The tribe maintained hunting rights within the reservation boundaries and, "the right to hunt on any lands north of the Platte, and on the Republican Fork of the Smoky Hill River, so long as the buffalo may range thereon in such numbers as to justify the chase."[81] The Lakota seemed to have gained the assurance of

[80] Ibid.
[81] *The Statutes at Large, Treaties and Proclamations of the United States of America*, from

cultural continuity and power. However, the Lakota's future rested upon their ability to procure sufficient buffalo to remain self-sufficient. At the time this sticking point seemed irrelevant because the Lakota had spent a century perfecting their way of life.

Unlike many neighboring sedentary agriculturists whose societies developed and still maintained a more hierarchical organization, as the Oglala moved onto the Great Plains they formed a loose confederation which allowed the Lakota people greater flexibility and maneuverability for following the herds of buffalo, which in turn kept the tribe well fed. Kinship relationships and reciprocity within the *tiospaye*, and the tribe as a whole, came to control the economy.[82] One gained respect and status within the community by providing food, clothing, and shelter for your family and others within your tribe, not by the accumulation of material possessions for mere individual gain. Thus, the economic process remained subservient to social structure and labor. For a period of approximately 100 years the Lakota developed and enjoyed this equestrian nomadic lifestyle that allowed them to tap more efficiently into the thermodynamic system of the Great Plains, specifically the harvesting of the vast herds of buffalo. However, this way of life disappeared with the buffalo and the emergence of reservation life.[83]

By the mid-1860s much of the northern buffalo herd had already been eliminated within reservation boundaries and the federal government had taken steps to alleviate the problem. In 1865 the United States government

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Dec. 1867, to March 1869, Edited by George P. Sanger, Counselor at Law, Vol. XV, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1869), 639.

[82] For the juxtaposition of nomadic versus agricultural northern plains tribes see, Preston Holder, *The Hoe & the Horse on the Plains* (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press, 1970).

[83]For a more detailed examination of Lakota economic structure see, Gump, *The Dust Rose Like Smoke,* 1994; and White, "The Winning of the West,"; and, Anderson, *Kinsmen*, 58-76.

agreed to pay each individual Lakota, "at the rate of about fifteen dollars per head per annum in view of the fact that the buffalo and other game, by means of which these nomadic tribes subsist, are being driven from the country by the whites who traverse it."[84] Special United States Indian Agent J. P. Cooper further indicated the severity of the dwindling bison herds on August 27, 1868 when he requested that all Indians north of the Platte River be sent immediately to Fort Randall for supplies. He noted that, "the great danger now is that the scarcity of buffalo in that region will compel the Indians to commit depredations in order to live."[85]

Many factors influenced the rapid disintegration of the northern bison herd, the most critical being the increased hide trade brought about by the development of a chemical tanning process that dramatically increased the demand for buffalo hides.[86] Furthermore, the invention of the paddlewheel boat provided the necessary transportation for shipping the heavy buffalo hides to eastern markets. Over 110,000 hides flowed down the Mississippi River by the 1840s. Only a decade earlier the number was closer to 25,000 hides. Other factors included natural mortality, Indian subsistence hunting and market hunting for robes, wolf predation, possible disease introduction from cattle, and a warmer drying climate trend. The shift to generally milder winters, brought about by the end of the Little Ice Age, meant increased hardships for many Northern Plains tribes who relied upon well-established

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[84] Executive Documents, The House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 39th Cong., 2nd sess., 1866-1867, Serial No. 1284 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867), 5.
[85] Executive Documents, The House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 40th Cong., 3rd sess., 1868-1869, Serial No. 1366 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1869), 711.
[86] William A. Dobak, "Killing the Canadian Buffalo, 1821-1881," *Western Historical Quarterly* 27 (Spring 1996, No. 1), 33-52.

hunting patterns.[87]

As winter came to the Great Plains the buffalo often sought both forage and shelter from the winds and deep snows in familiar river valleys. This migratory pattern of the buffalo allowed the tribes to predict the movements of the great herds accurately and easily procure a large winter supply of meat. However, as the climate changed and winters became less severe the buffalo no longer sought food and shelter in these river valleys.[88] Furthermore, the encroachment of white settlers into traditional buffalo watering areas and the bison's natural migratory habits caused widely scattered herds had that roamed over the Northern Plains to coalesce into much larger herds.[89] The mobility of these larger herds increased as they consumed the forage in an area more rapidly than the previously scattered herds. Therefore, the developing situation of large mobile herds moving about the plains in unpredictable patterns created sporadic hunting success throughout the Great Plains. For Oglala tribesmen newly confined to the Great Sioux Reservation this meant eventual economic disaster.

In the decade following the promulgation of the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie many Oglala continued to pursue their familiar buffalo-centered way of life in the northern regions of their territory. There they lived far away from the prying eyes of white men. However, Red Cloud and other leaders eventually came to realize that continued pressure from the United States and

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[87] For a fascinating examination of the Southern Plains herds see Dan Flores's, "Bison Ecology and Bison Diplomacy: The Southern Plains from 1800-1850," *The Journal of American History* 78 (September 1991, No. 2), 465-485.
[88] For a detailed examination of this phenomenon see Richmond Clow's, "Bison Ecology, Brule and Yankton Winter Hunting, and the Starving Winter of 1832-33," *Great Plains Quarterly* (Fall 1995, vol. 15), 259-270.
[89] Douglas B. Bamforth, "Historical Documents and Bison Ecology on the Great Plains," *Plains Anthropologist: Journal of the Plains Anthropological Society*, (February 1987, Vol. 32, Number 115), 1-16.

the continuing decline of buffalo meant that a new economic strategy needed to be found for reservation life. By the end of that decade the Oglala turned toward cattle as answer to their growing economic difficulties.

CHAPTER TWO

"Some Good Cattle Every Year": Genesis of Cattle in Oglala Culture, 1868-1876

On a cold winter day in December of 1871 the herd came under attack. Some of the beasts ran wildly across the Dakota prairie in a mad attempt to escape the Oglala hunters, while others milled about in confusion. The bellows of the wounded and frightened animals mixed with the shouts of the mounted hunters to create a primordial cacophony that mingled with the cloudy breath of the men, horses, and beasts, and rose into the brisk winter air. Upon this contentious theater of the Northern Plains the great ungulates fell, brought down one after the other by determined hunters, pierced by arrow or bullet, until the entire herd lay still.

Once the men completed their violent task the women came to skin and butcher the animals. The hides were stripped from the beasts' flesh and much of the offal, such as livers and kidneys, devoured on the spot. When the Indians had eaten their fill, they prepared and then stored the remainder for the coming winter months. This scene undoubtedly played itself out countless times in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as the Oglala Lakota developed into one of the most successful nomadic hunting groups on the Northern Plains. What set this event apart from previous hunts is the fact that the prey animals were not buffalo. They were government issued steers provided to the Oglala at Red Cloud Agency.[90]

[90]Office of Indian Affairs to U. S. Indian Agent J. W. Daniels, Dec. 16, 1871, General Records, Box 2, RG 75, KC. The letter instructs Daniels to employ and supervise the Indians in the slaughter of government cattle for the purpose of packing the meat for future use. The cold weather was believed to enhance the effort by preventing the meat from becoming spoiled.

The three years following the signing of The 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie found the Oglala divided. After 1868 the tribe for the most part continued to live by hunting buffalo and raiding unlucky neighbors. However, buffalo numbers continued to fall and many bands looked increasingly toward the federal government for support. In May and June of 1870 Red Cloud, once granted permission, went to Washington, D.C. to discuss perceived treaty violations involving both the lack of quality and quantity of annuity payments and white travelers on the Oregon Trail. He also hoped to ease tensions with the people of Wyoming. When he returned in late June Red Cloud found his fellow Oglala impatiently waiting to trade robes for needed goods. Apparently the Lakota continued to raid their long-time enemies the Crow and regional tensions remained high.[91]

That fall the United States Army received $100,000 to provide goods such as food and clothing to the tribe, but the agents asked that the agency be moved in exchange. This was agreed upon and over 6,000 Oglala moved to the new location about 32 miles downriver from Fort Laramie on the upper bank of the North Platte River in the spring of 1871. There the tribe waited for the promised goods, without Red Cloud who was upset he did not pick the new location. Red Cloud stayed away from the agency until March of 1872. In his absence many Oglala adapted to the new economic situation in an interesting manner.[92]

They did so by continuing to hunt either the Republican River to the south or on the Powder River to the north but then they returned every five days to receive their rations. The Oglala adapted. Most of the tribe returned

[91] Larson, *Red Cloud*, 135-140; Hoxie, *Parading Through History*, 100-104.
[92] Larson, *Red Cloud*, 145-146.

to their buffalo centered culture; however, many incorporated new economic strategies in an attempt to maintain cultural continuity while simultaneously taking advantage of much needed rations. These strategies included continuing their equestrian nomadic lifestyle by hunting buffalo and drawing rations, and hunting government issued steers as noted at the top of the chapter. By 1872 Red Cloud and several other band chiefs camped within the near vicinity of Ft. Laramie in order to take advantage of the United States government's promised issue of goods and food. These reservation Oglala sought proximal control and benefit from the goods delineated by the 1868 Treaty. Such control reinforced their leadership positions by demonstrating their ability to provide for their people. However, when issue goods arrived late or in lesser quantities than promised these same leaders lost respect and influence with their people.[93]

In relation to this strategy the most important provision of the treaty, other than the establishment of boundaries, involved providing the Agency Indians with beef and flour if they could not procure it themselves. The 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie stated in Article X that,

> each Indian over the age of four years, who shall have removed to and settled permanently upon said reservation and complied with the stipulations of this treaty, shall be entitled to receive from the United States, for the period of four years after he shall have settled upon the reservation, one pound of meat and one pound of flour...provided the Indians cannot furnish their own subsistence at an earlier date.[94]

Red Cloud told the emissaries of the United States that he would remain

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[93] Larson, *Red Cloud,* 143-144. In this chapter Red Cloud's followers, or the "hangs around the fort Indians," will be referred to as the "reservation Oglala" for the purposes of clarification concerning the disparate Oglala bands.

[94] *The Statutes at Large, Treaties and Proclamations, of the United States of America, from December 1867, to March 1869,* Edited by George P. Sanger, Counselor at Law, Vol. XV, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1869), 639.

peaceful in the summer of 1872, and he meant to keep his word. And in order to do so he needed to provide for his people. While their spatial proximity to the fort reinforced the band leaders' political control of their followers it also gave the federal government a significant amount of influence over these bands through the power to observe, judge, and punish either with the threat of force or the stoppage of goods. Nonetheless, under these circumstances the "hangs around the fort" Indians sought to maintain as much cultural continuity as possible. The result was the "hunt" previously described. To these Oglala, this strategy seemed preferable to seeking the diminishing herds of buffalo and the possibility of conflict with the United States.

However, for the federal government, the beef ration was merely a stopgap measure to provide the tribe with enough nourishment until the Oglala could learn to support themselves as individual family farmers. Moreover, the Oglala perceived cattle as a temporary substitute for buffalo until their numbers increased. Therefore, few attempts were made to supply the Oglala with breeding stock to create their own herds. Instead the government issued steers in order to meet their treaty obligations to provide a beef supply for the tribe and the Oglala "hunted" the steers as they had buffalo. However, the government's supply of beef inevitably failed to meet its treaty obligations or the tribe's needs.[95]

According to the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty the government agreed to provide each tribal member with one pound of beef and flour per day, or approximately thirty pounds of beef per month. In a nine-month period from September 30, 1867 to June 30, 1868 the federal government issued 145,551

[95] *Statutes at Large*, 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, 639.

pounds of beef to approximately 6,000 Oglala, Brule, Northern Arapaho, and Northern Cheyenne around the Red Cloud Agency.[96] This came out to about twenty-four pounds of beef for each tribal member for a nine-month period, or about .09 pounds per day. It should also be noted that the number of pounds issued to the tribe was counted in gross poundage, or what the cattle weighed on the hoof. Once a steer is slaughtered and processed for consumption the actual poundage of edible beef is cut by an average of two-thirds. Further loss could occur because of shrinkage, and spoilage, which would reduce post-processed beef by another 10% to 50%. Moreover, cattle weighed upon arrival, but not slaughtered immediately often lost hundreds of pounds over the winter yet still appeared on the roles at full weight, and steers that died over the winter also counted as issued beef. This sporadic compliance to the treaty by the United States convinced many "hangs around the fort Indians" to spend the summer months hunting buffalo.[97]

Nonetheless, several factors worked increasingly against the tribe's ability to procure the needed buffalo so critical to their society, both nutritionally and culturally, thus making the tribe dependent upon the federal government for their means of survival. For example, further hunting limitations were placed upon the Oglala during this crucial period of cultural adjustment. Despite the Treaty of Fort Laramie's declaration of hunting rights in 1868, the tribe hunted buffalo only with permission of the resident Indian agent. Indians that hunted without the agent's authorization risked being labeled hostile and then subjected to punishment. Consequently, buffalo hunts

[96] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 40th Cong., 3rd sess., 1868-1869, Serial No. 1366, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1869), 709.
[97] Paul M. Robertson, "The Power of the Land," 82-85.

occurred less frequently and became far less successful following the creation of the Great Sioux Reservation. In one of the only documented accounts of a successful Oglala buffalo hunt beyond 1868 by reservation Indians, Indian Agent J. W. Wham reported issuing two months worth of ammunition for a hunt on the Republican River in mid-September 1871. The Indians requested that no whites accompany them on that hunt, yet sub-agent Yates went along despite their objections. The same report noted that the Oglala killed large numbers of buffalo on that particular hunt.[98]

The primary reason that buffalo hunts happened with less regularity is that authorization from Indian agents and subsequent support from the federal bureaucracy remained unpredictable. In the fall of the next year the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, F. A. Walker, notified J. W. Daniels, the Red Cloud Agent, that Little Wound had organized a hunting party for a second time without permission. The Commissioner stated that the War Department had been notified and instructed to bring him and his party back to the agency. The government was reticent to allow the hunts and provide the needed ammunition the hunts because the tribe continued to prosecute raids against neighboring tribes such as the Crow and Pawnee. The United States feared this conflict might grow to include whites as well. These economic impediments, such as decreased buffalo herds and increased government interference, greatly discouraged the organization of hunting parties following 1868. As a result, leaders such as Red Cloud began to look increasingly toward government issued cattle to provide for their peoples sustenance.[99]

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[98] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 42nd Cong., 2nd sess., 1871-1872, Serial No. 1505, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), 1118-1119.

[99] Commissioner of Indian Affairs F. A. Walker to Agent J. W. Daniels, November 5, 1872, General Records: Correspondence received from the Office of Indian Affairs, Indian

The Oglala looked toward cattle as a supplement supply of meat because they easily replaced buffalo within the Northern Plains environment. This region was, and remains, primarily suited for the care and raising of livestock in the absence of native grazers and large predators. The climate, grasses, and soil combined to create an environment that is particularly adapted for ungulates such as buffalo and cattle. The predominant soils found within the 1868 reservation boundaries consisted of prairie soils, lithosols and shallow soils, and a small amount of chernozem soils located only in the extreme southeastern tip of the reservation. Lithosols and shallow soils consist of "an imperfectly weathered mass of rock fragments, largely but not exclusively on steep slopes," which are more commonly referred to as either sandhills or badlands. Chernozem soils are "dark-brown to nearly black soils of cool and temperate, subhumid grasslands."

However, it is the prairie soils that consist of the "very dark brown soils of cool and temperate, relatively humid grasslands," that are home to the rich and nutritious short grasses such as grama and buffalo grass that buffalo, elk, deer, antelope, and cattle thrive upon.[100] Bouteloua gracilis, or blue grama grass is a native perennial in the northern Great Plains. It not only produces highly nutritious summer forage, it also provides excellent winter pasture as it retains its protein content if allowed to cure while standing. *Buchloe dactyloides*, or buffalo grass, is also an outstanding source of nourishment and forage for herbivores of the Great Plains. Its

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warehouses & special agents, chronological arrangement, Feb. 24, 1871-Dec. 31, 1877, Box 2, RG 75, NARA-KC.

[100] The information and quotes pertaining to soils was obtained from the chart titled GENERAL PATTERN OF GREAT SOIL GROUPS: THE WHEAT BELT in a text by Ladd Haystead and Gilbert C. Fite, *The Agricultural Regions of the United States* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955), 180-181.

> growth begins in late spring and continues all summer. The forage is attractive to all classes of livestock. Buffalo grass becomes established rather easily, and spreads vigorously under use. It withstands prolonged heavy grazing better than any other native grass in its region of adaptation; on ranges severely grazed every year, it often survives as a nearly pure stand.[101]

When the soil conditions and flora are mixed with an annual yearly rainfall of under twenty inches per year it creates an environment conducive to the development of a regional cattle industry once the indigenous wild grazers and their predators are removed. However, while environmental conditions informed Lakota economic strategy to some degree other factors greatly influenced Oglala economic strategies during the early years of reservation life.[102]

The area included in the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, which established The Great Sioux Reservation, occupied the western half of the present state of South Dakota, parts of Wyoming, Montana, and Nebraska, with the eastern boundary being the Missouri River. The tribe maintained hunting rights within the vast reservation boundaries and, "the right to hunt on any lands north of the Platte, and on the Republican Fork of the Smoky Hill River, so long as the buffalo may range thereon in such numbers as to justify the chase."[103] However, as previously mentioned much of the northern

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[101] W. A. Wheeler and D. D. Hill, *Grassland Seeds: A Handbook of Information About the Grass and Legume Seeds Used for Forage, Pasture, Soil Conservation and Other Turf Planting in the United States* (New York: D. Van Norstrand Company, Inc., 1957), 562, 579-580.

[102] The average annual rainfall in South Dakota between 1882 and 1960 was 19.12 inches per year. This average included regions of Eastern South Dakota that were not part of the Great Sioux Reservation and receive a higher average rainfall per year than the reservation. For the reservation created in 1868 the average rainfall was closer to 16 inches per year than 19, which demonstrates why the attempt to cultivate this region using dry farming methods failed. Herbert S. Schell, *History of South Dakota*, 11-12.

[103] *The Statutes at Large, Treaties and Proclamations of the United States of America*, from Dec. 1867, to March 1869, Edited by George P. Sanger, Counselor at Law, Vol. XV, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1869), 639.

buffalo herd had already been eliminated from the reservation and the federal government had already taken steps to alleviate the problem.

As early as 1865 the United States government agreed to pay each individual Lakota, "at the rate of about fifteen dollars per head per annum in view of the fact that the buffalo and other game, by means of which these nomadic tribes subsist, are being driven from the country by the whites who traverse it."[104] Special United States Indian Agent J. P. Cooper further indicated the severity of the dwindling bison herds on August 27, 1868 when he requested that all Indians north of the Platte River be sent immediately to Fort Randall for supplies. He noted that, "the great danger now is that the scarcity of buffalo in that region will compel the Indians to commit depredations in order to live."[105]

The United States government indicated even before The 1868 Treaty of Ft. Laramie that it favored farming over ranching for the Oglala, despite the arid and unpredictable environment of the Great Plains. The federal government had already stated in the 1865 Lakota Treaty that its policy towards the tribe, as with the vast majority of tribes in the United States, would be the promotion of cultivation over ranching. As previously noted, contemporary American ideals saw the independent farmer as the model for American citizenship and the foundation of American democracy. Therefore, the goals of United States' policies designed to assimilate Native Americans into white society often forced Indians to adopt the role of farmer despite the

[104] Executive Documents, The House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 39th Cong., 2nd sess., 1866-1867, Serial No. 1284 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867), 5.
[105] Executive Documents, The House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 40th Cong., 3rd sess., 1868-1869, Serial No. 1366 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1869), 711.

environmental realities.[106]

Federal actions to promote farming over stock raising took many forms. In this 1865 agreement the United States stipulated that the Lakota must promise not to impede members of the tribe from pursuing agricultural interests. Moreover, the federal government promised twenty-five dollars per tribal member for those engaged in cultivation of the soil, ten dollars more than for those Indians who pursued other interests. The treaty also promised the Oglala that if one hundred lodges gathered in one area for agricultural reasons then the U. S. must provide an agency for that group and employ a farmer for their instruction.[107] Further reports of Red Cloud Agency Indian Agents indicated that they found it difficult to implement this policy. This dichotomy between federal and local decision-making is clearly seen in the Red Cloud Agent's report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1870. He stated that

> it will be understood that teaching the Indians the art of cultivating the soil is attended with many difficulties in this locality…on account of location of the lands allotted to them for agricultural purposes, which, owing to the frequency of droughts and visits of the grasshopper, make the failure to produce a crop nearly a certainty."[108]

Despite the agent's on-cite experience and recommendations the federal policy of assimilation maintained that in order for the Indians to develop successfully into proper American citizens they must adopt farming as their primary way of life.

Not surprisingly, the Northern Cheyenne experienced a similar

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[106] Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction*, 7-12.
[107] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 39th Cong., 2nd sess., 1866-1867, Serial No. 1284, (Washington: Government Printing Office), 5.
[108] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 41st Cong., 3rd sess., 1870-1871, Serial 1449, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1871), 685.

struggle between bureaucrats in Washington who promoted agricultural pursuits and a local agent who envisioned stock raising as the tribe's best chance for economic independence. The temporary agent at Tongue River Indian Reservation, a Private George Yoakam, requested in 1882 that of the money earmarked for rations on the reservation forty percent go towards the purchase of cattle. He hoped that within ten years the tribe would be able to support itself through the cattle industry. Nonetheless, an Indian Inspector, M. R. Barr, instead recommended that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs appoint a permanent Indian Agent, one other than Private Yoakam, one who understood farming. Despite the military's classification of the Northern Cheyenne as "prisoner of war," authorities hoped to settle the tribe in the Tongue River valley in accordance with the Indian Homestead Act of 1875, which provided Indians benefits similar to the Homestead Act of 1862.[109]

However, the dichotomy between federal policy makers and local agents concerning the future tribal economy of the Oglala was not the only problem found within the infrastructure of the federal Indian bureaucracy. Indian agents in the field were often temporary and differed greatly in their opinions concerning tribal economic opportunities. This is evident from the agent's reports of 1873 and 1874. In 1873 agent J. W. Daniels stated that despite Chief Red Cloud's opposition he believed that the tribe would soon begin to push toward agriculture as a way of life.[110] The very next year a new agent, J. J. Saville, stated that, "agriculture can not be depended upon as a means for support for these Indians. The valley of White River and adjacent

[109] Svingen, *The Northern Cheyenne*, 35-43.
[110] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,* 43rd Cong., 1st sess., 1873-1874, Serial No. 1601, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874), 611.

hills produce a fine grass…(and) stock-raising must be the main pursuit in this country."[111] The situation was becoming polarized because the local environmental conditions influenced local Indian Agents to pursue stock raising as the principle means of Oglala self-sufficiency. Meanwhile the federal government's rigid policy of Indian Americanization, which hoped to create good United States citizens by turning tribal members into Jeffersonian yeoman farmers, ignored the environmental realities.

As hunting became more restricted and unsuccessful the tribe depended more and more upon the United States for sustenance. Agent Daniels wrote to the Commissioner in his yearly report of 1873 that the hostile Chief Red Cloud and his followers

> come to these agencies starving and enemies, and received the same kind care that was given to those who had been here for years when they first came in they sent their soldiers to get rations that they might taste white man's food without his knowing of it, but after a few issues they came to acknowledge their dependency.[112]

In his 1874 report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs newly appointed Indian Agent J. J. Saville related how he instructed an independent feeling Oglala who had caused trouble "to the fact that the buffalo were almost all destroyed, and as soon as they were gone the Indians would be helpless."[113] Clearly, Oglala leaders no longer maintained the ability to provide needed food and shelter for their followers. This development undoubtedly led to a breakdown in kinship relations and aspects of societal reciprocity. Economic

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[111] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 43rd Cong., 2nd sess., 1874-1875, Serial No. 1639, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1875), 560.
[112] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 43rd Cong., 1st sess., 1873-1874, Serial No. 1601, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874), 612.
[113] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 43rd Cong., 2nd sess., 1874-1875, Serial No. 1639, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1875), 560.

realities began to dominate tribal decision-making and social structures.

The federal government's actions of restricting the tribe's movements and hunting practices also hoped to prevent conflicts between the Lakota and other tribes in the region, and the ever increasing population of whites moving into the region. On May 16th, 1874 Little Wound's band again failed to receive permission to hunt on the Republican river from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, despite their 1868 treaty rights, because of the Oglalas' cruel and unjust treatment of the Pawnee the previous year. The Commissioner referred to the Oglalas' ambush and defeat of a Pawnee hunting camp on the south shore of the Platte River in the summer of 1873, which the Oglala considered their hunting territory. In the ensuing battle over a thousand Lakota warriors killed almost two hundred Pawnee.[114]

Two days later Agent Saville received another letter from the Commissioner stating that in spite of the tribe's legal right to make the hunt no passes or permits would be issued because the hunt would, "terrify the settlers and get the Indians into trouble."[115] However, the still somewhat autonomous Oglala organized and conducted an extended buffalo hunt that fall near the Republican River in spite of federal opposition. Unfortunately the several thousand Indians managed to procure only one hundred buffalo and an unspecified number of cattle that fall. That winter was extremely severe, and snowstorms in January and February blocked supply trains and prevented the beef contractor from supplying the Red Cloud Agency. Many Indians went hungry and those nearer the agencies begged for whatever food

[114] Royal B. Hassrick. *The Sioux: Life and Customs of a Warrior Society* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 78.
[115] Commissioner E. P. Smith to Agent J. J. Saville, May 16 and 18, 1874, General Records, Correspondence received from the Office of Indian Affairs, Indian warehouses & special agents, chronological arrangement, Feb. 24, 1871-Dec. 31, 1877, Box 2, RG 75, NARA-KC.

was available. In the spring the tribe returned to the Red Cloud Agency, "with the sad realization that they had been on their last buffalo hunt."[116]

The federal government also continued to provide far less beef than Indian agents requested. In 1875 Indian Agent J. J. Saville stated in his report that it would take 14,782,500 pounds of beef to feed the Oglala, and Northern Cheyenne around Red Cloud Agency because each steer shipped was producing only 300 net pounds of beef. The government contracted for only nine million pounds. For a population of about six thousand Indians, nine million gross pounds of beef would provide anywhere from 250 to 500 net pounds of beef per person for that year. The amount Saville asked for would have produced from 410 to 820 net pounds of beef per person. The impending Treaty of 1877 increased the beef ration from one, to one and a half pounds of beef per day. Unfortunately, the government continued to use gross poundage delivered as the measuring system towards meeting its responsibilities, and thus fell far short of its treaty obligations.

With an understanding of the region's productive capabilities and the tribe's recent historical experiences it seemed increasingly clear to Red Cloud and other Oglala leaders that stock raising provided the best hope for the solid economic foundation. The tribe understood the need to achieve economic self-sufficiency if they hoped to maintain cultural continuity. Economic independence might provide the political and social power needed to resist American assimilationist policies. Moreover, some of the Red Cloud Agency's Indian Agents also understood clearly that the development of a cattle industry was crucial to the tribe's economic independence. In 1875

[116] George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1937), 229.

Agent J. J. Saville stated in his report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that, "the primary question of civilization is subsistence. This question presents peculiar difficulties in this country. If the Indians become self-supporting, it must be by the same pursuits that the white people engage in, viz, stock-raising." From June 27th to 29th of the same year a council was held to discuss the tribe's relinquishment of the Black Hills and all hunting rights in that area.

During the course of this meeting the tribe clearly demonstrated its understanding of the value of cattle in this region and the future benefits that could be derived from the establishment of a tribal herd. The United States offered the tribe $25,000 total for their hunting rights, and the Oglala said that if such a decision came to pass then they wanted the equivalent of the money to be paid in cattle, horses, and harnesses and wagons. Chief Spotted Tail stated, "I want to live on the interest of my money. (received for the loss of the Black Hills) The amount must be so large that the interest will support us…I will trade some of it for stock to raise cattle…we want some good cattle every year." According to the "Final Proposition of Council IV" the Lakota were to receive from the United States government for the loss of the Black Hills, "$50,000 for ten years to be paid in good American cows and other livestock, and in such implements of husbandry as are convenient to stock-growing and as may be deemed advisable by the President."[117]

However, the treaty failed to guarantee that the federal government would in good faith fulfill its obligations. On August 10th of that same

[117] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 44th Cong., 1st sess., 1875-1876, Serial No. 1680, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1876) Agent Saville's comments pertaining to stock-raising are found on p.753. The Oglala's council with the federal government's representatives is found on pp. 690-693.

summer in a meeting between the Lakota Chiefs and a committee investigating fraud at the Red Cloud Agency Chief Little Wound complained that, "the wagons had not come yet; the cattle and horses had been delivered, but the cattle were small and the horses were wild and could not be broken." Clearly, either the Indian agent in the field or the suppliers did not intend for the Oglala to partake fully in the burgeoning regional cattle industry. Further insights into the troubles the tribe would face in its attempt to build an economy based upon ranching was provided by the Chairman of that committee, the former Governor of Missouri Thomas C. Fletcher, who opened that June meeting of 1875 by admonishing the Oglala to, "learn the white man's way of agriculture and husbandry."[118]

By 1875 the Oglala Lakota's life as a nomadic hunting group that lived and depended upon the great herds of buffalo was rapidly nearing an end. Colonel George Armstrong Custer's Black Hills Expedition of 1874 confirmed the existence of large gold deposits in the Lakota sacred mountains. As miners poured into the region the United States government sought to negotiate the Lakota's surrender of their beloved *Paha Sapa.* The flood of whites to the region increased tensions, especially in the minds of Wyoming citizens. As the Black Hills issue simmered hotly Red Cloud ignored the issue.[119]

At the time Red Cloud, the preeminent Chief of the Oglala at that time, found himself locked into a struggle for power with the Agent, J.J. Saville. Red Cloud traveled to Washington, D.C. again in 1875 in order lay claims of corruption at Saville's doorstep and thus obtain a new agent. Red Cloud

[118] James C. Olson, *Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), 192-193.
[119] Larson, *Red Cloud*, 165-169.

succeeded eventually, Agent Saville resigned while in Washington defending himself, and finally left his post on December 3, 1876, but the Black Hills issue awaited Red Cloud upon his return.[120]

In the fall of 1875 the Allison Commission, led by Iowa Senator William Allison, held a conference to discuss the tribe's surrender of the Black Hills. While these negotiations ultimately failed to resolve the conflict the negotiations revealed the tribe's changing perspective concerning the importance of cattle in Lakota political economy. As noted at the beginning of this chapter both Red Cloud and Spotted Tail demanded that cattle be made available to the Lakota for their subsistence.[121]

These contentious debates hardened the hearts and strengthened the resolve of many Lakota to refuse any demands for the Black Hills and continue their traditional way of life. As reports reached the east of Lakota intransigence concerning the issue President Grant sought for a way to take the Black Hills without violating the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. In the end he issued a demand that all Lakota return to their agencies by January 31st, 1876, or be declared hostile. He did so knowing full well that the Lakota tribes had already made winter camps and could not, nor would not, obey such an order. The result was the summer campaign that resulted in the pyrrhic victory of the Lakota Nation over Colonel Custer's forces at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.[122]

After Colonel Nelson A. Miles chased Crazy Horse throughout the winter of 1876-77, and drove Sitting Bull across the border into Canada a new Peace Commission arrived to settled the Black Hills issue. The Manypenny

[120] Ibid, 167.
[121] Ibid, 186-194.
[122] Ibid, 198-204.

Commission, led by former Commissioner of Indian Affairs George W. Manypenny, proved far more effective in settling the dispute for several reasons. The most important of which is that they ignored Article 12 of The 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie concerning the required signatures of ¾ of all adult Lakota males for any future treaties. With Red Cloud in attendance an agreement was reached pertaining to the disposition of the Black Hills.[123]

In The Treaty of 1877 the Oglala gave up the western third of their reservation, which included the Black Hills, and their hunting rights west of the Black Hills in exchange for federal assurance that they would not be removed to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. This agreement of 1877 stated that the, "Indians do hereby relinquish and cede to the United States all the territory lying outside the said reservation…including all privileges of hunting." The tribe undoubtedly continued to kill buffalo when the opportunity presented itself but the federal government no longer allowed the Lakota freedom or means to pursue the ever-dwindling herds of bison. The decreased spatial mobility brought about by the treaty, coupled with a greater awareness of the economic crisis that loomed ahead if buffalo numbers continued to drop, led the reservation Oglala to seek an alternative economic foundation based upon cattle.[124]

It is also worth noting that the promulgation of the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, which created The Great Sioux Reservation, and the subsequent Treaty of 1877, set in motion a significant evolution in Oglala spatial

[123] Ibid, 205-213.
[124] *The Statutes at Large of the United States of America, from December, 1875, to March 1877, and Recent Treaties, Postal Conventions, and Executive Proclamations*, Vol. XIX (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1877), 255. The federal representatives ignored Article XII of the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie by not obtaining three fourths of adult male signatures for its ratification.

perceptions. For the first decade following the treaty the tribe still enjoyed access to the Black Hills and its geographical power centers. However, with the discovery of gold in the Black Hills and the subsequent renegotiations that resulted in the Sioux Treaty of 1877 the tribe was separated from the center of their cosmological universe. The United States government, in an effort to contain and control the tribe, and isolate it from white settlers, desperately sought to "fix" the Oglalas' geographical location.

The spatial struggle for control between the United States and the Oglala appeared most markedly over efforts by the federal government to both continually attempt to move the agency to the Missouri river and take a census. Between the summer of 1871 and 1878 the agency moved four times. From its location 32 miles south of Fort Laramie it moved to a location on the White River near Camp Robinson in northwest Nebraska. In 1877 the Oglala were forced to move the agency to the Missouri River near the mouth of Medicine Creek after the Sioux War of 1876-77. The tribe returned to their preferred territory in the west in 1878 when the agency made its final move to White Clay Creek when it became known as Pine Ridge Agency.[125]

In the winter of 1873-74 Agent J.J. Saville sought to count the Oglala despite adamant Oglala opposition. His attempt almost got him killed. Agent Saville left the agency to count the tribe only to find himself surrounded by a group of rather unhappy warriors and escorted back to the agency where he was rescued from an untimely execution by Red Cloud and Little Wound. However, the Oglala soon learned that the census might prove an avenue to a

[125] Larson, *Red Cloud*, 140-223.

greater issue of rations. The higher the population, the more goods issued. As a result, a census was completed by Saville in the winter of 1874-75, and Agent Saville counted 9,339 Oglala at Red Cloud Agency, as well as over a thousand each of Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapahoe. Undoubtedly, these numbers were inflated. A more accurate count finally occurred over a decade later, but in the meantime the Oglala utilized the census to gain access to a larger number of issued rations. However, this does not mean the tribe received an adequate food supply as previously noted or that such concessions did not provide the federal government increased spatial control over the tribe.[126]

The United States government sought spatial control in order to observe, judge, and then enforce assimilationist policies. These polices included eventual bans on tribal rituals, dances, and ceremonies the tribe viewed as vital in maintaining cultural order and stability within an increasingly chaotic world. The Oglala unable to access important geographical conduits to *Wakan Tanka,* and hindered from performing ceremonies designed to maintain cultural stability and strength, faced a crisis within their concept of "vertical geography." Eventually, this crisis would include the introduction to the new spiritual power of Catholicism. The spiritual crisis created by the imminent loss of the tribe's cosmological universe concerned the tribe greatly. Yet the economic crisis created by the

[126] Ibid, 156-159.

loss of hunting grounds and opportunities dominated the tribe's thoughts and actions concerning reservation existence.[127]

The decision to turn toward a cattle centered economy seems obvious when one understands the environmental conditions of the region and the pastoral lifestyle of the Oglala. However, there are several important questions that require examination concerning the Oglala's evolving political economy. The following are questions historians have so far failed to address in regard to the liminal period of cultural transition to reservation life for Native American groups unused to such confinement. What other factors than the environment led the Oglala Lakota to increasingly center their reservation political economy on cattle after 1877? Were there other options? And if so what ultimately led the tribe to choose cattle as their economic foundation within the reservation system?

Oglala historical experiences during the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century provide insights into why the tribe developed an economic strategy based increasingly upon cattle following the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. Moreover, a comparison between Hunkpapa and Oglala early reservation economic strategies illuminates Oglala decision-making processes. An 1880 special government census made at Standing Rock Reservation, as well as Agent's reports for both Standing Rock and Pine Ridge Reservations during the same period reveal startling contrasts in economic strategy between the Hunkpapa and Oglala. It is this contrast that opens a window into the differing factors that shaped Agency/Reservation survival strategies for two of the tribes within the Teton branch of the Lakota

[127] Matthew G. Hannah, "Space and social control in the administration of the Oglala Lakota (Sioux), 1871-1879," *Journal of Historical Geography,* Vol. 19, No. 4, (1993), 412-432.

Nation. These two tribes, with the same language, culture and recent history of both violent expansion, and resistance to American expansion, chose very different economic strategies with the hope of achieving the same end, that of economic self-sufficiency and stability.

For the Hunkpapa of Standing Rock Agency in 1880, farming seemed to offer the most acceptable, and perhaps best, chance for economic independence. Thirty out of forty-five families farmed an average of 5.2 acres of land per family and had done so for an average of 2.6 years, while only one family killed seventeen buffalo and four deer. These same families also lived in log houses; while non-farming Hunkpapa and all Oglala lived in lodges. Moreover, the 30 Hunkpapa families that farmed owned 124 cattle, 78 horses, 378 domestic fowl, and kept 121 dogs. They also grew 215 tons of hay, 663 bushels of corn, 47 bushels of potatoes, and two families grew pumpkins and melons.[128]

The most successful agriculturalists were Crow Feather, 42, and his wife Elk, 37. They had lived for eight years near Grand River in a log house, on a 160-acre allotment without patent, and had worked the land for three-years. The had three daughters, Grey 22, Pretty White Buffalo 10, and Red Medicine 6, and two sons, Lone Man 5, and One They Pray To age 2. As a family they cultivated 13 tons of hay and 45 bushels of corn on six acres. They owned three horses, six chickens, four cattle and kept four dogs.

[128] Ibid.

Moreover, Crow Feather had accepted "civilized" dress for the last four years and dressed his eldest son Lone Man in a like manner for two years.[129]

On the other hand, the Oglala overwhelmingly rejected government pressures to farm and instead put their faith in hunting, herding stock cattle, or engaging in wage labor. According to the 1880 special census, of the 95 Oglala families that lived near Standing Rock Agency 63 engaged only in hunting, which brought the tribe 2,793 buffalo and almost 400 deer, while none farmed.

A comparison between Hunkpapa and Oglala survival strategies comes into sharper focus when one compares the annual Agent's reports for the two tribes from 1879 to 1881. In 1879 the new Agent, J.A. Stephan was very optimistic concerning the future of farming on Standing Rock. He noted that rainfall had increased for the last seven years and grasshoppers had disappeared over the last two years. While only 706 acres were under cultivation he believed 1,200 more would soon be plowed. The Hunkpapa seemed eager to farm, with 122 heads of households agreeing to accept claims of 80 acres each, both north and south of the agency on the Missouri River. He hoped that since wheat farming was going so well around Bismarck it might catch on with Standing Rock Indians as well. Agent Stephan reported an abundant crop of 25,000 bushels of corn.[130]

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[129] Ibid.

[130] Report of Agent J.A. Stephan to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 21, 1879, "Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs," in *Report of the Secretary of the Interior Being Part of the Message and Documents Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress at the Beginning of the Second Session of the Forty-Sixth Congress*, Vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879) pp. 152-156, population figures come from pp. 336-337.

What is striking about the 1879 Agents' reports for Standing Rock and Pine Ridge is the disparity between the percentages of Indians engaged in horticultural pursuits. Agent Stephan's report showed 595 families at Standing Rock engaged in agriculture, and at an average of 4.15 per family that accounts for the entire Indian population of 2,583. The same year at Pine Ridge only 200 Oglala families engaged in agriculture, or about 912 out of a population of 7,250, or 12.6% (See Table No. 2).[131]

Table No. 2: Comparison of Pine Ridge and Standing Rock Agency Agricultural Production and Stock Ownership, 1879-1881.

	Pop-year	Acres Farmed	Families Farming	Bushels Corn	Bushels Vegetables	Tons Hay	Cattle	Income Freighting
PR 1879	7,250	1,500	200	500	4,150	2,000	2,500	$41,000
SR 1879	2,583	706	595	25,000	13,175	1,060	651	0
PR 1880	7,200	1,800	500	800	4,160	2,100	3,500	0
SR 1880	2,611	1,581	385	36,000	10,580	2,069	660	0
PR 1881	7,200	2,000	625	1,000	5,250	2,700	4,500	$41,382
SR 1881	2,637	1,486	553	8,000	5,200	3,000	1,206	0

All figures come from Agents annual reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

The Oglala farmers fared poorly their first year. They broke 1,500 acres of ground but cultivated only 500 bushels of corn, 4,150 bushels of vegetables, 2,000 tons of hay and 300 pounds of oats and barley. However, in 1878 the Oglala began freighting agency supplies from Rosebud Landing on the Missouri River, some 200 miles away, with 100 wagons issued by the government. Agent V.T. McGillycuddy stated that at first they had trouble

[131] I calculate my numbers from the 1880 special census, which averaged for the Oglala 4.56 individuals per family and for the Hunkpapa 4.16 individuals per family.

controlling the teams but by 1879 they had 300 wagons in use, 50 of which were purchased by the tribe with freighting proceeds. They hauled over 2,000,000 pounds of freight and earned over $41,000 in cash during the year.[132] Clearly, the Hunkpapa at Standing Rock chose farming as their economic strategy toward accommodation with agency life, while the Oglala for the most part rejected farming despite significant pressure from misguided government officials.[133]

Agent reports for 1880 and 1881 reveal a continuation and expansion of the same economic patterns and strategies. In 1880 Indians at Standing Rock farmed a total of 1,581 acres, over double from the year before, and had raised 36,000 bushels of corn, 10,580 bushels of vegetables, and over 2,000 tons of hay.[134] At Pine Ridge the number of acres cultivated increased a mere 300 acres during the same period, from 1,500 to 1,800, and yielded just 4,160 bushels of vegetables, 2,100 tons of hay, and negligible crops of corn, oats,

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[132] Report of Agent V.T. McGillycuddy to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 15, 1879, "Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs," in *Report of the Secretary of the Interior Being Part of the Message and Documents Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress at the Beginning of the Second Session of the Forty-Sixth Congress*, Vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879) pp. 143-146, population figures come from pp. 336-337, Pine Ridge agricultural figures come from pp. 354-355.

[133] The Oglala were pushed toward farming in order to create Thomas Jefferson's vision of the yeoman farmer, which was believed would allow Indians to become "civilized" and thus become assimilated into Anglo-American culture, see, Bernard Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974); For other citations of government pressure on the Oglala to farm see, Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 44th Cong., 1st sess., 1875-1876, Serial No. 1680, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1876) pp. 690-693; Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 39th Cong., 2nd sess., 1866-1867, Serial No. 1284, (Washington: Government Printing Office), 5; and Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 48th Cong., 2nd sess., 1884-1885, Serial No. 2287, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885), 81-82.

[134] Report of Agent J.A. Stephan to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 1, 1880, "Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs," in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior on the Operations of the Department for the Year Ended June 30, 1880*, Vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880) pp. 382-383.

and barley. However, the Oglala increased their herd of cattle from 2,500 in '79, to 3,500 in 1880.[135]

The following year proved less fortunate for the Hunkpapa. In 1881, while still farming 1,486 acres the Standing Rock tribes experienced severe storms, and both hot winds and hot weather that killed many crops. That year their efforts yielded 8,000 bushels of corn, 5,200 bushels of vegetables, and 3,000 tons of hay, a significant drop from the year before.[136]

In 1881 the Oglala at Pine Ridge faired much better. Between 700 and 800 young Oglala men were employed in freighting, and they hauled over 2,000,000 pounds of freight and earned $41,382 in cash. Agricultural efforts on Pine Ridge again proved minimal, bringing in 5,250 bushels of vegetables and 2,700 tons of hay on 2,000 acres of land. Their cattle herd increased to 4,500 from 3,500, and would continue to grow in the years to come.[137] In 1883 the Oglala cattle herd numbered 5,500.[138] And by 1889 the herd reached 10,968 strong.[139] The Hunkpapa and Oglala clearly chose different economic survival strategies for reservation life (See Table No. 3 below). So again,

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[135] Ibid.
[136] Report of Agent J.A. Stephan to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 7, 1881, "Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs," in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior on the Operations of the Department for the Year Ended June 30, 1881*, Vol. 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1882) pp. 115-118, 352-353.
[137] Report of Agent V.T. McGillycuddy to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 1, 1881, "Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs," in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior on the Operations of the Department for the Year Ended June 30, 1881*, Vol. 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1882) pp. 102-108, figures for cattle and crops come from pp. 352-353.
[138] Report of Agent V.T. McGillycuddy to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 19, 1883, "Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs," in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal year Ended June 30, 1883*, Vol. 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883) pp. 346-347.
[139] Executive Document, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1889-1890, Serial No. 2725, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 156.

what led two such closely linked societies, tied together both in language and culture, to choose such divergent economic paths?

Table No. 3: Percentage of Oglala and Hunkpapa engaged in horticulture, 1879-1881.

	Total Population	Families Farming	Average Family Size x Families Farming	Percentage of Tribe Farming
Pine Ridge, 1879	7,250	200	4.56 x 200=912	12.6%
Standing Rock, 1879	2,583	595	4.15 x 595=2,469	95.5%
Pine Ridge, 1880	7,200	500	4.56 x 500=2,280	31.7%
Standing Rock, 1880	2,611	385	4.15 x 385=1,598	61.2%
Pine Ridge, 1881	7,200	625	4.56 x 625=2,850	39.6%
Standing Rock, 1881	2,637-Not counted 2,719 "prisoners"	553	4.15 x 553=2,295	87.0%

The "average family size" is derived from calculations from the 1880 special census. The Oglala averaged 4.56 per family on that census. The Hunkpapa averaged 4.15 per family.

The answer lies both in their historical experiences during the 19th century and their tribal structure. Lakota culture consisted of a loose confederation of seven tribes, themselves made up of various bands whose societal foundation consisted of patriarchal led family units called *tiospaye*.[140] Despite sharing the same language and culture these tribes operated independently of one another, which created a political atmosphere that promoted independent decision-making.[141] For example, after a brief

[140] Tiospaye are "sometimes defined as flexible exogamous residential units organized around a core of bilaterally related kin." See Paul M. Robertson, "The Power of the Land: Identity, Ethnicity, and Class among the Oglala, Lakota," (Ph.D. dissertation, Union Institute, 1995), 4.
[141] See, George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1937), 21. This text offers an outstanding history of the Oglala, Lakota before 1877, their movements and inter and intra-tribal relations; see also, White, "The Winning of the West," 321.

flirtation with an agricultural way of life near the Missouri River in the 1770s the Oglala advanced west with the Brulé tribe in search of buffalo for an increased robe trade.[142]

Between 1800 and 1820 the Oglala and Brulé hunted mainly between the Cheyenne and Teton Rivers and along the White River.[143] By 1825 they moved south toward the Platte River, and west toward the Powder and Tongue Rivers in search of buffalo. During this period the Oglala and Brulé battled other nomadic equestrian societies, such as the Kiowa, Crow, and formed alliances with the Arapahoe and Cheyenne. Between the 1830s and 1870s the Oglala and Brulé proceeded west to the Big Horn River and south to the headwaters of the Republican and Smokey Hill Rivers.

As a result, the Oglala experienced no direct contact with the more sedentary agricultural tribes that inhabited the Missouri River valleys, such as the Mandan, Hidatsas, Arikara, Ponca and Omaha after 1790. The only sedentary tribe the Oglala encountered during the 19th century was the Pawnee along the Republican and Smokey Hill Rivers by the 1840s. However, their meetings were the product of raids, which provided little chance for cultural exchange.[144]

The Hunkpapa, for much of the 19th century, chose a different course. While the Oglala moved south and west in the late 18th and early 19th century, the Hunkpapa remained near the Missouri River. By 1830, together with the Yankton, Yanktonais, and other Saone tribes, the Hunkpapa dominated the

[142] White, "The Winning of the West," 324.
[143] Ibid, 327n.
[144] Ibid, 333-335, 337-339.

Missouri River trade. They either traded with or raided such sedentary agricultural tribes as the Arikara, Ponca and Omaha. During this decade they also began to expand both north and south along the Missouri River, both to obtain horses needed for hunting and war, and to more completely control both trade and hunting options of the sedentary tribes who still farmed the Missouri River valleys. Dominance over such tribes allowed the Hunkpapa to both obtain, either through trade or raiding, carbohydrates such as corn and beans, and expand their trade supremacy along the Missouri River. In fact such constant and inexorable pressure from the Sioux led the Arikara to abandon their villages along the Missouri River and settled near the Skidi Pawnee in Nebraska and Kansas in 1832.[145]

It was not until the 1840s when part of the Hunkpapa moved west of the Missouri River. They traveled west in order to help other Lakota, including the Oglala and Brulé, rest hunting grounds from the Crow. During the 1840s other bands of Hunkpapa moved north along the Missouri River into Canada where they fought with Metis, Plains Crees, and Assiniboines for access to the dwindling buffalo herds.[146] From the 1850s on both the Hunkpapa and the Oglala experienced a growing and inevitable conflict with the United States. They saw the buffalo disappearing in ever increasing numbers, and they felt the pressure of white expansion. Both tribes enjoyed

[145] Ibid, 329, 331, 333; Saone is a term to describe the five Teton groups that did not expand west with the Oglala and Brulé—the Hunkpapa, Minniconjou, Sans Arc, Two Kettles, and Blackfeet, White, "The Winning of the West," 321; see also, Edward A. Milligan, *Dakota Twilight: The Standing Rock Sioux, 1874-1890* (Hicksville, New York: Exposition Press, 1976), 4. This book is poorly written and subjective but contains some useful information pertaining to Standing Rock.
[146] Ibid, 337-338.

victories, and they both experienced irreversible defeats. And by the 1870s many Oglala had settled near an agency, first near Fort Laramie and then Fort Robinson. The Hunkpapa did the same near Fort Yates.

Clearly, despite linguistic and cultural constants, the Oglala and Hunkpapa experienced very different cultural interactions during the 19th century. The Oglala migrated west in the 1790s; thus, they were both insulated from agrarian influences, and isolated within a cultural milieu of nomadic hunting societies such as the Cheyenne and Crow. It is more than likely that by the 1870s few if any Oglala remained who had interacted with an agrarian culture. As a result the Oglala rejected the unfamiliar economic strategy of farming in favor of a tribal cattle herd and the economic freedom afforded them from income provided by wage labor in the freighting business.

Concomitantly, the Hunkpapa were consistently exposed to both the workings and benefits derived from native communities who farmed. The Hunkpapa had either traded with or raided a significant number of sedentary tribes, such as the Arikara and Omaha, throughout the 19th century. This contact almost certainly convinced some Hunkpapa band chiefs to seek economic stability and independence through the cultivation of the soil rather than other options. One such band chief of the Hunkpapa, Thunder Hawk, started farming in 1874, and two-thirds of his followers did likewise shortly thereafter. By 1880, the year of the special census, Thunder Hawk and his family worked seven acres, which yielded a crop consisting of 8.5 tons of hay, 21 bushels of corn, and 12.5 bushels of Potatoes. He also owned two horses,

five cattle, three pigs, 24 chickens, and kept 11 dogs. Moreover, his was the only family on the census who was not wholly or partially supported by the government.

This comparison demonstrates clearly that 19th century tribal experiences greatly influenced the economic strategies for the Oglala and Hunkpapa. The Hunkpapa, who experienced intimate connections with sedentary horticulturalist tribes within their recent memory, preferred farming as a reservation economic foundation. Conversely, the Oglala, isolated from such sedentary societies since the 1790s, overwhelmingly rejected a future of planting and harvesting as their economic hope. Instead they sought more immediately familiar economic strategies that involved riding herd and driving teams. Unfortunately, in the end neither achieved its goal of economic self-sufficiency and independence.

An examination of the experiences of the Northern Cheyenne at Tongue River Reservation in southeastern Montana demonstrated similarities concerning the economic evolutions that occurred in Oglala culture. First of all, the Northern Cheyenne were close allies of the Lakota and often lived and fought beside them during the zenith of their regional power. In fact a contingent of 517 Northern Cheyenne resided on Pine Ridge Reservation as late as 1890.[147] These two tribes shared considerable cultural characteristics. They both enjoyed the equestrian nomadic way of life that depended upon the buffalo for its economic continuation. Both tribes consisted of a loose confederation of extended family groups tied to one another by a shared

[147] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 51st Cong.,2nd sess., 1890-1891, Serial No. 2841, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891), 50.

language and history. And finally, they closely resembled each other in dress, mannerisms, and even adopted some words of the others language into their own vocabulary.

A striking example of this similarity occurred on May 28, 1877 in Darlington, Oklahoma. On that date a group of Northern Cheyenne arrived on the Southern Cheyenne reservation in Indian Territory after being removed from the Northern Plains. Upon arrival Little Rogue, a Southern Cheyenne, gestured at his Northern brethren and asked, "What are the 'Sioux' doing here?" The Southern Cheyenne failed to recognize their Northern brothers as part of their own culture, and they expressed no joy at this forced reunion. The two divisions of the Cheyenne continued to bicker at one another until the Northern Cheyenne under the leadership of Dull Knife and Little Wolf fled the Cheyenne-Arapaho Agency. Eventually, after much hard travel and privation, Dull Knife's band found sanctuary with the Oglala at Pine Ridge. Their descendents made up the contingent of Northern Cheyenne the inhabited Pine Ridge for the next thirteen years.[148] The Northern Cheyenne inhabiting Pine Ridge later joined other bands of their own tribe on the Tongue River Indian Reservation in southeastern Montana.

Moreover, other factors demonstrate clearly the relevance of a comparison of the Oglala at Pine Ridge the Northern Cheyenne at Tongue River Indian Reservation. For example the Northern Cheyenne also faced problems from a white community hostile to their very presence at the Tongue River. Surrounding cattle interests campaigned for the tribe's removal to Indian Territory throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The

[148] Orlan J. Svingen, *The Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, 1877-1900* (Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1993), 19.

cattlemen hoped to gain valuable grazing lands for their ever-growing herds and rid themselves of possible economic competition.[149] The white man's fear of economic competition, especially from a defeated and seemingly inferior foe, hindered both the Oglala and the Northern Cheyenne tribes' ability to participate equally in the expanding capitalistic economic system of the United States.

Nonetheless, while the Tongue River Reservation contained only 460,000 acres by 1900, an increase of 204,000 acres since 1884, and fewer than a thousand Northern Cheyenne, they too hoped to gain economic independence through a tribal cattle industry. By 1880 the Northern Cheyenne had branded their small herds and according to General Nelson Miles they took as much pride in their cattle as they did any of their other possessions.[150] Unfortunately, the almost mystical, and certainly mythical, image of the independent yeoman farmer as the backbone of a democratic and free nation offered an unyielding blueprint for the assimilation of Native Americans into American society.

And as with the Oglala, the Northern Cheyenne in Montana were encouraged to farm rather than raise cattle. For each tribe the goal of establishing a self-sustaining communally owned cattle herd to serve as the foundation of a new reservation economy faced difficulties. Nonetheless, as the 1870s drew to a close the reservation Oglala sought to maintain their political and social infrastructure through economic independence from the United States. Independence represented by the bawl, pungency, and shape of

[149] Ibid., xxi, 30-36, 81.
[150] Ibid., 29, 145.

another ungulate of the Great Plains, the cow.[151]

The hunt referred to at the top of this chapter demonstrated one method used by the Oglala to hold on to familiar methods of meat procurement, which entailed the active pursuit and killing of the prey animal from horseback. However, the federal government later successfully ended that particular manner of slaughtering and butchering of the Oglala tribes' issued beef because of its "barbarity." Moreover, other Oglala techniques used for the care and distribution of stock following the Treaty of 1877, which promoted Oglala cultural continuity, faced significant governmental intervention. This occurred because American society did not readily accept deviation from emerging cultural beliefs concerning the market economy, property, and individualism. As a result, the United States government would eventually force the Oglala to work within American concepts concerning cattle ranching and farming.[152]

Ultimately, the fact that the federal government turned loose hundreds of steers for the Oglala to hunt in a familiar, or "traditional," manner represents more than a fascinating example of the United States-Indian relationship. It demonstrated the beginning of economic change that forever altered Oglala tribal culture. For although the Oglala knew of cattle and oxen before this period, predominantly from settlers who crossed Lakota territory heading west, bovines were never more than a target of opportunity in raiding or hunting to supplement a diet based almost completely on buffalo meat. However, as buffalo began to disappear from the Northern Plains, the federal

[151] Ibid, 31.
[152]For an in-depth study pertaining to the origin of Western American cattle ranching see the seminal work of Terry G. Jordan, *North American Cattle Ranching Frontiers: Origins, Diffusion, and Differentiations* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993).

government, through a series of treaties, accepted responsibility for providing the Lakota with an adequate food supply. After this development the relationship between the Oglala and cattle evolved into something quite new. Cattle progressed from a target of convenience to a replacement for the quickly diminishing buffalo herds. However, the steers and cows supplied to the tribe meant more than replacement protein. For the Lakota, cattle represented both an opportunity to continue their equestrian and nomadic way of life as a self-sufficient and independent people, and a vehicle that could revolutionize not only their economy, but their culture.

CHAPTER THREE

From Buffalo to Beeves: Cattle as a Vehicle for Cultural Continuation, 1877-1889

The Lakota experienced wrenching cultural changes in the years following the loss of *Paha Sapa* in the illegal treaty of 1876. The vital relationship to *Wakan Tanka* and the spirits of their birth disappeared with their exclusion from their religious center. The severing of this connection profoundly affected the Lakota's expectations for the future. Already the tribe saw signs of a strained relationship with the buffalo. The earth no longer seemed to give birth to buffalo in abundance; the White Buffalo Woman's gift appeared to be in danger. In an effort to provide for a future without buffalo, a concept never considered just a brief decade ago, the Lakota in general, and the Oglala in particular, turned to the raising and herding of cattle as a viable option for continued economic self-sufficiency.

In the eyes of many Oglala leaders the establishment of a large communal herd of cattle offered the best opportunity for the continuation of their pre-reservation society based on equestrian nomadism. Cattle offered a chance for the tribe to remain mobile and horsed as they followed their herds. Moreover, the eventual exchange, or gifting, of cattle for bride prices and various societal services, such as healing or for ceremonial success, promised another avenue for cultural continuation during the reservation era. Much like the horse before them, cattle stood ready to take a place among the tribe's pantheon of animals possessing power, or *wakan*.[153]

Furthermore, once established, communally and individually owned cattle herds might act as both a buffer and a link between Oglala and white

[153] James R. Walker, edited by Raymond J. DeMallie and Elaine A. Jahner, *Lakota Belief and Ritual* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), 167-168.

society. By providing economic stability cattle might act as a buffer against American cultural hegemony and dominance while simultaneously linking the tribe to western culture as they ensconced themselves within the regional cattle industry. However, the Oglala tribes' vision concerning their economic future faced considerable obstacles.

During this liminal early reservation period, as buffalo numbers dwindled and tribal mobility diminished, the Oglala Lakota developed a dynamic economic strategy founded on the creation of a tribal cattle herd. They based their decision upon intimate environmental knowledge, a clear understanding of the emerging regional cattle industry initiated by white entrepreneurs, and their unfamiliarity concerning agricultural pursuits exhorted by the American federal government. Because the Oglala, along with the Brule, spearheaded the Lakota migration south and west across the Missouri River the tribe unintentionally insulated itself from agricultural societies and thus rejected American governmental demands to institute an economy based upon farming. Moreover, the American government's failure to fulfill its 1876 treaty obligations pertaining to the beef issue acted as further impetus in the decision to establish a tribal cattle herd.

An example of the tribe's economic desperation was revealed in 1879, and again in 1881. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs denied Young-Man-Afraid-of-His-Horses permission to hunt the Yellowstone and Upper Missouri rivers because of the possibility of conflict with settlers. This denial occurred because the Oglala sometimes targeted surrounding ranches during their intermittent hunting forays. The tribal hunters allegedly killed some of the neighboring ranchers' cattle, stole horses, and forced herders to surrender food

and ammunition.[154]

The Wyoming Stock Growers Association complained to Governor Hale of Wyoming concerning this matter in 1883. The Association noted all of the above infractions and added that the Indians offered up their women for prostitution in exchange for food. The WSGA also noted that most of the offending hunters possessed passes issued by the local Indian Agent. The white members of the WSGA undoubtedly exaggerated greatly in regards to these alleged charges in order to gain federal support in limiting Indian access to what the ranchers considered their grazing lands.[155]

However, the fact that some of the tribe's hunts targeted cattle indicates that the Oglala could not find, or lacked access to, the remnant herds of bison that disappeared from the Great Plains by 1885. It further demonstrates that the tribe was sufficiently hungry to risk hostilities by taking white men's stock, and their own fledgling tribal herd remained insufficient in size to provide for their needs. The tribe's association with the buffalo was all but dead, and cattle would soon replace the great shaggy beasts of the Plains not only as the tribe's primary source of sustenance, but as the foundation of a new tribal economy.

Moreover, when one compares the actual beef issue to the proscribed treaty amounts it becomes clear why the Oglala eagerly sought to implement a more reliable economic tribal strategy. For example, in order for the federal government to comply with the Treaty of 1876, each tribal member counted

[154] Letter received by Agent V. T. McGillycuddy from Commissioner Hayt on October 25, 1879, General Records, Box 3, Jan. 1, 1878-Dec. 26, 1879, RG 75, NARA-KC, and Letter received by Agent McGillycuddy from Commissioner H. Price on Oct. 20, 1881, General Records, Box 5, April 26, 1881-June 6, 1882, RG 75, NARA-KC.
[155] Letter received by Agent McGillycuddy from Commissioner Price, Nov. 13, 1883, General Records, Box 6, June 12, 1882-Dec. 1883, RG 75, NARA-KC.

on being issued 1 ½ pounds of meat per day, which when multiplied by 365 days, averaged out to 548 pounds of beef per. In an examination of the recorded beef rations during the seven-year period from 1879 to 1885, calculations pertaining to the average ration per person revealed that each tribal member received somewhere between 175 to 350 net pounds of beef per year. (See Table No. 4) [156]

However, those numbers were skewed by the fact that the beef was weighed on the hoof, not after being slaughtered. Thus, one may assume that beef poundage actually supplied fell well below what the government promised. The higher figure assumed no spoilage, shrinkage, or loss of any kind after processing, while the lower figure allows for a 50% rate of loss. As the last column in the table indicates the beef rations for this period failed to meet the individual 548-pound yearly requirement by at least 200 pounds a year. Not surprisingly, the Oglala concomitantly accelerated their efforts toward building a cattle herd in order to provide economic self-sufficiency.

[156] These numbers were compiled from an agency record book entitled, *Weigher's Returns of Beef Cattle, March 29, 1879-June 26, 1886*, Administrative Records, Box 754, RG 75, NARA-KC. This ledger also contains the dates received, the numbers of steers received for each date, the total weight received for each date, and the names of the sellers who delivered the cattle to the agency.

Table No. 4: Federal Beef Rations to the Oglala Lakota, 1879-1885.

Year	Tribal Population	Gross Pounds of Beef Issued	Net Pounds of Beef Available	Net lbs of Beef Per Person
1879	7,000	7,522,807	2,482,526	178-355
1880	7,200	7,988,712	2,636,275	183-366
1881	7,500	8,753,332	2,888,589	193-385
1882	7,500	7,430,282	2,451,993	163-327
1883	7,800	8,280,262	2,732,487	175-350
1884	8,300	8,055,075	2,658,175	160-320
1885	7,649	7,941,438	2,620,675	172-343
Avg.	7,564	7,916,028	2,638,676	175-350

Note that the net poundage for each year was probably somewhat lower than presented because all calculations were based upon the weight of the cattle when they arrived at the agency. I was unable to take into account weight losses caused by winter forage difficulties and deaths. The population figures are compiled from Indian Agents' Reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The information provided concerning the pounds of beef issued was compiled from an agency record book entitled, Weigher's Returns of Beef Cattle, March 29, 1879-June 1886, Administrative Records, Box 754, RG 75, NARA-KC. This ledger also contains the dates received, the numbers of steers received for each date, the total weight received for each date, and the names of the sellers who delivered the cattle to the agency.

Faced with both a shrinking land base and buffalo population following the Treaty of 1876 the tribe moved quickly to raise a substantial cattle herd. Tribal leaders proactively examined each beef issue for any young heifers or cows mingled amongst the steers and gathered unbranded stock on the reservation to augment government issued cattle. By 1879 the Oglala as a tribe owned 1,622 head of stock cattle. Agent V. T. McGillycuddy predicted that cattle afforded the tribe their best chance for growing a self-supporting economy. As per the Treaty of 1876 the Department of the Interior issued 500 cows and heifers and 22 bulls, all of

which possessed at least 1/4 blood American stock. [157] (American stock meant non-Texas longhorns indigenous to Spain and brought up through Mexico to Texas).[158] These additional cattle brought the total herd number up to 2,500 by the end of the year.[159]

American stock, such as Herefords, offered more meat because of their stockier builds. Texas longhorns possessed rather lean characteristics, being comprised mostly of hide, horn, and bone. However, longhorns tended to resist harsh conditions more effectively than most other breeds and their narrower frames made for easier births, which meant fewer losses during calving season. Interestingly, the Oglala realized the benefits of non-Texas longhorn stock several years before neighboring white run cattle outfits. James Haft and William H. Bayless, both originally from Kansas, first brought a herd of shorthorn cattle to the region in 1882, three years after the Oglala.[160]

McGillycuddy found that the stock had been well cared for, despite predictions that the cattle would all be slaughtered and eaten immediately. Felicitously, the tribe had managed to save 100 cows from the summer beef issue to bolster the herd. He stated that, "Indians have almost invariably herded their cattle well, and have raised young stock in considerable

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[157] *Report of the Secretary of the Interior; Being Part of the Message and Documents Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress at the Beginning of the Second Session of the Forty-Sixth Congress, Vol. 1, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879), 354-355.
[158] For an in-depth study of Western cattle ranching origins see the seminal work of Terry G. Jordan, *North American Cattle Ranching Frontiers: Origins, Diffusion, and Differentiations* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993).
[159] *Report of the Secretary of Interior, 46th Congress, Report of the Commissioner of Indian affairs, 354-355.*
[160] Bob Lee and Dick Williams, *Last Grass Frontier: The South Dakota Stock Grower Heritage* (Sturgis: Black Hills Publishers, Inc., 1964), 108-109.

numbers."[161] Poignantly, the report identified two problems that continued to haunt the Oglala Lakota throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The first pertained to the emerging domination of the tribal cattle interests by "white husbands."[162] These "white husbands," white men who married Lakota women, sought to obtain the rights and advantages meant to provide Indians with an equal economic footing within the surrounding white communities. These white men and their mixed blood descendants came to dominate ranching efforts on the reservation for generations. They reached this position for two reasons. First, they understood and could manipulate the market system of the whites more efficiently than the Oglala. They moved with ease with a market system designed to reward those who strove for personal goods and property.

Conversely, traditional Lakota culture marginalized a man desirous of accumulating personal wealth for its own sake. Actions such as this demonstrated a willingness to place personal gain and prestige over the needs of one's *tiospaye* and tribe. Focus on individual concerns and material wealth hindered tribal efforts to grow a communally, or *tiospaye*, controlled cattle herd. As will be discussed shortly, further impediments arose to hinder the Oglala's economic strategy designed to maintain cultural integrity.

"White husbands" enjoyed close association and mutual connections with both off-reservation cattle interests and Indian Agents and Farmers as

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[161] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., 1879-1880, Serial No. 1910, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), 75, 104, 145, and 355.

[162] I use the term "white husbands" to replace the offensive term "squaw men." The term "squaw men" will remain as is if used in a quotation; however, "white husbands" is more historically accurate and assessable to readers.

they sought to achieve their goal of individual wealth and power. Such conflicting worldviews and relationships clearly placed the Oglala at an economic disadvantage when in direct competition with "white husbands" concerning the future of reservation cattle interests. This was true whether it meant access to regional political and economic power centers or tribal resources such as land, water, and fencing materials. Furthermore, "white husbands" could make business decisions without asking permission from an Indian Agent. And within the capitalist system the ability to make timely and independent business decisions is not only beneficial it is necessary in order to compete in the marketplace, or in the case of the Oglala, to sustain a herd large enough to provide for the tribe's needs.

The second difficulty brought to light involved the illegal trespass of outside cattle interests on reservation land. Agent McGillycuddy provided an example of both difficulties when he noted that

> the squaw-men assume that by marriage they have all the rights of full-blooded Indians, and they endeavor to exercise these rights not only in possession of cattle themselves, but also in ranging and pasturing upon Indian reservations large herds belonging to other white men; and when the removal of such cattle is attempted by the agent, the squaw-men claim property in them under fictitious bills of sale.[163]

This practice of trespassing on tribal lands for free pasturage became so blatant that by 1884 between 700,000 and 800,000 head of cattle illegally grazed on the Great Sioux reservation.[164] Bob Lee noted in, *The Last Grass Frontier,* that "it was illegal to run cattle on the reservation at that time too."…"Cattlemen who pushed their herds onto the Pine Ridge reservation (sic) risked losing beef to the Indians, but the danger wasn't a serious obstacle

[163] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., 1879-1880, Serial No. 1910, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), 75, 104, 145, and 355.
[164] Schell, *History of South Dakota*, 243-247.

for outfits with crews of well-armed cowboys." [165] Clearly, the Oglala cattle owners faced difficult economic handicaps in their struggle to compete in an ever-intrusive market economy or establish viable herd numbers needed to sustain the tribe. In an all too familiar refrain federal Indian policy dictated on one hand that the Oglala alter their entire culture by adopting the precepts of capitalism, such as private property, individual avarice, the accumulation of material goods, and privately owned rather than communally owned cattle. While on the other hand the surrounding white cattle industry, and the "white husbands" on The Great Sioux Indian Reservation, attempted to exclude the tribe from full participation in the market economy.

A brief comparative examination of Northern Cheyenne cattle interests revealed a similar, if more malevolent, problem concerning off-reservation cattle trespass. In southeastern Montana white cattlemen who allowed their stock to graze illegally on the Tongue River Indian Reservation hoped to foment a conflict between Indians and whites. They hoped such a conflict might bring about the Cheyenne's removal to Indian Territory. White cattlemen also claimed that Cheyenne warriors burned their ranges, and frequently killed their cattle. While these charges proved false and the ranchers' efforts eventually failed, the constant attack upon the tribe's right to remain on the reservation negatively impacted its economic growth. The federal government hesitated to approve allocations for rations or cattle for the Northern Cheyenne on the chance that the charges proved factual. Financial support for the tribe was delayed for years as government inspectors and Special Agents arrived on site to determine the validity of the accusations.[166]

[165] Lee and Williams, *Last Grass Frontier,* 108.
[166] Svingen, *The Northern Cheyenne*, xxi, 30-36.

For the Oglala Lakota the problem of cattle trespass remained centered on economic competition rather than possible relocation. Despite these significant obstacles the tribe managed to increase its herds. In agent McGillycuddy's report to the Commissioner in 1880 he noted that the number of cattle owned by tribal members rose to 3,500 with the help of a summer issue of 1,000 head of stock cattle. Unfortunately, records are unclear as to what percentage of the herd fell under "white husbands" or mixed blood ownership and what percentage belonged to the full blood tribal herd. Agent McGillycuddy provided only the total reservation herd size in his reports. He also noted in June of 1880 the tribe's excellent care of stock cattle issued and, "in fact, these Indians taking naturally, as they do, to stock raising and herding, this would seem to offer the most feasible and practical method of making them eventually self-supporting." Moreover, McGillycuddy found the idea of a sustainable agricultural system for the Oglala unrealistic.[167]

However, the most fascinating aspect of the report lies in McGillycuddy's theory about why Chief Red Cloud resisted any tribal acceptance of agriculture or herding. He correctly believed that Red Cloud feared a loss of power and influence within the tribal political organization.[168] Because of the tribe's concentration near the agency the political structure of the Oglala became much more centralized, which gave leaders such as Red Cloud more power than tribal chiefs moving with loosely knit *tiospaye* bands. Before 1880 the Oglala political structure centered on multi-band councils

[167] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 46th Cong., 3rd sess., 1880-1881, Serial 1959, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881), 162.
[168] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 46th Cong., 3rd sess., 1880-1881, Serial No. 1959, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881), 162-163, 382-383.

made up of chiefs from the *tiospaye*, or extended family bands, that strove to gain a group consensus before undertaking any significant political decisions. These decisions included discussions on whether or not to send diplomatic forays to surrounding tribes or whites, or whether or not to raise a large war party to attack an enemy tribe. The important point to note is that individual chiefs possessed no dictatorial powers, and that they only influenced the council through their reputation as a leader and oratory ability. The council continued to debate such issues until a consensus was reached.[169]

However, by 1880 the Oglala chiefs such as Red Cloud and Spotted Tail garnered far more influence within the tribe. This occurred both because of consolidation of the tribal population around Pine Ridge Agency, and the tribe's societal crisis. The Oglala political framework allowed for fluidity of decision-making based upon necessity. For example, as the tribe moved from one location to another it was vulnerable, so the *wakiconza* (camp administrator) briefly held great decision-making power in the tribe. And in times of military crisis, such as the conflict with United States soldiers in the late 1870s, the *blotahunka* (war party leaders) gained in political influence and power. In other words, incessant warfare during the nineteenth century provided the militaristic segment of Oglala political structures more everyday power and control over larger segments of the tribe. The result is especially paradoxical when one considers that from the early 1840s the United States government's central political objective in regards to the Oglala centered on the reduction of the chief's influence within the tribe. The United States government hoped to more easily control tribal decision making by modifying

[169] Catherine Price. *The Oglala People, 1841-1879* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 2-6, 172,173.

the political structure of the Oglala.[170] However, as the tribe consolidated around the Agency tribal members looked increasingly to their chiefs for guidance in how to interact with the whites.

Yet as the tribe began to spread out on the reservation in order to practice cattle ranching the chiefs lost much of their influence over the majority of tribal members. What is most interesting is the fact that as the Oglala people scattered throughout the river valleys to raise livestock and plant a small garden they began to readopt the traditional political structure of the *tiospaye*. The tribe became more decentralized as small family units started to make decisions concerning their lives without the chief's input. While the political and social organization of the tribe more closely resembled its earlier structure, the same could not be said for its economic delineation.

While tribal members scattered over the reservation in order to farm small plots or raise a few head of cattle they found themselves increasingly alienated from their economic beliefs in kinship relationships and reciprocity, which previously informed their economic practices. For a Lakota warrior the appearance of generosity equaled that of his bravery in the eyes of the community. Generosity most often revealed itself in the social custom of the giveaway. A giveaway bolstered a warrior's position within the tribe because it allowed him to reaffirm his kinship relationships and acknowledge his debts to others by giving away his possessions. The more a man gave away, the higher his status within tribal society.

As previously noted, a warrior's ability to provide for his extended family was closely linked to his ability to achieve greater social, economic, and political power. For example, in order to gain higher status warriors often gave away entire horse herds and many fine garments produced by their female relatives. The ability of a man to give away such garments revealed the esteem with which his female relatives held him, for they would not create such beautiful clothing for a man who failed to provide for their every need.

[170] Ibid, 172.

In fact the women's creation of such garments did more than enhance her status and that of her provider; it helped maintain the vitality of kinship relationships within tribal society. For example, during the 1870s and 1880s as the male members of the tribe lost access to many means of obtaining social status, such as warfare and raiding, they increasingly felt emasculated. What is most fascinating is that as the social and economic structures of kinship relationships and reciprocity faced external threats during the 1880s, the women of the tribe greatly increased their production of fine garments in an attempt to maintain these methods of economic redistribution.[171]

As one might imagine, the idea of a giveaway ran counter to American concepts of good old-fashioned capitalism, and this practice fell quickly out of favor with Indian agents determined to instill this new economic belief. Consequently, giveaways occurred more infrequently, which further degraded the role of kinship relationships and reciprocity within Oglala society.

By 1883 approximately 7,800 Oglala inhabited the region around Pine Ridge Agency on the Great Sioux Indian Reservation, most dispersed throughout the creek bottoms, some as far as forty miles from the agency. The number of cattle owned by tribal members grew to 5,500, yet agent McGillycuddy was concerned about the continued issue of beef rations. He felt that although most cattle owners on the reservation provided good care for their stock, many others neglected their cattle or simply ate them because they believed that the United States would simply provide more.[172] What he failed to take into account was the deficiency of the beef issue, and thus the

[171] Marsha Clift Bol, "Lakota Women's Artistic Strategies in Support of the Social System," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 9 (1985, No. 1), 33-51.
[172] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 48th Cong., 1st sess., 1883-1884, Serial No. 2191, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884), 92-93, 346-347.

hardships many tribesmen experienced, especially during winter. As early as 1880 "white husbands" and their kin exerted control over a large segment of reservation cattle. They often purchased issued cattle from full bloods with the permission of the Indian Agent because "white husbands" possessed the competency for such business transactions. Those full bloods who killed and ate their few issued cattle, or sold them to "white husbands" or mixed bloods, enjoyed few other options.

The following year McGillycuddy's report to the Commissioner revealed a new impediment to the establishment of a self-sustaining cattle herd when he noted that farming efforts increased in the river valleys. McGillycuddy also stated that he hoped for a "more systematic and enlarged effort." [173] This new emphasis on reservation farming occurred because of federal directives concerning ongoing Indian assimilation policies. Such policies, which trace their roots back to Thomas Jefferson's philanthropic efforts, were designed to assimilate Native Americans into American society as yeomen farmers, the foundation of Jefferson's vision of a liberal democracy.

As a result of the new directives Agent McGillycuddy embraced, at least rhetorically, a new economic strategy for the reservation. He planned to divide the reservation into four farming districts with an agency farmer overseeing each area. The four farming districts created: White Clay Creek, Wounded Knee, Porcupine Creek, and Medicine Root Creek districts seemed to McGillycuddy capable of supporting a population of about 2,000. However, McGillycuddy failed to understand that the Oglalas' method of

[173] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 48th Cong., 2nd sess., 1884-1885, Serial No. 2287, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885), 81-82.

river valley farming offered the only feasible way to cultivate crops in this arid and unyielding region.

Without access to irrigation "more systematic and enlarged efforts" of farming were doomed to failure. The irregular weather patterns of the Northern Great Plains provided occasional years of abundant rain and crops, but eventually the yearly rainfall dropped below twenty inches a year. This unpredictable pattern of rainfall prevented the effective establishment of long-term dry farming in this region. Moreover, frequent visitations by grasshoppers, prairie fires, and hot dry winds precluded any productive horticultural pursuits. Hay proved the only consistent crop able to yield significant benefits for the tribe. Not surprisingly, these hay crops fed reservation cattle during hard winters.

Clearly, the ecosystem of the region surrounding Pine Ridge Agency was best suited for the development of a tribal economy founded upon the care and raising of cattle. The soils, grasses, and yearly rainfall all combined to create an environment appropriate for large herbivores such as cattle, and prohibitive to the industry of farming. This is evidenced not only by the natural world but also by the economic system established by the surrounding white communities. A system based on ranching. As the Oglala realized that the federal government cared little about meeting its' treaty obligations concerning meat rations the tribe sought to begin its' own cattle operation. Yet as the tribe attempted to establish a reservation economy sustained by ranching, it met with resistance from whites both on and off the reservation. "White husbands" competed with Indians for access to reservation lands and markets for their beef, while white ranchers who ringed the Pine Ridge Agency, and the entire Great Sioux Reservation for that matter, boldly

trespassed their herds on reservation pastures. Despite these difficulties the Oglala had established an inchoate reservation economy by the early 1880s that hinged upon the success of their burgeoning tribal herds. Unfortunately, the tribe's budding cattle industry would experience more set backs and institutional controls in the following decade.

As the 1880s progressed the cattle industry emerged as the core of the emergent Oglala reservation economy. Agent McGillycuddy clearly illustrated this point when it 1884 he stated that stock-raising went as "well as could be expected, many of the better class of Indians now owning respectable sized herds, breaking in steers for work purposes, and occasionally selling the increase to neighboring settlers, when in the opinion of the agent the same is advisable."[174] Moreover, the Oglala began to cooperate and coordinate with ranchers in Nebraska and the Black Hills area in gathering and returning winter strays. This amicable interaction is noted as being a welcome change from the previous practice of stealing each others' stock whenever possible. It also demonstrated both groups' willingness to cooperate when the result was mutually beneficial. Despite this advantageous development, the stock owned by tribal members remained at approximately 5,500.[175] Interestingly, McGillycuddy's remarks above pertaining to a "better class of Indians," and his intimation to his power over tribal decision-making, offer insights into the developing economic transformations within the tribe and his own unquestionable power on the reservation.

When he refers to a better class of Indian he is describing the

[174] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 48th Cong., 2nd sess., 1884-1885, Serial No. 2287, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885), 81-82.
[175] Ibid., 350-351.

fomentation of an economic division within the tribe itself. This division often, but not always, formed along the lines of mixed bloods and squaw men versus the full blood majority. Mixed blood cattle owners invariably possessed larger herds than the full bloods despite being a distinct minority. Moreover, the terms "mixed blood" and "full blood" began to denote more than a difference in blood quantum. The terms evolved into a denotation for education and economic opportunities, and fundamentally, whether one's cattle interests either furthered one's personal success or the tribe's.

The statement, "when in the opinion of the agent the same is advisable," seems innocuous enough but it is an example of the overwhelming power wielded by reservation agents. The agent, not the individual Indians themselves, decided if a particular tribal member could sell his excess stock for profit or sustenance. In a biography of McGillycuddy's life, his second wife noted that

> at this time there was probably no more autocratic position under the United States government than that of an Indian agent at a remote agency. The governor of the territory had no jurisdiction over the Pine Ridge agent. Though the Sioux Reservation was in Dakota, it was not properly a part of it. Approximately fifteen hundred miles from Washington…the Pine Ridge agent ruled four thousand square miles populated by eight thousand Indians.[176]

This situation gave "white husbands" and surrounding white cattlemen a distinct advantage in the regional market place, as they possessed the freedom to make timely and independent economic decisions concerning their operations. Moreover, most mixed bloods and "white husbands" operations occupied spaces nearest the agency's power centers. This spatial proximity, coupled with carefully nurtured relationships with agency personnel and off-

[176] Julia B. McGillycuddy, *McGillycuddy Agent* (London: Humphrey Milford; Oxford University Press, 1941), 5-6.

reservation outfits, meant greater access to reservation resources. Most often these resources included grazing lands, water, and fencing and building materials.

A letter received in 1886 by Agent McGillycuddy from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Honorable H. Price, further evidenced the restrictive and unequal competitive environment that the Oglala cattlemen competed under. In reference to surplus cattle (or cattle numbers beyond a maximum sustainable breeding herd) raised by the Oglala, Commissioner Price instructed Agent McGillycuddy to put an end to the selling of these cattle by the tribesmen. Price also stated to McGillycuddy that, "your Indian police should be on the alert to prevent the sale of these stock cattle, unless when the sale is made with your full knowledge and consent." Commissioner Price went on to say that "if they (meaning the Oglala) persist in selling their cattle, unless with your consent and under your personal supervision, that they will be placed on the list of Indians not deserving any further aid from the government in that direction."[177]

The Commissioner's paternalistic memorandum demonstrated the increasingly restrictive economic environment the Oglala labored to overcome in order to implement their original economic strategy. It revealed something more remarkable as well concerning spatial relations on Pine Ridge Reservation. In 1886 the Great Sioux Reservation covered most of western South Dakota and parts of North Dakota, nearly 22,000,000 acres. However, most tribal populations were concentrated within a forty-mile radius of each agency. This left an enormous amount of land sparsely populated and

[177] Letter received by Agent V. T. McGillycuddy from Commissioner Price on March 5, 1884, General Records, Box 7, Jan. 2, 1884-April 22, 1886, RG 75, KC.

unevenly patrolled by tribal line riders. In 1886 the total number of tribally owned cattle reached 4,927. That year the Oglala calved 1,043 head, purchased 114, and obtained 405 by issue from the federal government. What seems out of place when one examines the productive capability of the reservation is any discussion at all of "surplus" cattle with such a relatively small herd for such an enormous area. Clearly, the Lakota did not control access to a significant portion of their reservation. Instead, competing cattle operations, both off-reservation and "white husband" outfits, gained access to valuable grazing lands and marginalized the Lakota herds on their own reservation.

The prevention of the tribe from the creation of a communally owned cattle herd, participation in the regional cattle market, and dislocation from tribal lands placed them under a severe economic handicap. Surrounding white cattle operations sold, slaughtered, moved, and cared for their herds as the local market economy dictated. They trespassed cattle in staggering numbers and paid little for the risk. Tribal operations on the other hand remained under the strict control of the Pine Ridge agency Indian Agents. These agents, and not the Indians themselves, shaped the burgeoning tribal cattle herds. Thus the Oglala seemed caught in a vise, with the federal government promoting unrealistic agricultural and economic practices on one side, and the autocratic Indian agent, whose decisions affected the direction and effectiveness of the developing reservation economy, on the other. The original dream of establishing a tribal cattle herd in order to maintain cultural continuity suffered significant impediments by 1886. Unfortunately, further obstacles emerged during the second half of the decade.

In 1885, agent McGillycuddy's final year on Pine Ridge, he requested

that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs put an end to the issue of beef rations on the reservation. He believed that in order for the Oglala to become either independent workers or individualized families they needed to be forced to work for their food. Moreover, he believed that the beef issue was wasted upon the tribal dog population, estimated at between 30,000 and 40,000 dogs. Ironically, McGillycuddy reported an increased interest in cattle for the year, but the number of stock cattle decreased from the previous year's total of 5,500 to 4,927. This occurred because the beef issue failed to provide for the tribe's subsistence. As a result many tribesmen were forced to slaughter cattle in order to survive.

McGillycuddy noted that while Red Cloud's band killed and ate their issue of stock cattle, more industrious members of the tribe sold 300 head of 3-4 year old steers for $9,000. Again, this is an example not only of the scarcity of issued beef but also of the economic divisions that appeared during this period between Red Cloud's "full bloods" and "white husbands" and their mixed blood descendents. That same year McGillycuddy proudly noted that farming output quadrupled, and he credited his four agency farmers for the increase. Yet according to his report only 1,788 acres had been tilled, which was 22 acres less than reported in 1880![178] In this instance Agent McGillycuddy clearly fell victim to the bureaucratic practice of shaping reports to please one's superiors.

As the 1880s progressed the reservation farming enterprises developed by Indian Agents fell on hard times. Oglala efforts at farming under the direction of agent H. D. Gallagher faired poorly in 1887, with only 1,801

[178] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 49th Cong., 1st sess., 1885-1886, Serial No. 2379, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), 261-264, 596-597.

acres under cultivation. Although Gallagher noted that Red Cloud's people "are certainly beginning to understand the importance of making some effort in the direction of farming," he also reported that drought killed almost every crop on the reservation.[179]

Nonetheless, according to the report the tribe worked diligently in an effort to make the farming programs succeed despite such dramatic failures. Again, the surprising determination of the federal government to promote farming traced its genesis to Jeffersonian ideals pertaining to the importance of yeoman farmers and the symbol they represented concerning "civilization" and "democracy."[180] Indian policy demanded tribes adopt American dry farming techniques in order to achieve successful assimilation. While this model succeeded to some degree in areas of sufficient rain, and was successfully adopted by eastern tribes such as the Creek and Cherokee, it failed to account for plagues of grasshoppers, prairie fires, and a scarcity of rainfall. The harsh environmental realities of the region eventually shattered the hopes of well-intentioned bureaucrats who held fast to their belief that dry-farming on the reservation offered the tribal members their best chance at economic independence. But this provided little solace to the Oglala forced to divert their energies to agriculture rather than cattle. Moreover, the environment dramatically altered the direction of regional cattle operations the following winter.

The summer drought, and the severe blizzards that followed during the

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[179] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 50th Cong., 1st sess., 1887-1888, Serial No. 2542, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), 123-124.

[180] Bernard Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974). See Part Two: Program for a discussion of this ideology and belief system.

winter of 1886-1887, proved to be disastrous for the free-range cattle industry in this region. Each operator strove to maximize herd size and increase profits during the boom years between 1880 and 1886. This led to massive overgrazing and a subsequent paucity of winter grasses. Traditionally, during the winter free range ranchers allowed cattle herds to roam freely in search of fodder and shelter in the protected river valleys and creeks. This technique developed regionally in 1868, "the year a treaty was concluded at Fort Laramie with the troublesome Sioux."[181] Normally, surrounding cattle outfits gathered anywhere from 10,000 to 75,000 head each spring. This roundup consisted of 23 wagons, 2,500 head of horses, and 325 men representing about fifty outfits in the area. However, they rounded up only 3,000 head of cattle during the spring roundup of 1887.

This practice of overgrazing, coupled with a dry summer and a severe winter, left as many as ¾ of the area's outfits, "to the wall with a seventy-five to hundred percent 'kill' of their range stock."[182] The grass had failed to replenish itself because of the lack of rainfall, and the deep snows prevented cattle from finding the little forage that remained. At the time of agent Gallagher's report to the Commissioner in 1887, the number of tribally owned stock cattle stood at 6,278 head, up from 4,927 in 1885 despite the killing winter.[183] Remarkably, the Oglala stock cattle fared very well in comparison because of the tribe's practice of providing the herds with winter stores of hay. Unfortunately, the next year saw a dramatic reversal of fortunes for both the

[181] Lee and Williams, *Last Grass Frontier*, 22.
[182] Bert L. Hall, *Roundup Years, Old Muddy to Black Hills* (Pierre: State Publishing Co., 1956), 276.
[183] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 50th Cong., 1st sess., 1887-1888, Serial No. 2542, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), 464-465.

tribal and white cattle interests.

In 1888 an event occurred that at the same time greatly decreased the prospects of the Oglala tribe's cattle interests in the region and greatly increased the surrounding white cattlemen's future economic security. The Sioux Bill of April 30, 1888, reduced the Great Sioux Reservation by 9,000,000 acres and scattered the separate tribes of the Lakota among six smaller reservations. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, created for the Oglala and a temporary population of Northern Cheyenne, contained 3,155,200 acres. For the ceded land the entire Lakota nation received a twenty year extension of the educational provisions of the 1868 Treaty, thirty new day schools, farm equipment, $1,000,000 of excess money from ceded land sales, and most significantly 26,000 head of stock cows and 1,000 bulls.[184] The Oglalas' share of the stock came out to 7,520 cows and 300 bulls.[185] The tribe's negotiation for such large numbers of cattle revealed their understanding of the industry's importance to their future economic stability and cultural continuity.

Not surprisingly, the cattle industry outside the reservation strongly supported, if not actually led, the agitation to reduce the Great Sioux Reservation. Because of the region's aridity no great land rush occurred because white farmers feared they could not survive in the region, which left the majority of land available for the nearby ranching interests.[186] The effects of this enormous land swap further polarized the ranching industry in the

[184] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 50th Cong., 2nd sess., 1888-1889, Serial No. 2637, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), LXXIII.
[185] Letter received by Captain Penney from Commissioner D. Browning, March 13, 1895, General Records, Box 17, RG 75, KC.
[186] Schell, *History of South Dakota*, 247.

region. For the white ranchers in the region it meant vastly increased pasturage for their herds. For the Lakota it meant severe restrictions on herd size and increased pressure from the white cattle ranchers. For example, the agent reported that during the winter and spring white ranchers still herded large numbers of cattle onto the reduced reservation in order to obtain free grazing and avoid taxes despite their access to new lands. The agent wrote letters to all offending parties requesting that they remove their stock by July 1st, and most complied. However, some small operators ignored the agent's requests.[187]

The farm equipment provided for the tribe in the Sioux Bill of 1888 underscored the government's determination to create an Indian community of yeomen farmers. Clearly, the symbol of the independent yeoman farmer as the foundation of the nation's economy remained strong despite the industrial revolution in the latter half of the nineteenth century. For most Americans land still represented economic freedom and the wellspring of democratic influence within the United States. It was not until the following decades that Progressive Era advancements in transportation and communication helped transform America's perception of farmers from the backbone of American democracy to hayseeds and rubes.

Despite the determination of such well-intentioned or unsympathetic government officials, the tribe's farming efforts failed in 1887 because of yet another drought that killed almost all crops on the reservation. The cyclical climatological patterns of the northern plains brought an abundance of rain in 1888, and the tribe raised over 21,000 bushels of corn, and 6,000 bushels of

[187] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 50th Cong., 2nd sess., 1888-1889, Serial No. 2637, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), LXXIII.

potatoes.[188] Unfortunately, this temporary success only encouraged the environmentally unrealistic policy of dry farming on the Great Plains. The unpredictable weather patterns on the plains forced many hopeful sodbusters to go bust after only a few years, and led to ecological disasters such as the Dust Bowl on the Oklahoma plains.

The year 1889 was marked by significant events that altered the Oglala tribe's reservation economy. One such change occurred because of changing federal policy pertaining to the beef ration. For the period between 1885 and 1888 the federal government reduced the approved annual beef rations from 8,000,000 pounds[189] to only 4,000,000 pounds.[190] This reduction occurred in response to a sharp reduction in the tribal census. Agent McGillycuddy's census in 1885 counted 7,649 Indians on the reservation.[191] However, the following year a new agent, Captain J. M. Bell, undertook a far more rigorous census in the name of efficiency and cost cutting and found only 4,873 Indian living on the reservation. Agent Bell stated that the Indians, "acknowledge they had been drawing rations for all their ghosts."[192]

This behavior on the part of the Oglala demonstrated that the Oglala possessed the ability to respond and adapt to the shortages in the beef ration by manipulating the system for the people's benefit. If the United States

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[188] Ibid.
[189] Executive Document, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 49th Cong., 1st sess., 1885-1886, Serial No. 2379, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), 262.
[190] Executive Document, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 50th Cong., 2nd sess., 1888-1889, Serial No. 2637, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), 470-471.
[191] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 49th Cong., 1st sess., 1885-1886, Serial No. 2379, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), 259.
[192] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 49th Cong., 2nd sess., 1886-1887, Serial No. 2467, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1887), 294.

government shorted the Indians on its beef issue, why not then exaggerate the number of Oglala and Northern Cheyenne living near Pine Ridge Agency? The tactic worked for twenty years, and still the Indians went hungry more often than not.

The desire to cut governmental spending while increasing efficiency is one of the central characteristics of the emerging Progressive Era. However, for the Oglala the timing proved especially bad when one couples the droughts, blizzards, and impending reduction of the Great Sioux Reservation in the late 1880s with the new census. This population shift from 1885 to 1886 constituted a 35% drop in tribal population, a fact that agent Bell believed could save the government $50,000 a year in beef rations alone. Not surprisingly, the 1887 gross poundage awarded for the beef contracts was reduced from 6,500,000 pounds to 4,500,000 pounds, a drop of 31%.

The reduction in beef rations meant an end to the Oglala tribe's economic security blanket, which remained at four million gross pounds under contract until the twentieth century. The tribe realized that the United States remained indifferent concerning its obligation to provide adequate supplies in a timely fashion. This realization, coupled with growing food shortages and crop failures, created a broader and more urgent tribal interest in reservation cattle operations. After a short period of adjustment that saw their herd size dwindle, the Oglala intensified their commitment to the care and expansion of their herds. This recommitment to stock raising also considerably affected the Oglala's continually shifting cosmological conception of space and place within a reservation community.

The creation of the Holy Rosary Catholic Mission on Pine Ridge in 1887 led to a fascinating transformation of Oglala spirituality regarding their

access and connection to *Wakan Tanka.*[193] Historiographically, authors have portrayed the relationship between Oglala and Catholic religions within either a dialectical framework or within the sociological themes of "coexistence" and/or "syncretism." However, this complex and constantly renegotiated relationship resists such thematic restrictions.[194]

One must remember that Oglala spiritual and cosmological beliefs created an inherently flexible religion willing, if not eager, to adopt new ceremonies in order to better understand, and thus control, *Wakan Tanka.* With the Oglalas' access to the Great Mystery greatly diminished the tribe understandably sought new avenues, or conduits, to this power. As a result, Catholic ceremonies and/or teachings were adopted within a uniquely Oglala religious context. They were and addition to, or an aggregation with, existing Oglala cosmology, not a syncretic blending of the two. In other words, the Oglala practiced their own "religious colonization" of the Catholic faith. They took from it what resources were useful and compartmentalized them within their own spiritual framework.[195]

Black Elk, the Oglala *wicaša wakan,* or holy man, became an icon of this religious transformation in numerous studies concerning this religious

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[193] DeMallie and Parks, *Sioux Indian Religion,* 121.

[194] For a syncretic take on Christian-Oglala-Peyote religions see, Paul B. Steinmetz, *Pipe, Bible, and Peyote Among the Lakota: A Study I Religious Identity* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990); for more dialectical studies concerning Catholicism and Oglala spirituality see, Clyde Holler, *Black Elk's Religion: The Sun Dance and Lakota Catholicism* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995); Raymond DeMallie, ed., *The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); and Michael F. Steltenkamp's, *Black Elk: Holy Man of the Oglala* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).

[195] For a more contemporary examination of the complex relationship between native cosmologies and Christian proselytizing efforts see, Cornelia Ann Kammerer, "Customs and Christian Conversion among Akha Highlanders of Burma and Thailand," *American Ethnologist,* Vol. 17, No. 2, (May, 1990), 277-291.

interaction. He has been portrayed both as the driving force of the Sun Dance's longevity, and as a leader in the Catholic church on Pine Ridge who rejected his shamanistic role. In truth he fit neither role completely. Black Elk, influenced by a powerful vision as a youth, sought to lead his people by providing them a sense of power and hope within their cosmological universe. He did so by seeking alternative connections to *Wakan Tanka*. He sought to bring order out of chaos from his own cultural perspective by incorporating new ceremonies and rituals into his existing "vertical geography." Black Elk never remade his spiritual conception of the universe; he merely broadened it to include Catholic teachings. While the Oglalas' "vertical geography" helped maintain their connection to *Wakan Tanka* and informed their interaction with the myriad of *wakan* within the universe, it concomitantly defined their more terrestrial relationships.[196]

While the "vertical geography" of the Oglala seemed amorphous, it found a connection to the physical world through specific geographical locations. For the Oglala, the Black Hills, or *Paha Sapa,* occupy an especially important place within tribal cosmology. Most importantly, it was there that the tribe emerged upon the earth and became *wicaša akantula,* or "men on top."[197] When the Oglala returned to *Paha Sapa* during the 18th century many specific geographical locations either reemerged or were incorporated into both tribal metaphysical beliefs and connections, and temporal rituals and ceremonies.

[196] Ibid.
[197] DeMallie and Parks, *Sioux Indian Religion,* 28.

For example, as Linea Sundstrom noted in her work, "Mirror of Heaven," Inyan Kara Mountain, which is located in the Black Hills, is spiritually linked to *Inyan,* who gave of himself to create the world. The Oglala called this mountain *Inyan Kahga,* or "Stone Gathering," and it was visited by tribesmen annually before each Sun Dance. Furthermore, the Oglala identified specific geographical points in the Black Hills with constellations associated with the Falling Star story. In the story, Falling Star travels to seven "star" villages of Pleiades, or the Big Dipper. However, these villages' descriptions indicate clearly that they are simultaneously located in the Black Hills, which illustrates the duality of Oglala cosmology.[198]

In order to clearly understand cultural change within the "horizontal geography" of the Oglala one must distinguish between various aspects within the tribe's relationship with the physical world. These include Oglala perceptions of tribal leadership, identity, their interactions with outside groups, and finally how the tribe viewed the concept of boundaries. Taken in turn, each topic provides a more intricate and complete understanding concerning the evolution of spatial perceptions in Oglala culture.

Within the Oglala's "horizontal geography," which occupied the physical world, power, or *wakan,* could be possessed by any leader granted a position of authority. Such individuals were entrusted to carry out and reify secular, or terrestrial, tribal law and traditions. Because of the tribe's equestrian nomadic society these men became mobile centers of power in and

[198] Linea Sundstrom, "Mirror of Heaven: Cross-Cultural Transference of the Sacred Geography of the Black Hills," *World Archaeology,* Vol. 28, No. 2, Sacred Geography (October, 1996), 177-189.

of themselves, yet because of the tribe's diffusion and the *tiospaye* centered culture they held little compulsory authoritative power. However, the leader's role within Oglala society changed as the tribe expanded its territorial claims through military expansion. Increased military threats from both newly encountered tribes, and eventually the United States, led to increased power for tribal war leaders. Once possessed of increased power Oglala chiefs sought to maintain this power within reservation boundaries.[199]

However, United States' allotment policies, promulgated by the Dawes Act of 1887, threatened the Chiefs' power by diffusing tribal members over the reservation. As a result, many tribal leaders sought to create new loci of power. Chief George Standing Bear, leader of the Corn Creek District, requested that a sawmill and storehouse be constructed near his village in order to better supply his people with rations.[200] His request demonstrates both a desire to maintain his close spatial relationship with his followers in order to maintain political control, and a new secular perception of power in relation to geographical locations. In short, the tribe's isolation from the Black Hills, the center of the Oglala's "vertical geography," and the difficulty they faced in performing traditional ceremonies, resulted in the ascendancy of

[199] Price, Catherine, *The Oglala People, 1841-1879 A Political History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).
[200] Letter received by CIA, General T. J. Morgan from Acting Agent, Captain George LeRoy Brown, April 19, 1892, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NA-DC.

terrestrial perceptions of power in relation to specific geographical locations.[201]

Oglala identity also evolved during the early reservation era. Before confinement on the reservation the Oglala's tribal identity focused on "affirmative" cultural characteristics, such as a shared language, history, and cosmology. However, several factors led to a shift in tribal identity. First of all, the isolation of the seven tribes of the Lakota nation from others one weakened cultural ties. Add to that the spiritual contraction that occurred from the loss of the Black Hills, the restrictions of Oglala ceremonies, and the presence of whites within Oglala boundaries, and one finds a shift in tribal identity to a more "negative" perception of themselves. Cultural identity became more about "not" possessing the characteristics of whites than about being Oglala. Being Oglala meant not being selfish, greedy, materialistic, and honest. Moreover, the creation of reservations and the presence of whites also affected spatial relationships, and therefore perceptions, concerning other cultures and tribal boundaries.[202]

Previous to reservation life the Oglala understood tribal boundaries to be negotiable and elastic. Tribal enemies might limit movement but only if they possessed the strength to resist Oglala expansion. The tribe moved to follow the buffalo wherever they went, and as a result the Oglala often "renegotiated" boundaries with various tribes on the Northern Plains. Once

[201] For a discussion of the dialectical struggle between sacred power and authority and law see, Michael E. Harkin, "Carnival and Authority: Heiltsuk Cultural Models of Power," *Ethos,* Vol. 24, No. 2, (June, 1996), 281-313.
[202] Keith H. Basso, *Portraits of the "Whiteman": Linguistic Play and Cultural Symbols among the Western Apache* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

confined, first to the Great Sioux Reservation, and then to Pine Ridge, the Oglala perception of boundaries evolved. Boundaries emerged as distinct geographical points, and thus came into sharper focus. Fences and rivers now confined the tribe within a fixed geographical area. With mobility restricted, and political power focused on new geographical locations on the reservation, the world became a much smaller place.

The dramatic changes brought about by reservation life also altered the Oglala's perspective concerning the tribe's relationship to other cultures. As a nomadic-equestrian tribe the Oglala were especially skilled at avoiding outside threats before confinement upon the reservation. If attacked, non-combatants knew to flee while the warriors held the enemy at bay. If threatened, an entire camp could be ready to move within two hours. Defensively, the Oglala founded their strategy upon their superior mobility. Once confined on the reservation ultimate escape became impossible. The creation of fixed geographical boundaries greatly restricted mobility and thus diminished the Oglala's world. Notably, the contraction of the tribes' physical universe and its reduced mobility provided access within tribal boundaries to a non-Oglala culture, that of white Americans.

The presence of white men, either as agents of the United States government or as "white husbands," greatly influenced tribal diffusion on Pine Ridge. Those Oglala more willing to accept federal Indian policies tended to congregate nearer to white power centers, namely reservation and district headquarters. Those most ardently opposed to cultural

accommodation removed themselves from the watchful eyes of federal agents by following traditional strategies of evasion.[203] This resulted in the growing power and influence of accommodationist groups within the tribe nearer areas of resource distribution. A growing full blood-mixed blood dichotomy emerged on Pine Ridge as descendents of "white husbands" eagerly sought out positions of economic and political power near the reservation agencies.

The first two decades of the reservation era significantly altered Oglala concepts of space and place. Geography became a "fixed" concept as the reservation restricted horizontal dimensions of space. The willingness of some Oglala leader's to settle in one place, take allotments, and seek symbols of power demonstrated a significant evolution in Oglala concepts of horizontal space. The power gained from *Paha Sapa* was no longer accessible and ceremonies proved incapable of restoring order. As a result, power shifted from the *wakan* of traditional places, accessed by a shamans' intercession, to newly created power centers on the reservation. This transformation of physical power centers demonstrated the ascendancy of "horizontal geography" over that of "vertical geography" concerning secular powers of authority and law. Moreover, this period blurred Oglala perceptions of their own identity while it simultaneously brought the tribal sense of boundaries into sharper focus.

The introduction of Christianity led not to a dialectical struggle between Lakota cosmology and Christianity so much as to an incorporation of

[203] Hannah, "Space and social control in the administration of the Oglala Lakota ("Sioux"), 1871-1879," 412-432.

aspects of Christian belief within the tribes' spiritual worldview. During this period the Oglala maintained their desire to create order out of chaos by gaining access to *Wakan Tanka*, or the great mystery, through selected individuals' personal connection to and/or ability to control the spiritual realm. Within this cosmology Christianity acted not a replacement to Lakota religion, nor did a blending of the two occur. Instead, Christianity presented an opportunity to access the power of *Wakan Tanka* through an alternative conduit. Several leaders such as Red Cloud freely incorporated Catholicism into their religious beliefs while concomitantly refocusing their efforts to recreate the tribe's political economy. Red Cloud and other leaders still urgently sought to develop a self-sustaining communally owned cattle herd in order to maintain Oglala cultural continuity.

While tribal members increased its interest in the cattle business, the previously mentioned reduction in the beef rations hindered the tribe's ability to dramatically enlarge its operation despite the cattle provided by the 1888 treaty. In 1889 the number of tribally owned cattle stood at 10,968 head[204], but by 1891that number dropped to 7,982.[205] This decrease occurred because the Oglala often slaughtered their stock animals in order to survive, such as in 1890 when the tribe was forced to eat 700,000 pounds of their own stock cattle to make it through the winter.[206] Clearly, the sharp reduction in beef rations created a shortage of food for a large portion of the tribe, which necessarily adversely affected its own cattle industry. However, by 1897 the

[204] Executive Document, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1889-1890, Serial No. 2725, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 156.
[205] Paul M. Robertson, "The Power of the Land," 56.
[206] Executive Document, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 51st Cong., 2nd sess., 1890-1891, Serial No. 2841, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891), 50.

number of Indian stock rose sharply to 40,051 head, an increase of over five hundred percent in seven years.[207] This expansion in the herd size demonstrates the productivity of the land when utilized for the care and raising of cattle by an active and determined group of cattlemen. Unfortunately, it also demonstrated the mixed-bloods' and "white husbands'" political and economic ascendancy on Pine Ridge as they came to dominate reservation cattle operations.

While this increase in cattle numbers helped some members of the tribe to achieve economic independence, the majority of the Oglala failed to reap the benefits from this growing industry. "White husbands," mixed bloods, and a small number of "progressive" full bloods grew to dominate the cattle industry on the reservation. Nonetheless, this renewed interest in raising cattle in order to gain economic self-sufficiency demonstrated that the Oglala clearly understood the importance of cattle to both the regional economy and their own independence. The tribe's dream remained very much alive.

Unfortunately, the cultural fragmentation that emerged by 1889 prevented the Oglala from fully reaping the benefits of the growing economy. While cattle numbers on the reservation increased greatly, only a small percentage of the Indian population gained economic independence through this industry. "White husbands" and mixed bloods, which constituted only ten percent of the Lakota population on Pine Ridge in 1889, owned a

[207] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 55th Cong., 2nd sess., 1897-1898, Serial No. 3641, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1897), 271.

disproportionate percentage of the cattle that legally grazed tribal lands.[208] Moreover, events later revealed that many of the larger cattle interests on the reservation rejected the associations created by kinship relationships and reciprocity. The Oglala's goal of maintaining political, social, and economic customs and connections weakened under the various obstacles faced by the tribe during the 1880s. For example, by 1880 "white husbands" and mixed blood cattle owners joined the Wyoming Stock Growers Association. By 1898 they joined together to form a stock association to protect brands, kill wolves, and work together for one others mutual benefit.[209]

The fact that they created a stock association and worked for their *mutual* benefit, and not the tribe's, indicates that to some degree they accepted the American ideology of capitalism and its focus on obtaining wealth to a significant degree. Moreover, the concept of protecting individual brands demonstrates a strong belief in personal property and material accumulation, a belief not in tune with practices of kinship relationships and reciprocity, nor the generosity of the giveaway. That year the stock growers on Pine Ridge sold 2,000,000 pounds of beef to the United States to help the government meet its beef ration obligations to the rest of the tribe, and branded over 8,000 calves in the spring. The reservation agent was so optimistic about the future of the cattle industry that he predicted the yearly production of steers would soon double.[210]

Yet during the same year he also noted that of the 6,400 Indians living

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[208] Executive Document, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1889-1890, Serial No. 2725, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 152.
[209] Lee and Williams, *Last Grass Frontier,* 76-77.
[210] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 55th Cong. 3rd sess., 1898-1899, Serial No. 3757, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898), 276, 610.

on the reservation, only twenty percent lived off their own labor, and the other eighty percent survived on government rations.[211] This economic situation prevented many tribal members from participating in the emerging reservation economy specifically, or the regional market economy in general. For example, larger and better-established white ranches out produced smaller reservation operation. They provided larger amounts of beef to market while at the same time possessing greater access to the markets because of the Indian Agent's control over Oglala herds. Moreover, the cattle business requires an extensive investment in time and capital in order to compete successfully. Larger operations, both on and off the reservation, possessed greater ability to pay for both shipping costs to distant markets and repair costs inherent with the business. Full-blood Oglala cattle owners with smaller herds found it almost impossible to either maintain sustainable communal herds or to compete in the regional cattle market when faced with competition from "white husbands" and mixed bloods on the reservation and off-reservation cattle outfits. Unfortunately, more governmental institutional controls concerning Oglala cattle operations arose soon after the division and downsizing of the Great Sioux Reservation.

A shift in governmental policy pertaining to managing and harvesting cattle spotlighted the year 1889 as a significant date for the Oglala. As noted at the beginning of this paper, the preferred method of the Oglala for procuring and processing the issued beef was the traditional hunting method used to kill buffalo. Cattle were turned loose from corrals after being weighed and then hunted down and shot from horseback. The fact that the Oglala

[211] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 55th Cong. 3rd sess., 1898-1899, Serial No. 3757, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898), 276, 610.

maintained their traditional harvesting and processing method for over twenty years demonstrates how cattle were used by the tribe as a tool for retaining as much of their tribal identity and practices as possible. However, the local and federal officials never warmed to this method of slaughter. As early as 1874 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs asked agent J. J. Saville if a more efficient method could be found to dispatch the animals.[212] However, the practice of killing government issued beef from horseback continued for two decades. For example, in June of 1889 a young visitor to the reservation named Will S. Hughes gave this account of a beef issue at Pine Ridge

> The boss farmer and his interpreter would enter the small house; at a command the cattle started thru the shute (sic) and the interpreter called the two names for each animal turned loose, until 500 long horned steers had been released. The big flat was covered with chasing, shooting Indians, until it sounded like a battle was taking place. After the firing had ceased Mr. Baredy took us out on the prairie where the slaughtering was being done. The first scene we witnessed was two squaws and two old men who were hurriedly ripping the hide from a big long horn. Four or 5 dusky children were eagerly watching the procedure. In fact it seemed that the 2 old 'gals' were doing the work. As the hide came off, meat was cut off in pieces, the papooses eagerly picking up clotted blood from under foot, eating it with apparent relish. The old bucks secured a kidney each, and would cut off huge bites and chew like a Virginia planter would a hunk of tobacco. The whole thing was (a) bit sickening to a tenderfoot.[213]

This scene, seemingly barbarous to whites whom witnessed it, demonstrated the Oglala's resolve to retain as much of their nomadic equestrian way of life was possible.

However, in 1889 policies pertaining to the handling and harvesting of tribal cattle changed dramatically. The government issued four new regulations regarding the slaughter of cattle: no cattle could be killed without

[212] Letter received by Agent Saville from Commissioner E. P. Smith, April 9, 1874, General Records, Box 2, RG 75, KC.
[213] Hall, *Roundup Years,* 172.

the agent's permission, no stock issued for breeding could be killed, cows or heifers could not be killed unless proven barren, and no permits would be issued to kill steers less than three years old. These rules served two practical purposes. The first regulation promoted the growth of the reservation cattle industry dominated by squaw men and mixed bloods. If the small herd owners were not allowed to butcher and eat their beef they had two choices, either attempt to compete with the larger outfits or sell their cattle to them. Either way the larger herd owners enjoyed the advantage.

The second purpose aimed at putting an end to the seemingly barbaric practice of hunting cattle as well as dancing and feasting. Once the agent possessed the power to decide if cattle could be slaughtered, and when, he also held the power to decide the method and eventual use of the beef. The Oglala found it more difficult to gather in large numbers and maintain social connections through feasting and dancing, practices the assimilationist United States government strove to forever destroy. This is evidenced by the religious practice of the Sun Dance being outlawed in 1883. Because the tribe continued to dance after the law's promulgation sterner methods arose to combat this threat to assimilation. The Oglala, along with all other plains tribes, were forced to either abandon the Sun Dance or practice the ritual without the Agent's knowledge. Moreover, the practice of "hunting" cattle issued by the government lasted only another year.[214]

1889 also found new regulations concerning the handling of cattle. These policies stated that during the annual spring roundup, held in coordination with non-reservation cattle outfits, all calves must be branded

[214] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1889-1890, Serial No. 2725, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 156.

with individual brands, not tribal bands.[215] This branding policy further alienated the full bloods whom at times joined their small herds together in order to compete with larger cattle interests on the reservation. By forcing the bands to divide their cattle the government promoted the importance of the individual and the accumulation of personal property over that of the *tiospaye* or the tribe as a whole. With these new regulations in place the Oglala Lakota on Pine Ridge faced dramatic challenges to their socially driven economic practices of kinship relationships and reciprocity as the foundation of their tribal economy.

Both socially and economically the Oglala reached a significant turning point in the tribe's history in 1889. The Sioux Bill of 1889 cost the Lakota over nine million acres of productive land and created separate reservations for each band of the Lakota. The United States' reduction of beef rations ended the Oglala complacency and sparked the beginning of a true reservation economy centered on the cattle industry. And most importantly, changes in federal policy regarding the care and handling of the tribally owned cattle made it increasingly difficult to maintain more familiar economic practices. These events made 1889 one of the most pivotal and culturally significant years in Oglala tribal history. The tribe still maintained its cultural identity; however, by attempting to both adapt to and adopt the ideals inherent in market capitalism the Oglala experienced wrenching economic changes that carried significant social and political implications. Following the Dawes Act of 1887 and the subsequent Sioux Bill of 1889 tribal leaders on Pine Ridge Reservation struggled to thwart allotment and its

[215] Ibid.

deleterious effects for the next 15 years.

CHAPTER FOUR

Boundaries and Barbed Wire: The Transformation of Oglala Culture, 1890-1906

The year 1890 exists as a landmark in both western and Native American history. It stands as a monument to both American cultural transformation during the nineteenth century and as the last burning moment Native Americans spent at the forefront of the American consciousness. During the early 1890s Native Americans underwent a metamorphosis within Anglo-American cultural perceptions. Once militarily defeated, the threat posed by Indian cultures dissipated, as did their apparent relevance to the broader political and economic discussions within the United States. As a result Native Americans seemingly disappeared within the kaleidoscope of American culture.

For most the year 1890 marked the end of Indian resistance to Euro-American expansion and dominance. For some it meant an end of sorts, for others it offered the promise of a bright future. The more romantic or nostalgic at heart point to it as the end of the frontier. They find it an end to an era when great men carved a life for themselves and their families out of a vast wilderness, and the beginning of a more oppressive bureaucratized America. Others eagerly point to these years as a positive turning point in American History. A time when the United States first moved towards the power and greatness it achieved in the twentieth century.

Historiographically for the Lakota, these years came to represent a last resistance and an ultimate defeat in their struggle for power and autonomy on

the northern Great Plains. The Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee seemed a last desperate gasp for the tribe before it settled meekly into reservation life. Undoubtedly, for many Lakota the Ghost Dance provided hope toward a cultural rebirth and its failure proved culturally and psychologically wrenching. Nonetheless, despite the bitter losses at Wounded Knee and the end of the Ghost Dance many Lakota continued to actively pursue viable economic strategies in order to succor cultural continuity and independence within the reservation environment during this notable time period.[216]

For the Oglala, the dramatic reduction in land resources promulgated by The Sioux Bill of 1889, coupled with increased institutional controls, presented significant new obstacles for the tribe. Moreover, the dramatic loss of land and resultant economic and mobility restrictions led to the development of new understandings regarding spatial relationships. This pertained both to Oglala perceptions concerning "boundaries," and spatial proximity to loci of power both within the Oglala community and in regards

[216] Native American studies predominantly look to 1890 and the Wounded Knee Massacre as the final resistance by tribes against United States imperialistic expansion. While the Lakota are specifically viewed as terminally effected by this event, historians of the west mark Wounded Knee as an example of the end of universal Native military actions and autonomy, and to a greater degree, their relevance within the broader historiographic context of American history. For works that speak specifically concerning the "end" of the Lakota see, Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963); Robert M. Utley, *The Lance and the Shield: The Life and Times of Sitting Bull* (New York: , 1993); George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1937); George E. Hyde, *Spotted Tail's Folk: A History of the Brulé Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961); James C. Olson, *Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965). For Native American studies presenting the same theme in a broader context see, Robert M. Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984). For a different perspective on Wounded Knee see, Jeffrey Ostler's work that brilliantly revisits both the events and causes of the Wounded Knee Massacre within the larger context of colonialism and American expansion in, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism From Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). While Ostler's work reexamines and recontextualizes Wounded Knee it is important to note that his work chooses this event to mark its end as well.

to the tribe's relationship with off-reservation power centers. Despite developments such as these, many Oglala leaders refocused their efforts to establish a self-sustaining and economically supportive cattle herd in order to create a reservation culture founded on familiar political and social systems.

However, other members of the tribe seemed more eager to accept American institutional controls and guidelines and energetically moved toward accommodation with an increasingly intrusive federal government. Not surprisingly, those most eager to conform to United States policies consisted primarily of mixed blood Oglala and "white husbands." Control over reservation resources such as rations, fence wire and other supplies, and most importantly, land, hinged on the outcome of the struggle between two increasingly divided factions on Pine Ridge.

While the center of the debate pertained to land and its use and ownership its effects ultimately rippled throughout the Oglala tribe in several significant ways. Cultural aspects affected included tribal cohesion, tribal social and economic structure, and power relationships both within the tribe and in regards to the federal government. Those seeking greater accommodation with the federal government seemed willing to fundamentally alter social relationships within the tribe by accepting American economic and social models presented by Agency personnel. They also created and strengthened connections, or bonds, with reservation and regional power centers by accepting these models.

Economic and political power on Pine Ridge Reservation lay predominantly with Agents and their acting District Farmers. Regionally, off-reservation cattle interests proved a valuable economic resource for the growing number of mixed bloods and "white husbands" who made up and increasingly large portion of the more accommodation minded tribal members. Not surprisingly, from 1890 to 1906 the debate concerning tribal land usage and ownership focused predominantly on allotment.

Allotment and Accommodation

Winter on the northern plains traditionally meant a time of relaxed activity for the Oglala. They tended their horse herds and occasionally hunted, but for the most part they settled down and rode out the winter by surviving on stored meats and vegetables. It was rarely a time of decisive activity. However, by 1890 conditions for the Oglala no longer resembled those of a decade ago, and for two tribal members decisive activity flowed from the point of a pen. In January 1890 both George Sword, Captain of Agency Police, and Fast Horse, Lieutenant of Agency Police wrote letters to the Honorable J. W. Noble, Secretary of the Interior, requesting surveyors be sent to Pine Ridge so allotment might commence. Fast Horse stated he knew nearly 300 ready to take their land, and that he worried over present conditions on the reservation because "one (Oglala) has as much right to the land as another." He went on to note that while The Sioux Bill of 1889

allowed five years for allotment he believed it could be done in less than three if surveyors completed their work that coming summer.[217]

These letters provide a glimpse into the two most significant developments on Pine Ridge Reservation between the years 1890 and 1906. During these years disagreements arose within the Oglala community concerning the future of both the growing Oglala cattle interests and the necessity of accommodation with an increasingly intrusive American culture. George Sword and Fast Horse represent a small, vocal, and yet increasingly powerful segment of the Oglala tribe. In 1891 these two men drafted a petition, signed by 131 heads-of-households who represented 515 tribal members, which again called for "a survey to be made in order that we may declare our election and settle on the land we have selected." These men, hoped to take their land in severalty by applying for their allotments under the agreement of the Sioux Bill Act of March 2, 1889. Clearly, a significant portion of the tribe envisioned a future that did not include commonly owned or shared reservation land used to run large herds of both communally and individually owned cattle. During the next fifteen years these two competing viewpoints strove to realize their vision for the tribe.[218]

However, in the early 1890s the tribe still struggled to combat off-reservation cattle trespass, maintain familiar socio-economic practices, and

[217] Letter received by Honorable J. W. Noble, Secretary of Interior from Fast Horse, Lieutenant of Police, January 20, 1890, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NARA-DC, and Letter receive by Noble from George Sword, Captain of Police, February 4, 1890, ibid.

[218] Petition dated March 31, 1891, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NARA-DC. Of particular personal interest, among the names elegantly written on the petition was that of George W. Means, this author's great grandfather.

create a stable economy. Government inspectors noted that the Oglala cattle industry might become self-sufficient if allowed to utilize their resources without competing with trespassers. The tribe continued to sell cattle to the government for the beef issue and often hunted them from horseback. However, that policy continued to come under attack as brutal in nature and by the end of that year disappeared.[219]

Meanwhile, George Means and his fellow petitioners moved energetically to facilitate the allotment process. Over the next several years the Commissioner of Indian Affairs received many letters asking that surveys be completed so allotment might commence. The Bissonett family declared their desire for allotments in June 1891. The Acting Agent, Captain Charles G. Penny, noted at the time "these people are all mixed bloods, but well disposed and reasonably progressive."[220] The push to survey the reservation proved effective. Surveyors arrived in the summer of 1891 but their progress proved to be too slow for some tribal members.[221]

In February of 1892 Special Agent George LeRoy Brown sent a letter to the CIA on behalf of "progressive" Indians who want the White River

[219] Letter from Frank C. Armstrong, U.S. Indian Inspector, to J.W. Noble, SOI, March 22, 1890, Box 9, Index to Correspondence Received from the Office of Indian Affairs, Indian Warehouse & Special Agent, 1896-ca. 1906, General Correspondence, RG 75, NARA-KC.
[220] Letter received by CIA, from Acting Agent, June 2, 1891, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NARA-DC.
[221] Letter received by CIA from George Chandler, Acting Secretary, August 11, 1891, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NARA-DC. Chandler directed, as commissioned, the Commissioner of the General Land Office to survey 15 townships on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The surveyors completed several townships by the time of the August letter.

Valley and Medicine Root District surveyed for their allotments.[222] The Oglala in question urgently requested surveys as soon as possible because the Brulé at Rosebud were getting their allotments completed first because their land was surveyed.[223] Moreover, a second petition calling for immediate allotment arrived at the CIA's desk in January of 1892. The petition, again organized by George Sword and Fast Horse, contained 184 names, 53 more than the first.[224]

However, for many Oglala allotment remained a confusing prospect. Chief George Standing Bear of Corn Creek District expressed his uncertainty regarding allotment in a letter to Agent Brown in March of 1892. Chief Standing Bear referred to himself and his people as "desiring to become settled progressive people" but asked to meet with the agent to clarify several topics. He noted a preference for the $3 cash payment to annuity goods or rations, but feared the loss of all three if allotted. George worried because "some of the Indians said that any Indians taking land in allotment under severalty law will be deprived of rations and that he has to pay taxes on his land yearly and finally his lands be taken." Despite these fears he reiterated

[222] The OIA adopted the title "Acting Agent" to refer to those Army officers employed as agents because of security concerns on the reservation. Daniel T. Royer, known as "Young Man Afraid of His Indian" by the Oglala, was relived on January 8, 1891 following Wounded Knee. During the following months temporary responsibility for the agency fell upon F. E. Pierce on Jan. 13, Capt. Charles G. Penny on Feb. 5, and Capt. George LeRoy Brown on October 27, with Brown being named Acting Agent on December 1, 1891. Captain Charles G. Penny assumed command again on July 24, 1893, Appendix B, *Agents/Superintendents at Pine Ridge to 1917*, NARA-KC.

[223] Letter received by CIA, General T. J. Morgan, from Acting Agent, Captain George LeRoy Brown, February 20, 1892, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NARA-DC.

[224] Letter received by Commissioner of Indian Affairs, General T. J. Morgan, from Acting U. S. Indian Agent, Captain George LeRoy Brown, dated January 6, 1892, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NARA-DC.

his desire to become an American citizen but hoped that "those Indians who have no intelligence" might not pull the "progressives" down. The reservation debate concerning allotment clearly affected George. Those factions desirous of preventing allotment seemed to play upon the fears of those more benevolently inclined toward the program.[225]

George Standing Bear continued to foster a relationship with Agent Brown in order to move allotment forward. In an April letter George Standing Bear again stated his desire for allotment and also asked for a new sawmill and storehouse. He wanted future ration issues stored in Corn Creek District, and also declared his desire for a new method of killing government issued beef. Chief Standing Bear seemed so eager to accept newly implemented government controls that when Acting Agent Brown forwarded the letter to the CIA Brown stated that Chief Standing Bear and his followers were "among the most progressive on the reservation."[226] In fact, Acting Agent Brown conferred the same sentiments about Judge Fast Horse and Judge Grass after they again called for their allotments as soon as possible.[227] The focus of these men's communications dealt predominantly with allotment; however, these letters reveal other factors affecting both tribal unity and control over economic and political power.

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[225] Letter received by Captain George LeRoy Brown, Acting Indian Agent, from George Standing Bear, Chief Corn Creek District Camp, March 1892, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NARA-DC.
[226] Letter received by CIA, General T. J. Morgan from Acting Agent, Captain George LeRoy Brown, April 19, 1892, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NARA-DC.
[227] Letter received by CIA, General T. J. Morgan from Acting Agent, Captain George LeRoy Brown, May 11, 1892, Special Cases, 1821-1907, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), RG 75, NARA-DC.

As Fast Horse, George Standing Bear and likeminded Oglala actively sought allotment they found themselves increasingly tied to the agents of the American federal government in an effort to gain political and economic power on Pine Ridge. First, when these men wrote letters they revealed a familiarity with the culturally imposed system of power relationships and the disposition to work within that system. Fast Horse and the others realized the value and power of writing inherent within the increasingly invasive power structure of the United States. As a result they wrote letters and promulgated petitions to both local and federal agents of the government. Their familiarity with agency bureaucracy led them to attempt access through new avenues of communication rather than meet with Agents and District Farmers in more traditional councils that depended upon the word and influence of the representative federal agents. Moreover, Grass and Fast Horse accepted positions as tribal judges. These positions were created to promote assimilation by controlling native behavior. To work as a part of federally created institutional controls demonstrated a willingness to accept a significant level of cultural change in order to further one's own agenda. These men sought control of the growing tribal cattle interests and ownership or access to the most valuable land on the reservation.

Furthermore, George Standing Bear's request for a sawmill and storehouse indicated an attempt to reposition a reservation power center within the sphere of his control or influence. The proximal location of a storehouse near Chief Standing Bear's encampment might provide him with

the ability to manipulate the distribution of the rations in order to both consolidate and bolster his position as Chief. As a matter of course he seemed willing to drastically alter the more familiar Lakota mode of production, which involved the harvesting of buffalo/government issued steers from horseback. Those Oglala who sought to maintain their nomadic equestrian way of life by establishing communally and individually owned herds of cattle grazed on commonly controlled land depended upon the continuation of pre-reservation social and economic connections. They believed that continued alterations to their pre-reservation kinship relationships and economic patterns meant eventual cultural extinction. As the 1890s moved forward the two camps economic visions solidified, polarized, and moved forward within an American cultural framework.

The Oglala who sought allotment clearly understood that if they utilized the emergent American institutional controls to gain legal claim to the most productive reservation lands they might claim control of the tribe's economic development. Their efforts to establish relationships with agency personnel and control reservation resources demonstrated an intimate knowledge of administrative technologies employed by their federal bureaucratic supervisors.[228] This knowledge proved invaluable in gaining the Agent's permission both to buy cattle from other Indians and to sell it to the government as part of the tribe's beef ration. Not surprisingly, much of the

[228] "Administrative technologies" is a term defined as a "system for the surveillance and control of the everyday lives of the Lakota people" created within the reservation system by bureaucratically penetrating the population, in Thomas Biolsi's *Organizing the Lakota: The Political Economy of the New Deal on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992), 7.

insights concerning the machinations of the American bureaucratic system emanated from mixed blood Oglala and their white fathers. One of the most successful of these mixed blood reservation cattlemen was William Denver McGaa.

W. D. McGaa's rise to prominence on Pine Ridge Reservation is a uniquely fascinating tale in western history. His father, William McGaa laid claim to being one of the west's most colorful characters. William McGaa's true name and ancestry appeared both uncertain and rather nefarious. He used the name Jack Jones as readily as William McGaa and sometimes claimed to be the bastard son of either an English Baronet or a Lord Mayor of London. He worked primarily as a mountain man and trader, but gained his greatest notoriety concerning his efforts for the St. Charles Company, where he played a central role in its incorporation and early development. Not insignificantly the St. Charles Company served as a prominent organizing force in the city of Denver's early growth and eventual incorporation during the early years of the Colorado gold rush. [229]

Ironically, William's marriage to a Lakota woman both opened the door for his success in Denver and also proved his ouster. His Lakota wife proved an important connection to Cheyenne and Arapahoe communities during his time as a trader in and around Denver during the 1850s and 1860s. However, in the early 1860s Denver's increasingly influential white society proved far less accepting of the colorful William McGaa and his Lakota

[229] William McGaa is a notable character in Elliot West's, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998), 184-185.

wife.[230] The concept of race as a categorical weapon for both social and economic division and exploitation pockmarked the landscape of the west during the expansion of the United States. One's claim to "whiteness" helped define one's social standing and access to economic and political recourses and power. Conversely, one could be stained by the taint of perceived racial deficiencies pertaining to one's closest associates.[231]

As a result, William McGaa found himself ostracized both socially and economically because of his marriage to an Indian woman because Indians occupied the lowest social rung within the emergent community of Denver. Nonetheless, before his death on December 15th, 1867 William indelibly marked his place in Colorado history when he became the father of the first child born within the newly established city.[232] On March 8, 1859, William's Lakota wife gave birth to a son. The young babe was appropriately named William *Denver* McGaa.[233]

Over a decade after his father's death W. D. McGaa followed his surviving family north to the Great Sioux Reservation in 1879 where his mother's heritage proved an asset.[234] His maternal grandmother's brother was

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[230] Ibid, 185-201.
[231] For a brilliant and nuanced examination of how language, perception, power, and beliefs shaped categories of whiteness and class see, Neil Foley's, *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). Foley's work carefully depicts the complexities and nuances of racial negotiations pertaining to perception of "whiteness" as they related to increased machinations of regional capitalistic involvement and changing relations to land ownership and use.
[232] For the date and place of William McGaa's death see, Page 3 of Hazel L. Cuney's, *Ancestor Chart*, Biography M1312, McGaa, William, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.
[233] West, *The Contested Plains*, 185.
[234] See, April 29, 1925 "Scions of Denver McGaa, Early-Day Resident Here, Now Leaders Among Sioux" in Biography M, McGaa, William, and Family, Clipping files, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.

Chief Day, an important leader among the Oglala.[235] Attracted by new economic opportunities, created by recent treaty negotiations with the Lakota, the McGaa family headed north with several of William's former trapping and trading compatriots. Men such as Batiste "Big Bat" Pourier, John Provost, Antoine Janis, and the Richard, Morrison, and Shaugreau families quickly became "white husbands" on the reservation. Their mixed blood children were often W. D. McGaa's closest companions and friends, and they eventually controlled the majority of cattle production on Pine Ridge.[236]

Pine Ridge offered an economic and political sanctuary of sorts for "Denver Bill" and his fellow Colorado expatriates. Marginalized from participation in Denver's burgeoning economic growth because of their ties to Native American communities they found greater opportunities and societal influence available on the reservation. "White husbands" enjoyed both the economic opportunities presented on Pine Ridge and the political buffer the tribe provided between state and federal powers. However, this does not mean they escaped the negative stereotyping and condemnation of racism all together. Many of the white government employees working and living on Pine Ridge possessed rather vitriolic perceptions concerning Indian/white miscegenation.

For example, George P. Tower, a clerk at Pine Ridge, referred to "white husbands" as "*squaw humpers*" in an official letter to Lieutenant Guy

[235] See, "Lovie McGaa, 100: the memories are clear," February 16, 1984, *The Rapid City Journal*, in Biography M, McGaa, William, and Family, Clipping files, biography, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.
[236] See, "My Tepee Life" by He-Wan-Jee-Cha, Indian, Tribes, Dakota, Clipping files, Biography M, McGaa, William, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.

H. Preston pertaining to vouchers for cattle received by the agency. While "white husbands" faced social opprobrium from white neighbors they concomitantly enjoyed access to a growing reservation cattle industry. Both politically and economically insulated from the machinations of a disapproving white society these "white husbands" and their descendants significantly shaped the direction of Oglala culture during the next several decades.[237]

When the McGaa family arrived in 1879 the reservation cattle industry was small but quickly growing. The tribe claimed ownership of 2,500 head of cattle after a government issue of 500 cows and heifers and 22 bulls, all at least ¼ blood American stock. The Indian Agent, V.T. McGillycuddy, noted that the stock was "well cared for" with only a loss of 5 or 6 head despite predictions they would be slaughtered and eaten. Moreover, the tribe saved over 100 cows from the summer beef issue and he recommended "a large issue of stock the coming season."[238]

However, McGillycuddy's report also pointed to both cultural and economic fragmentation on the reservation as early as 1879. He referred to the beginning of the struggle for control of both the reservation's economy and resources when he stated

> the squaw-men assume that by marriage they have all the rights of full-blooded Indians, and they endeavor to exercise these rights not

[237] Letter received by Lieutenant Guy H. Preston from George P. Tower, clerk, August 28, 1893, Box 1, Vouchers for Open Market Purchases from Indians June 4, 1883-October 31, 1901, Pine Ridge Agency, Record Group 75, NARA-KC.
[238] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,* 46th Cong., 2nd sess., 1879-1880, Serial 1910, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), 145, 355.

> only in possession of cattle themselves, but also in ranging and pasturing upon Indian reservations large herds belonging to other white men; and when the removal of such cattle is attempted by the agent, the squaw-men claim property in them under fictitious bills of sale.[239]

Clearly, the presence of a growing population of "white husbands" dramatically affected the economic conditions on Pine Ridge by competing with Oglala for both cattle and grazing.

That same year Agent McGillycuddy noted political wrangling within the tribe when it dispersed in order to pursue stock raising and agricultural interests. He found that within a year of his arrival at Pine Ridge the number of band chiefs rose from 11 to 30 as a result of this dispersal. Tribal leaders such as Red Cloud gained considerable power when the tribe consolidated both in order to militarily resist American expansion and then as the Oglala settled near the agency during the decade following the 1877 Treaty. The scattering of the Oglala population threatened their power. McGillycuddy believed leaders such as Red Cloud resisted economic change because it meant a dramatic reduction in the Chief's quotidian influence concerning tribal matters. The McGaa family arrived during an unsettled and contentious economic period. Their timing proved rather propitious.[240]

During the reservation's economic and political period of instability W. D. McGaa carved a significant niche for his family on Pine Ridge. In 1881 he found work as a herder on Pine Ridge. He rose to the position of Chief Herder in 1883 and held the post for a year and a half. He stated in a

[239] Ibid, 104.
[240] Ibid, 162-163.

1906 interview, which took place at Batiste Pourier's place, that he lost that job because he refused to use a "cold iron" when branding government issued beef. A "cold iron" referred to insufficiently heated branding irons unable to sear the stock's flesh and thus leave a permanent mark. Because a "cold" iron brand wore off quickly any cattle so marked reverted to the previous owner's possession, as only their brand remained visible. The government often contracted for large herds, sometimes as large as 6,000 head, to meet its treaty obligations. These herds were to last seven to nine months and be rounded up as needed, which left sufficient time for the reservation brand to disappear on cattle branded thusly.[241]

W. D. McGaa claimed that during the first two years he rode herd the Chief Herder used a "cold" brand that marked only the hair of the issued cattle. By the time many of the issued steers faced their ultimate fate their F.O.F. reservation brand no longer remained legible. The reservation stock inspector employed by the Wyoming Stock Growers Association either unwittingly or in collaboration with agency employees cut the cattle out of the herd because they seemingly belonged to off-reservation outfits. These cattle often were resold to the government several times until eventually shipped to the stockyards in Chicago. According to McGaa such dealings remained the "rottenest…he ever saw." When McGaa attained the position of Chief Herder he stated he branded his cattle well, and therefore lost his job. He noted that the excuse the agency used to fire him focused on 11 head of cattle his wife

[241] See, "Interview with Wm. Denver McGaa. At Batiste Pourier's, November 8, 1906," Reel 2, Eli S Ricker Collection, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.

owned. Supposedly, anyone who owned cattle could not hold a government position.[242]

Despite this occupational setback W. D. McGaa increased his holdings. He gained the position of Boss Farmer at Manderson in Wounded Knee District in 1892; the policy against government employees owning cattle conveniently forgotten or overlooked. In the eight years following his dismissal as Chief Herder McGaa dramatically increased his herd. In January 1893 he possessed a herd large enough to sell 44 steers to the government for $1,509. Not surprisingly, by 1901 "Denver Bill" rated a story in the *Omaha World-Herald*, which described him as "a wealthy stockman now," and noted he "branded more calves last spring than any other man on the Pine Ridge agency."[243] In fact, between 1892 and 1906 W. D. McGaa personally sold 406 head in sixteen separate sales to the agency for $14,000. During a time when most Oglala sold one or two head, probably recent government issued stock, in open market purchases called for by the agency McGaa averaged over 25 head sold per transaction. Moreover, these sales do not include cattle "Denver Bill" shipped and sold in the stockyards of Omaha and Chicago.[244]

W. D. McGaa's family and his old friends from Colorado also fared rather well at Pine Ridge. His fellow émigrés to Pine Ridge, Batiste "Big Bat"

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[242] See, "Interview with Wm. Denver McGaa. At Batiste Pourier's, November 8, 1906," Reel 2, Eli S Ricker Collection, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.
[243] See, "Denver's First White Baby," March 17, 1901 *Omaha World-Herald*, Biography-M, McGaa, William, and Family, Clipping files, biography, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.
[244] See, Box 1, Vouchers for Open Market Purchases from Indians June 4, 1883-October 31, 1901; Box 2, Vouchers for Open Market Purchases from Indians November 1, 1901-March 24, 1910; and Box 3, Vouchers for Open Market Purchases from Indians 1903 through 1906, Pine Ridge Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA-KC.

Pourier, Antoine Janis and the Morrison's and Shaugreau's, found the economic atmosphere to their liking as their names appeared many times along side "Denver Bill's" in the vouchers recording cattle sold to the agency by "Indians."[245] The names Pourier, Janis, Richard, Morrison and Shaugreau, as well as the Craven's, appeared on voucher for sale of beef to the agency 65 times between June of 1893 and June of 1906. (The Craven's were in-laws of "Denver Bill's." His sister Jessie married Cornelius Augustus Craven owner of the *Open Buckle Ranch* on Pine Ridge, the "**–D**" was one of the first brands on the reservation.)[246] These transactions totaled 529 head, an average of more than eight cattle per sale, total weight of which came to over half a million pounds of beef. During this same period the average number of cattle sold per transaction by the vast majority full blood Oglala numbered either one or two head. Why the discrepancy between "white husband"/mixed blood and full blood numbers per sale? Opportunity and willingness to sell offer the best explanations.[247]

Full blood Oglala who hoped to maintain cultural continuity held a very different vision concerning cattle. Previously, the introduction of the horse fundamentally altered the Lakota's more egalitarian society as ownership and control over large herds emerged as the most visible demonstration of status within the tribe. The killing or removal of most of the tribes' horse herds, coupled with the truncation of warfare as an avenue of

[245] Ibid.
[246] See, M1312, pp. 4-13, (Letter and Report on C. A. Craven), McGaa, William, and Family, Clippings files, biography, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.
[247] Ibid.

increased social status, forced dramatic alterations concerning concepts of masculinity and power.

As a result, most full bloods hoped to integrate cattle into their socio-economic relations to replace both the horse and buffalo as conduits to status and prestige. While they also desired to grow their herds quickly they did so for very different reasons. They hoped to regain their economic independence by establishing tribal herds sufficiently large enough to provide sustenance for the entire tribe indefinitely. Moreover, cattle offered a chance to maintain, or reinstitute, hierarchical symbols tied to status and prestige. As horse herd numbers once helped to define a man's societal standing, so too might cattle. The sale of their cattle seemed at odds with that goal; moreover, they not only were less familiar with the machinations of the American capitalistic economy they found no easy access to regional/national markets in any case. As previously noted Indian Agents increased quotidian control of Oglala economic decisions greatly hindered the tribes' off-reservation economic interactions.

Conversely, to "white husbands" and their mixed blood progeny, cattle represented a means to an end, not an end unto itself. These men sought an alternative to tribal concepts of manliness and social status based previously upon warfare and the economic provision of one's *Tiospaye*. "White husbands" and their descendants perceived concepts of success as tied to the accumulation of property. Ownership and control of land seemed to offer access to economic and political influence both on the reservation itself and

within a larger regional context. Materially, the purpose of building a cattle operation rested in its ability to provide an income for the immediate family. Concern for the Oglala tribe as a whole either ranked as a secondary consideration or possibly as none at all. The import placed upon the pursuit of profit and power, coupled with the "white husbands" considerable advantage in matters pertaining to the regional/national market, provided increased incentives to grow larger herds quickly and then to sell excess cattle to market. The McGaa family is just one notable example of this method of operation.[248]

While mixed bloods and "white husbands" moved toward reshaping tribal cultural infrastructures through their influence on the Oglala cattle industry their families found other conduits to power on Pine Ridge through permanent government employment. Government employment offered not only steady pay and a certain level of economic security; it offered access to the reservation power centers such as schools, Pine Ridge Agency itself, and the District Farmers offices. The proximity to loci of power afforded opportunities to influence reservation policy by presenting opinions on various reservation projects or debates to either District Farmers or the reservation Agent. Moreover, these positions often provided varying degrees

[248] James F. Brooks artfully delineates the significant influence capitalism possessed concerning the alteration of patrimonial societies of the southwest borderlands. The Comanche socio-economic infrastructure changed from a loose confederation of egalitarian family units called *numunahkahni,* to more hierarchical bands under more powerful leaders. These leaders gained prestige through the acquisition of the "cultural capital" of warfare, hunting, and more significantly, the capture and possession of both horses and captives. Brooks notes that as the Comanche gained in power because of their growing trade in horses and slaves they also became more vulnerable to broader economic developments beyond their control. See Chapter Two, "Los Llaneros," of *Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 2002).

of control over tribal members seeking rations, a redress of grievances, or an education. Not surprisingly, both reservation Agents and District Farmers sought to employ "progressive" Indians inclined to both support and administer government policies. As a result both mixed blood and white women and men filled most government positions on the reservation.

For example, from June 30, 1887 to June 30, 1889 the employment records at Pine Ridge listed the following male employees: A.W. Means-butcher; J.T. Darr-Chief Herder; William Twiss-Assistant Chief Herder; Two Two-herder; Charles Giroux-herder; Pumpkin Seed-watchman; Charles Cuny-interpreter; P. Wells-telegraph operator; Edgar Fire Thunder-laborer; Frank Twiss-laborer; Amos Long Hill-laborer; Frank Galligo-laborer; L.W. Brewer-laborer; Robert Bissonette-laborer; William Vlandry-laborer; and Charles Means-laborer. With the exception of Two Two and Pumpkin Seed they are all either whites or mixed bloods.[249] This occurred despite the fact that mixed bloods comprised only 503 persons out of a reservation population of 5,609, which is just less than nine percent.[250]

This is not to say full bloods did not still have access to wage labor on the reservation. The same ledger that listed reservation employees also noted "Indians" earned $4 for every cord of wood supplied to the agency. On December 31, 1887 the agency paid $1,037 for 259 ¼ cords, and on

[249] See Ledger titled, "Receipts & Disbursements, Red Cloud—Pine Ridge Agency, 7-2-75 to 6-25-94," Cash Book-July 1875-1894, A Record of Receipts and disbursements, Pine Ridge Reservation was know as Red Cloud Reservation until January 1, 1879, RG 75, NARA-KC. The butcher, A. W. Means is yet another of this author's relatives, as was laborer Charles Means.

[250] Executive Documents, House of Representatives, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,* 51st Cong., 1st sess., 1889-1890, Serial 2725 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 152.

September 29, 1888 "Indians" pocketed $2,100 for 525 cords of wood. Another $900 entered the possession of "Indians" that same day for 150 tons of hay at $6 per ton. Moreover, the agency paid "Indians" $2,229.40 for hauling 445,880 pounds of freight (50 cents per 100 lbs) from Brooksville, Nebraska to Pine Ridge Agency on March 31, 1888.[251] Despite these seasonal occupations it is clear that government jobs predominantly went to mixed bloods or white men. This occupational condition further bolstered mixed bloods' and white women's economic, social, and political influence on Pine Ridge.

One need look any farther than "Denver Bill's" sister, Jessie "McGaa" Craven, to illuminate both the preference of Agent's to hire either whites or mixed bloods and the many and surprising avenues available to influence reservation development. As noted earlier, Cornelius and Jessie Craven established one of the earliest cattle outfits on the reservation, the Open Buckle Ranch. The ranch's open buckle brand, **-D**, belonged among the first recorded on Pine Ridge. In a letter to her son Ben, written on June 16, 1941, she recounts how her husband, born in Burlington, New Jersey, made his way west to Abilene, Kansas. From there he joined a large Texas outfit headed to for Wyoming and years later bought "a little bunch of young cows" in Fort Collins, Colorado in 1876. He herded them to Cheyenne, where he already had a few cows, and branded them with the Open Buckle brand. C.A. Craven,

[251] See Ledger titled, "Receipts & Disbursements, Red Cloud—Pine Ridge Agency, 7-2-75 to 6-25-94," Cash Book-July 1875-1894, A Record of Receipts and disbursements, Pine Ridge Reservation was know as Red Cloud Reservation until January 1, 1879, RG 75, NARA-KC. For a brief examination of freighting and other Lakota reservation economic opportunities see, Ostler, *The Plains Sioux,* 135-146.

as Jessie called him, soon received a government contract to supply beef first at Fort Robinson, and later at Pine Ridge. Jessie and C.A. later established an outfit near Kyle, South Dakota on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. [252]

It was at Kyle that Jessie recalled gaining her position as schoolteacher at Kyle Indian Day School in the early 1890s.[253] The Agent, Captain George LeRoy Brown, frequently stopped by their home and on one occasion insisted Jessie accept the position of schoolteacher at Kyle. She refused at first, but Brown promised to build her a cottage near the school in which she and Cornelius could live, any style she desired, if she might acquiesce. Most likely overwhelmed by his generosity and persistence she agreed. It was here she made the acquaintance of two of America's most notable historical figures.

One day at around noon she received three visitors at the school, Agent Brown, Reverend Charles Cook, and a Mr. Theodore Roosevelt. The future President of the Untied States asked Mrs. Craven if he could see some of the children's work and hear them sing. Jessie eagerly granted his requests and after hearing two "school songs," a hymn and "America," the children were dismissed. Following their time at the school Captain Brown and Reverend Cook returned to the agency; however, Mr. Roosevelt stayed on for a week with Jessie and Cornelius. This notable week took on more significance when Mr. Herbert Welch from Germantown, Pennsylvania also

[252] See, M1312, pp. 4-13, (Letter and Report on C. A. Craven), McGaa, William, and Family, Clippings files, biography, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.
[253] The exact dates are not mentioned, but Agent Brown occupied the position of Indian Agent at Pine Ridge Reservation between December 1st, 1891 and July 24th, 1893.

came to call on the Craven's.[254] Imagine welcoming two of the nation's most noted reformers into one's home, discussion must have sparkled. Undoubtedly, the intimate group setting led to discussions concerning Indian education and reform; however, the gathering itself reveals much more concerning reservation social and economic machinations and hierarchy.[255]

The two noted guests, whose national influence within Indian affairs was considerable, forged their perception of Pine Ridge Indian Reservation from their visits to schools, district farm stations, and Pine Ridge Agency. They looked for examples of "progressive" Indians and found them at the school in Kyle. It must have done their hearts good to hear the Indian children singing a hymn and the song "America." However, access to these powerful men was offered predominantly to mixed bloods and "white husbands." As a result any discussions concerning the reservation's future offered only one "Indian" perspective, which undoubtedly favored the mixed blood/"white husband" faction.

As their connections to power strengthened, those who favored allotment continued their aggressive demand for immediate allotment. For example, Iron Crow asked Acting Agent Brown to write the CIA concerning his desire for allotment. In the letter Brown described Iron Crow as being an Indian, "who has a trading store on the Upper Wounded Knee, and is one of

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[254] For an insightful examination of the larger political and cultural contexts behind Indian schooling, and a glimpse into the influences of Herbert Welch on Indian education and reform during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries see, David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995).

[255] See, M1312, pp. 4-13, (Letter and Report on C. A. Craven), McGaa, William, and Family, Clippings files, biography, Western History Collections, Denver Public Library.

the leaders among the progressive Indians on this reservation, requests me to write to you in regard to the further survey of this reservation." Apparently, the survey was supposed to have been done during the previous summer.[256]

Despite the advantage of possessing a more direct avenue to power the "progressive," full blood, and mixed blood/"white husband" minority faced increasingly powerful resistance to their push for allotment. In March of 1894 Red Cloud and other Oglala leaders sent a petition of their own to the CIA stating their strong opposition to allotment.[257] Later that summer a new Acting Indian Agent sent a letter to the CIA supporting Red Cloud's socio-economic position. Agent Charles G. Penney told the CIA that he received a petition with 1,258 names and "they are now, almost to a man, very positive in the opinion that their land should not be allotted to them in severalty, but that they, as a community, should have a title in fee simple to all the land of their reservation." He went on to note that not ten percent of the tribe now wants allotments.[258]

The CIA in reply asked Agent Penney's opinion on the matter. His reply powerfully summed up the majority of the tribe's socio-economic strategy for reservation existence.

> I have never had but one opinion on this subject. That is; that the allotments of land in severalty, on this reservation, to the Ogalalla (sic) Indians will be speedily followed by the reduction of these people to a condition of starvation and beggary. The only chance for them is that they keep their entire reservation intact; that they take up small holdings along the streams for homesteads, and that

[256] Letter to CIA from Acting Agent Brown, February 25, 1893, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.
[257] Letter to CIA from Red Cloud and others, March 26, 1894, Ibid.
[258] Letter to CIA from Acting Agent Charles G. Penney, August 25, 1894, Ibid.

> they retain the whole reservation in common as stock range. Any other policy will result in their speedy extinction. My recommendation, therefore, is that the title to the reservation be vested, permanently, in these Indians, as a community, and that they be not required, now or hereafter, to take their lands in severalty allotments.[259]

Not surprisingly, Penney's recommendation remained unheeded and the federal government continued to enforce spatial and institutional controls and promote an assimilationist agenda.

In the spring and summer of 1896 new Acting Agent W. H. Clapp sent three letters to the Additional Farmers employed on the reservation delineating his desire to press for further control over the Oglala. His first communiqué reminded the Farmers that Indians were not allowed to move from one farming district to another without his permission.[260] The next letter gave permission for old bulls and oxen from the September roundup owned by Indians to be held until inspected and then sold. Clapp stated that old bulls no longer valuable for breeding may be killed by their owners from time-to-time for food with special permission from the farmer after inspection, but not to abuse the policy.[261] The Agent's next note told the Additional Farmers that no issue or business would be done with painted Indians or educated Indians with long hair from that time on.[262] Moreover, Clapp stated the following year that only large holders of cattle would be permitted to sell their stock off-

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[259] Ibid.
[260] Letter to "Additional Farmers" from Captain W. H. Clapp, acting agent, March 10, 1896, Box 740, Ledger titled, "Circulars to Farmer Employees," March 10, 1896-July 21, 1900, Vol. 1, COPIES OF CIRCULARS AND LETTERS TO FARMERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES-March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Vol. 1-4; 1896-1906, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.
[261] Ibid, August 19, 1896.
[262] Ibid, September 18, 1896.

reservation for a higher price, all others could only sell to the government. He did so because he knew the railroads required a full car load, but his judgment favored mixed bloods and "white husbands."[263]

That same summer a letter went out to the Additional Farmers of each district stating the amount of beef each could sell to the government for the beef issue. (See Table No. 5). But what is revealing is that Agent Clapp told the Farmers to give preferential treatment to full bloods and small holders. This clearly demonstrates that such an economic disparity existed between full bloods and mixed bloods/"white husbands" that such an allowance needed to be made.[264]

Table No. 5: "Amount of Beef each District May Sale"

Wakpamni District	160,000 lbs	July 26, 1897
White Clay District	200,000	July 27, 1897
Wounded Knee District	217,000	July 28, 1897
Porcupine District	130,000	July 29, 1897
Medicine Root District	153,000	July 30, 1897
Pass Creek District	140,000	July 31, 1897

As the turn of the century neared conditions on the reservation changed little. The vast majority of the tribe remained bitterly opposed to allotment, one letter form Agent Clapp to the CIA claimed 95% opposed

[263] Ibid, May 15, 1897.
[264] Ibid, July 18, 1897.

allotment.[265] Roundups continued with the usual claims of off-reservation cattle rustling that involved branding FOF stock with brands from such outfits as the Sheidley Cattle Co. and the Keystone Land and Cattle Co., all proud members of the Western South Dakota Stock Growers Association.[266]

Cattle trespass continued as a significant impediment to tribal utilization of their resources and mixed bloods and "white husbands" steadily increased their control over reservation stock. In fact they also moved to solidify their claim to the best lands on the reservation, both for their cattle and their desired allotments. In the summer of 1899 Charles Turning Hawk, a full blood, wrote the CIA and asked, "whether the full bloods have a prior right over mixed-bloods and squaw men in selecting allotments, or if all are on an equal footing…the mixed bloods and squaw men have fenced in all the most fertile lands on the reservation."[267] Then in December of 1899 Agent Clapp requested that his Farmers provide lists of all mixed bloods and "white husbands" in their district who owned large numbers of cattle.[268]

Captain Clapp's request identified a new reservation policy concerning the rampant trespass of off-reservation cattle on Pine Ridge and the Agent's recognition that many mixed bloods and "white husbands" worked in

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[265] Letter to CIA from Major William Clapp, Acting Indian Agent, March 22, 1898, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.
[266] Bob Lee and Dick Williams, *Last Grass Frontier: The South Dakota Stock Grower Heritage* (Sturgis: Black Hills Publishers, Inc., 1964), 195.
[267] Letter to the Honorable W. A. Jones, CIA , from M. K. Sniffen, Indian Rights Association, May 11, 1899, Box 157 (Allotments in severalty), SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.
[268] Letter to Additional Farmers from Acting Agent Clapp, December 18, 1899, Box 740, Ledger titled, "Circulars to Farmer Employees" March 10, 1896-July 21, 1900, Vol. 1, COPIES OF CIRCULARS AND LETTERS TO FARMERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES-March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Vol. 1-4; 1896-1906, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.

partnership with outfits like Keystone. They claimed ownership of the trespassing cattle with fictitious bills of sale and were paid handsomely in return. For example, Jack Red Cloud reported to the Reservation Agent that Paul Crier and Lip, and mixed bloods Bill Randall and Louis Mousseau were collecting money from outside cattlemen whose cattle had "drifted" over to the reservation. Jack Red Cloud said that Crier and Lip each received $50 and the mixed bloods $100.[269] What resulted was a $1 tax on every head of cattle over 100 owned by any Indian, mixed blood, or "white husband" on the reservation. It was hoped that by taxing the larger herd owners they might be more reluctant to work in collaboration with off-reservation cattle outfits and that their growing stranglehold on the reservation herds might loosen.[270] An outstanding example of the growing domination of the mixed blood/"white husband" faction on Pine Ridge is revealed in a 1901 report from Pass Creek District. Farmer Boesl reported that full bloods possessed the ability to sell only about 215,000 pounds of beef that fall and winter, but numerically smaller mixed bloods and "white husbands" owned enough cattle to sell 1,015,000 pounds. That is almost five times as many cattle to market.[271] This

[269] Letter to J. J. Boesl, Farmer Allen, SD, from Agent John R. Brennan, January 19, 1903, Box 740, "Letters to Farmers and Employees, From November 1900 to April 4, 1904": Signed by J.R. Brennan, Vol. 3, COPIES OF CIRCULARS AND LETTERS TO FARMERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES-March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Vol. 1-4; 1896-1906, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.

[270] For a recollection in Agent John Brennan's own words see, Reel 2, pages 85-91 of Eli S. Ricker Interviews, Records of interviews with Indians [microfilm] 1904-1909, Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, Copyright owned by the Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.

[271] Letter to Agent Brennan from Farmer Boesl at Pass Creek District, April 11, 1901, Box 740, "Letters to Farmers and Employees, From November 1900 to April 4, 1904": Signed by J.R. Brennan, Vol. 3, COPIES OF CIRCULARS AND LETTERS TO FARMERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES-March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Vol. 1-4; 1896-1906, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.

is especially remarkable considering the demographic breakdown revealed by a census in 1900. There were 5,334 full bloods, 1,530 mixed bloods, and 368 "white husbands," for a total of 7,232. This meant that a little over 25% of the tribe owned almost 80% of the cattle available for market.[272]

It is important to note that with increased institutional controls concerning the care and disposition of cattle full bloods turned increasingly toward the sale of their stock as their preferred avenue toward self-sufficiency. This transformation occurred rather quickly as pasturage became harder to acquire and familiar socio-economic kinship relationships and techniques resource procurement and processing became forbidden. The local cattle market offered by the federal government for the beef issue, and the towns of Omaha and Chicago, afforded the tribe its best chance to sustain the momentum of the cattle industry and provide enough income to achieve self-sufficiency. When the 1904 tax lists from the farming districts appeared no full bloods appeared on the list of 30, but W.D. McGaa now owed the Agency $232, which meant he ran a reported herd of 332 head.[273]

The next year found McGaa and Richard Stirk complaining to Agent Brennan that some residents of Porcupine District were killing their beef. When McGaa and Stirk confronted the "Indians" they refused to show the hide from the beef, but always seemed to have a large supply at their places.

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[272] Letter to Farmers in Charge, from Special Agent in Charge, James E. Jenkins, August 31, 1900,"Circulars and Notices to Farmers": Volume 2, COPIES OF CIRCULARS AND LETTERS TO FARMERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES-March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Vol. 1-4; 1896-1906, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.

[273] Letter to B.J. Gleason Farmer Porcupine District, from Agent John Brennan, July 1, 1901, ibid.

McGaa and Stirk requested a special detective assigned to examine the hides of the beef, and McGaa was willing to pay for it himself so there would be no cost to the Agency.[274] Despite these losses old "Denver" Bill managed to at least maintain his herd size because in the spring of 1905 Agent Brennan reported him long overdue in paying his 1904 tax of $250.[275]

1904 marked a particularly notable year for two events other than Mr. McGaa's unpaid taxes. That year the federal government finally appointed an Allotment Agent for the reservation and the issue of leasing emerged as the next significant obstacle in the path of Oglala economic independence. Apparently, resistance to allotment may have diminished in at least one district on the reservation as Farmer James Smalley of Medicine Root District noted that, "a very large majority of them want their land allotted."[276]

However, it should be noted that Farmer Smalley may have overstated the Oglala's desire for allotment. The apparent willingness of tribal members in other districts did not mirror the eagerness reported by Agent Smalley. At Wounded Knee and White Clay Districts the Agency Farmers found it almost impossible to get signatures for a petition asking for allotment. Clearly, strong resistance remained concerning allotment but once the federal

[274] Letter to George C. Dawson, Assistant Farmer, Porcupine District, From Agent John Brennan, October 26, 1905, "Letters to Farmers & Employees": From April 9, 1904 to October 1906, Vol. 4, COPIES OF CIRCULARS AND LETTERS TO FARMERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES-March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Vol. 1-4; 1896-1906, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.
[275] Letter to George C. Dawson, Additional Farmer, Porcupine District, From Agent John Brennan, January 12, 1905, ibid.
[276] Letter to U.S. Indian Agent Pine Ridge from James Smalley, District Farmer at Medicine Root District, May 20, 1904, Box No. 157 (Allotments in severalty), SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.

government took decisive action by naming an Allotment Agent the work moved quickly.[277]

The President appointed Charles H. Bates as Special Agent to allot lands in severalty to Indians on Pine Ridge on May 5, 1904.[278] All that stood in the way now was the signature of the Secretary of Interior and work its way down the chain of command. The wheels of bureaucracy turned slowly however, and Mr. Bates languished in limbo for weeks. However, on June 21st the allotment process received a considerable boost from Thomas F. Marshall, U.S. Congressional Representative from North Dakota. Marshall wrote the CIA and stated that he wished that Charles Bates would soon be appointed as Allotting Agent for Pine Ridge. His interest arose from the fact that his son had signed on with Bates as a chainman and wished to make his required arrangements quickly. A little over a week later the CIA wrote the Assistant CIA and stated that Bates needed to be assigned to Pine Ridge immediately. Not surprisingly, on August 1, 1904, Charles H. Bates officially assumed the position of Allotting Agent for Pine Ridge by order to Acting Secretary Thomas Ryan.[279]

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[277] Petition at Wounded Knee District, Pine Ridge Agency, S.D., June 27, 1904, and Petition at White Clay District, Pine Ridge Agency, S.D., July 6, 1904, Box No. 157 (Allotments in severalty), SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.
[278] Letter to the Honorable, The Secretary of the Interior, from A. C. Tonner, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 22, 1904, Box No. 157, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.
[279] See the three letters, Letter to Hon. W. A. Jones, CIA from Thomas F. Marshall, U.S. Congressional Representative from North Dakota, June 21, 1904, and Letter to Hon. A.C. Tonner, Asst. CIA from W. A. Jones, CIA, June 30, 1904, and Letter to CIA from Thomas Ryan, Acting Secretary, August 1, 1904, Box No. 157 (Allotments in severalty), SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.

Charles Bates assumed his task might proceed rather quickly, especially after noting jubilantly that Red Cloud accepted his allotment in December of 1904.[280] He believed that opposition to allotment would crumble once Red Cloud seemed willing. However, Allotting Agent Bates would remain on Pine Ridge for many years as he wrangled with recalcitrant holdouts and dealt with land disputes that inevitably arose. Mr. Bates difficulties sprang from an extremely determined work of the full blood majority who steadfastly opposed allotment. Agent Brennan vividly detailed the obstacles the Bates faced in reports to the CIA. Brennan noted that petitions for allotment came predominantly from mixed bloods and "white husbands" who sought to gain control of the best lands on Pine Ridge.[281]

Agent Brennan also stated that a general council was held and the full bloods resisted allotment because they owned few horses or cattle but wanted more, and the land was suitable only for raising stock not farming. He astutely noted that he believed that "if the land is allotted to them in the near future…in one year after this is done the average full blood would no have a thing on earth left except his allotment, out of which he could not possibly make a living." Brennan believe it unfair to allow mixed bloods to fence in and lay claim to the best lands on the reservation and then run their stock "(the

[280] Letter to CIA from Charles Bates, U.S. Allotting Agent, December 13, 1904, ibid.
[281] Letter to the Honorable, The Secretary of the Interior, from A. C. Tonner, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 22, 1904, Box No. 157, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.

greater portion of which is owned by this class) run at large over unallotted lands belonging to full bloods, which no doubt would be the case."[282]

However, the CIA, ignoring the 9th section of the act of March 22, 1889, which stated that allotment shall not be compulsory without the consent of the majority of the adult members of the tribe, believed this condition might only get worse and allotment should move ahead. Moreover, he stated that mixed bloods had a right to take up individual land as soon as possible so improvements might be made. He also said that since very few make a living on the reservation, except those few who own 100 head of cattle, they would not be worse off with allotments. If the full bloods do not participate in allotment and their condition worsens it is their own fault. It never occurred to the CIA that the full bloods possessed a very different economic strategy, nor would it have made a difference if he did. The government believed it knew what was best for the tribe and proceeded accordingly. Unfortunately, conditions continued to worsen as a new challenge arose concerning the viability of creating a reservation cattle based economy.[283]

On almost the same day that Allotting Agent Bates heard of his appointment a petition signed by over 500 Indians made the rounds on Pine Ridge. The petition contained names of Indians who desired to lease "excess" pasturage on the reservation to outside interests. President of the Oglala Council, Chief Kills A Hundred, originally presented the petition to the

[282] Ibid, 4.
[283] Ibid, 4-6.

Additional Farmers on the reservation. It then found its way to the desk of Agent John Brennan.[284]

He noted that Chief Kills A Hundred later protested the matter and asked the petition be held. Moreover, the Department of the Interior was loath to permit grazing permits without majority consent, and 500 names did not constitute a majority. Agent Brennan also stated however, that leasing pasture for 20,000 to 30,000 head of cattle was in the best interest of the tribe. He believed it unwise, and that "if they cannot be made to see their own best interests in the matter and to consent to the grazing of outside cattle on the reservation, it is deemed impolitic to force the system upon them." For the Oglala Lakota the fifteen years following the Sioux Bill of 1889 marked perhaps their most significant cultural turning point. Once allotted, the tribe no longer possessed the physical and spatial ability to maintain both their previous social connections and economic strategies.[285]

Those Oglala who promoted allotment seemingly moved away from the *tiospaye* as social foundation of the tribe. Traditionally, the *tiospaye* comprised an extended family unit who lived and traveled together and provided economic support while maintaining social connections. Allotment sought to end these "tribal," and thus objectionable, manifestations by establishing self-supporting and independent family units modeled on that of the Jeffersonian yeoman farmer.

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[284] Letter to Additional Farmers from Agent John Brennan, July 29, 1904, "Letters to Farmers & Employees": From April 9, 1904 to October 1906, Vol. 4, COPIES OF CIRCULARS AND LETTERS TO FARMERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES-March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Vol. 1-4; 1896-1906, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.
[285] Ibid.

By accepting allotment George Sword and George Means, Fast Horse, and many others willingly weakened *tiospaye* economic and social connections in favor of the personal interests of themselves and their immediate families. Their familiarity with bureaucratic machinations and regional economic developments provided them with an advantage toward the implementation of their economic agendas. The more power they gained from their relationship the more they were obligated to accept further demands for accommodation. Moreover, allotment exacerbated a growing tribal division between full blood Oglala seeking cultural continuity and mixed blood/white husband more accepting of cultural accommodation. However, the dreams and goals of Red Cloud and other Oglala Chiefs remained surprisingly intact despite mounting obstacles. For the next fourteen years many Oglala sought a different path. They strove to regain both their economic footing and the socio-political infrastructure that served the tribe so well before reservation life.

CHAPTER FIVE

Allotment and Leasing:
Resource Alienation and the End of the Dream, 1905-1920

By 1905 the Oglala political economy faced serious challenges. Over eighty-percent of the reservation population depended solely upon government rations and annuity payments. Tribal efforts to freely develop both communally and individually owned cattle herds remained unmet. The reduction of the Great Sioux Reservation in 1889 constituted both a considerable loss of land and a physical and spatial separation from other Lakota tribes. This resource disenfranchisement occurred simultaneously with increased economic interference from the federal government. Remarkably, during the decade and a half following the Sioux Bill of 1889, which allowed for reservation allotment, the tribe successfully resisted its implementation. The year 1905 found that the previous threats of allotment and leasing of tribal lands to outside cattle operations found new strength. Both old challenges and new impeded the creation of cattle herds owned and controlled by the Oglala Nation. Nonetheless, Oglala leaders continued to determinedly pursue this economic strategy in the face of increased obstacles.

Not surprisingly, the impetus for the leasing of "excess" or commonly held lands on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation originated from an off-reservation source. In 1902 Henry Bradley of Chamberlain, South Dakota requested that he be allowed to lease two townships in the Pass Creek district on Pine Ridge. The request was written to Agent John Brennan, commissioned as U.S. Indian Agent at Pine Ridge in 1900. He held the post

for 17 years, far longer than any other Pine Ridge agent. Agent Brennan seemed an honest man determined to execute his duties to his best ability. He played a central role in events that led to the seminal period in Oglala history.[286]

Agent Brennan raised a question in a meeting with the District Council that centered on the tribe's interest in leasing their land to off-reservation cattlemen. He found no support for the proposal despite his stated opinion that the land went to waste because no cattle other than trespassing herds used the land. Two years later Mr. Bradley went over the head of Agent Brennan and wrote directly to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.[287] When the CIA inquired as to the feasibility of leasing the land Brennan replied that he thought it a good idea. However, he stated that Bradley misled the CIA regarding the northern boundaries of the reservation and that the petition from Chief Kills A Hundred was most likely forged.[288]

Previously it appeared Agent Brennan opposed the leasing of reservation lands to off-reservation cattle outfits. During his first four years as Indian Agent on Pine Ridge he came to understand the economic factionalism and disparity that existed on the reservation and each group's economic agenda. The year before he read Chief Lip's letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that stated the entire tribe opposed leasing. Chief Lip stated

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[286] Letter to CIA from Agent John R. Brennan, November 3, 1902, Box No. 358, SC-191, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.
[287] Letter to CIA from Henry Bradley of Chamberlain, South Dakota, March 26, 1904, Box No. 358 (Leases), SC-191 Pine Ridge 1900 to 1907, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.
[288] See two letters, Letter to CIA from Agent Brennan, April 11, 1904, ibid; and Letter to CIA from Indian Agent John Brennan, May 2, 1904, ibid.

that "the agreement of 1889 says that Indians shall do things in common raising stock cattle." (Emphasis his) He went on to underline "in common" twice more when he stressed their desire to raise stock and horses on tribal lands.[289]

As a result, Brennan often sought to better the conditions of full bloods and to loosen the stranglehold enjoyed by mixed bloods concerning the Oglala political economy. He viewed himself as the caretaker of all the Indians on Pine Ridge and strove to do what he believed in their best interests. This paternalistic perception concerning his relationship with the Oglala also led him at times to decide against the majority and take decisive action. He did so in 1905 when he unilaterally decided to lease what he believed to be excess reservation land. He stated it was in the best interest of the entire tribe.[290]

Brennan knowingly acted against the wishes of the Oglala Council, which Brennan consistently said was comprised of "old men and non-progressives." The Oglala Council, however, represented the vast majority of Oglala on the reservation. In January of 1905 the Committee of the Oglala Council, which included John Thunder Bear, Jack Red Cloud, Skunk Bear Nose, Iron Bird, Moses Red Kettle, Robert American Horse, and George Fire Thunder, crafted a letter that clearly stated their reasons for opposing leasing. They sent the letter to Mr. Herbert Welch of the Indian Rights Association in Philadelphia with the hope that he would contact the CIA and influence him to

[289] Letter to CIA from Chief Lip, March 5, 1903, ibid.
[290] Letter to CIA from Indian Agent John Brennan, April 14, 1905, ibid.

end the proposed leasing of their lands. The Council stated their arguments clearly and their justifications seemed both reasonable and well considered.[291]

First the Oglala Council stated that "we are opposed to leasing because it hurt our own stock interests." Secondly, they pointed to the fact allotment had already commenced on the reservation and leasing would hurt those who took allotments. Finally, they expressed a desire to finish the allotment process before they considered leasing. They also noted that the petitions circulating on the reservation did not originate with Indians. They were written to appear such, but they assured Welch that the petitions came from off the reservation.[292] The next month S. M. Brosius, and Agent of the Indian Rights Association forwarded the letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.[293]

In March the Oglala Council communicated their opposition to leasing directly to the Honorable R. E. Leupp, Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The Council both refocused and broadened their justifications for the secession of leasing. The Council stated as follows.

> Our reasons are these:-The President has recommended that we should take our allotments, and sent Mr. Chas. H. Bates her for the purpose of allotting us. We have agreed to take our allotments, and are now taking them as fast as we can. If we are to allow cattle to eat up our range, what shall we do with the farming implements that will be furnished us? Do not think that we are opposed to the leasing, simply because we can say "no". We have reasons for opposing such a scheme. We are certain that if our land is leased that we will suffer from its effect, like the Indians on the other

[291] Letter to Mr. Herbert Welch, Indian Rights Association, from the Oglala Council, January 2, 1905, Ibid.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Letter to the Honorable CIA, from S. M. Brosius, Agent Indian Rights Association, February 24, 1905, ibid.

> reservations. It will take from five to ten years to get over its effect, if cattle are allowed to graze on our land…It plainly specifies in the treaties that we were to have our allotments, but nothing was ever mentioned about leasing our lands for grazing purposes.[294]

The Council goes on to state that the government needs to enforce the treaties boundaries as well because "out-parties" both trespassed large numbers of cattle on the reservation and cut and hauled away large amounts of lumber.

Clearly the Council's hope was to postpone any discussion pertaining to leasing until the allotment process reached completion. Moreover, they appear to understand rather well the perception both Agent Brennan and the Office of Indian Affairs as a whole possessed concerning such councils. Their statement that they did not oppose leasing "simply because we can say no," demonstrated they wished to be taken seriously. They feared being dismissed as "old men and non-progressives." Their mention of "other reservation" revealed the Oglala possessed a regional and national understanding of Indian affairs. Oglala leaders strove to prevent further loss of tribal resources needed for their own economic future. Fortunately, the efforts of both the Oglala Council and the Indian Rights Association resulted in a delay in the leasing of Oglala lands.[295]

Nonetheless, in October 1905 another request to lease reservation land came to the desk of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. This time a Mr. I. M. Humphrey of Omaha, Nebraska asked if he could graze 10,000 to 15,000 head of cattle in the northeast corner of the reservation, the same area previously

[294] Letter to Honorable F. E. Luepp, CIA, from the Oglala Council, March 18, 1905, ibid.
[295] Ibid.

coveted by Henry Bradley.[296] When the CIA informed Agent Brennan of the request he replied that such action failed twice in the past two years because of opposition from the Oglala Council. Once again Brennan noted that he believed this council, comprised of "older and non-progressive Indians," did not understand where their best interests lay. Brennan went on to state that the Council held back the younger and more progressive males and asked for permission to promulgate a petition to get leasing approved.[297]

Brennan received permission from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to proceed with the petitions early in 1906. His replied that the petition might take all summer to circulate around the reservation because most Indians lived 30 to 80 miles from Pine Ridge Agency. He requested permission to place copies of the petitions at the sub-agencies of Porcupine, 25 miles from the agency; Medicine Root, 45 miles from the agency; Pass Creek, 50 miles from the agency; Wounded Knee, 18 miles from the agency; and White Clay, 18 miles from the agency, all of which were also at least 18 miles from one another.[298]

The petition presented that favored leasing named a price of four cents an acre, and was supported primarily by mixed bloods. However, in April the Oglala Council met again and developed a new strategy to stop leasing. They demanded a price of at least ten cents per acre, with leases to cover at least 100,000 acres and the lessees to fence the areas with a good 4-wire fence, and other demands. These included being paid cash semi-annually in advance,

[296] Letter to CIA from I. M. Humphrey, October 2, 1905, ibid.
[297] Letter to CIA from Agent John Brennan, October 11, 1905, ibid.
[298] Letter to CIA from Agent John Brennan, February 24, 1906, ibid.

that the lessees purchase their cedar posts from Indians, all fences and improvements made during the five-year lease would become Indian property when the lease expired, that each Indian family living in the district be given free pasturage of one-hundred head of cattle or horses, with families maintaining the right to seek allotments in the leased area, and that allotted Indian have the right to fence their lands to keep out the cattle of the lessee. Moreover, that Indians were not liable for cattle that died of disease or natural causes.[299]

In Agent Brennan's opinion these demands "practically kills the proposition" because large outfitters told him they could afford only between 3½ and 4½ cents per acre if required to fence. Again he noted the negative effect of the Oglala Council in providing income for the tribe from lands they did not use. In his letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs he rather condescendingly noted that "older and non-progressive Indians who take it on themselves to regulate matters of this sort, *got busy* (emphasis mine) and called a council. He also asked that a strongly worded letter be sent to the Oglala Council by the Office of Indian Affairs to impress upon them the fact that they were "standing in their own light" when they opposed such propositions.[300] Agent Brennan's statements implied that the Indians possessed no right to make decisions for the tribe because they lacked understanding. This paternalistic perspective was prevalent throughout Indian

[299] Letter to CIA from Oglala Council, April 12, 1906, ibid.
[300] Letter to CIA from Agent John Brennan, April 18, 1906, ibid.

Policy during the Progressive Era and beyond.[301] The debate continued throughout the summer and into the fall. The Oglala Council conceded to drop the price from ten cents per acre to nine cents, yet little else changed during that time.[302]

As the conflict concerning leasing heated up on Pine Ridge Allotting Agent Charles Bates confidently continued his work. He reported to work September 9, 1904 and then preceded strait to work. By February 2, 1905 he reported making 309 allotments to individual Indians, one each for the agency and boarding school, and two each for day schools, churches, and timber reserves. He stated he originally faced strong opposition from full bloods but once Red Cloud took his allotment his work continued apace.[303] He hoped to complete his work quickly and seek further employment with the Office of Indian Affairs. Bates reported the next January that he allotted another 815 individual Indians for a total of 1,127. He also allotted five more day schools and churches and two farmer stations. While he eagerly noted that his allotment to Red Cloud seemingly cleared the way for the rest of the tribe to acquiesce to allotment he failed to mention that the vast majority of his earliest allotments went to mixed bloods and "white husbands" and their

[301] For a discussion concerning the origins of federal Indian Policy see, Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction*; the best work so far on Progressive Era attempts to assimilate the Indian is found in Hoxie, *A Final Promise*; see also, Adams, *Education for Extinction*; Margaret Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination since 1928* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999); Wilcomb E. Washburn, *Red Man's Land/White Man's Law: The Past and Present Status of the American Indian* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995); and for seminal works on the ambivalent relationship toward Indians in American culture see Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

[302] Letter to CIA from the Oglala Council, November 14, 1906, Box No. 358, SC-191, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.

[303] Letter to CIA from Allotting Agent Charles Bates, February 2, 1905, Box No. 157, SC-147 Pima to Pine Ridge, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.

families. His belief that his work might soon be completed proved ephemeral. Allotting Agent Bates stayed on Pine Ridge for more than a decade before his task ended.[304]

The allotting process slowed in 1906 when the OIA ordered that "family histories" be completed before the issuance of each allotment in order to make sure the allottee qualified for allotment. Nonetheless, he pressed on and completed 647 individual allotments, which brought his total to 1775.[305] The following year Agent Bates faced continued resistance from "several camps of the old, non-progressive and troublesome full-blood Indians." He also noted a newly developed problem. Off-reservation families "from different parts of the country…have discovered they are Indians and are asking for rights here." He found they also sought to settle in the southeast portion of the reservation, which he stated contained mostly mixed bloods on the best lands on the reservation. Bates believed rightly that those on the roles in 1904 ought to receive their allotments first.[306] The Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs replied that full bloods deliberated longer and therefore needed more assistance, so Agent Bates must be diligent to provide needed consultation. The Acting Commissioner implied that full bloods lacked the intellectual capacity and cultural understanding needed to make such decisions. That the tribe possessed and alternate economic strategy never occurred to him.

[304] Letter to CIA from Allotting Agent Charles Bates, January 15, 1906, ibid.
[305] Letter to CIA from Allotting Agent Charles Bates, January 15, 1907, ibid.
[306] Letter to CIA from Allotting Agent Charles Bates, December 18, 1907, Folder 99203-07, Box No. 256, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.

Allotting Agent Bates moved optimistically ahead with his task in 1907. That fall he noted that 447,823 acres of surplus land existed. He calculated total population to receive allotments, 7,355, and estimated total allotment acreage at 2,340,849 and then subtracted from the total reservation acreage of 2,788,672.[307] Interestingly, he boldly compiled these estimates after allotting less than half the tribe. Indian Agent John Brennan facilitated Allotting Agent Bates efforts when he gained permission to offer allottees 20 heifers in lieu of farming implements listed in the Sioux Bill of 1889, such as 2 milk cows, a set of harness, and a wagon, hoe, pitchfork, axe, and plow.[308] By the end of 1908 Agent Bates had allotted 1,202,429 acres of land on Pine Ridge to less than 4,000 Oglala. He noted that most of 1908's allottees were full bloods from the camps along the upper Big White River and White Clay Creek, which undoubtedly added to his abundant optimism.[309]

The year 1909 is notable for the creation of Bennett County, which is land occupying the southeastern quarter of the reservation. Congress confirmed homestead access under the provisions of the Act of May 27, 1910. However, it remained a part of Fall River County politically until organized

[307] Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs from Allotting Agent Charles Bates, November 18, 1907, Folder 1382-1908, Box No. 256, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.
[308] Letter to Additional Farmers from Agent John Brennan, December 3, 1907, Ledger titled, "Letters to Farmers and Employees. From October 2, 1906 to July 23, 1909, Vol. 5, Box 741, Vol. 5-8, Employees, March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Copies of Circulars and Letters to Farmers and others, Administrative Records, RG75, NARA-KC.
[309] Letter to CIA from Allotting Agent Charles Bates, January 15, 1909, Folder 4569-1909, Box No. 258, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.

officially in 1912 when Martin, South Dakota was named county seat.[310] In 1910 Agent Bates was commissioned with surveying the surplus lands to be opened to white settlement. He reported 776.76 acres of first class agricultural lands and 13,940.85 acres of second class agricultural lands unallotted in size of ten acres and up but widely scattered. He also reported just less than 154,000 acres of grazing lands remained unallotted. When Bennett County was organized in 1912 the Oglala tribe had lost a quarter of its land resource.[311]

Charles Bates remained on Pine Ridge through 1915. By that time he allotted 2,408,923 acres to heads of families-640, wives-320, and children-160 acres each. Yet still 738 Oglala remained unallotted over ten years after Agent Bates started his task. Agent Bates reported that he needed access to 136,000 acres of land, yet only about 20,000 remained that were suitable for allotment on the reservation. He then requested permission to allot many of the remaining Oglala in Bennett County as there still remained 106,355.18 acres of land not yet taken up by homestead entry. He noted that most land was sand hills and suitable only for limited grazing but no other alternative existed. Bates received permission and attempted to finish his long and laborious task.[312]

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[310] Letter to the Second Assistant Commissioner from Charles Bates, December 27, 1910, Folder 99960, 1910, Box No. 259, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.
[311] Letter to CIA from Allotting Agent Charles Bates, December 17, 1910, ibid.
[312] Letter to CIA from Allotting Agent Charles Bates, July 7, 1915, Folder 76318-1915, Box No. 261, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.

That same year two inspectors arrive on Pine Ridge to investigate conditions. H. S. Traylor found that over 4,000 Oglala lived solely on rations received from the federal government. Encouragingly, he stated that Oglala men earned $14,000 hauling freight and $11,000 more in labor on the reservation. Oglala also worked as migrant labors in Nebraska picking potatoes, for which they earned another $12,000 and as showman with various Western acts for another $13,000 earned. Most tribal income however derived from selling cattle to the government for the beef issue, which brought $43,953 to predominantly mixed bloods and "white husbands." In his report he noted the prosperous were mostly mixed bloods. Inspector Fred S. Cook found that the economic disparity between mixed bloods and full bloods occurred because "the mixed blood Indians can, without permit, purchase from the full bloods their live stock (sic) such as cattle and horses." This occurred because issued heifers as allotment benefits were traded to mixed bloods before they arrived! Cook stated that it was safe to say that mixed bloods owned 60% to 70% of the livestock on the reservation.[313]

Cook related that cattle numbers on the reservation were down because of a hard winter and a significant reduction in rations allowed led many Oglala to either eat their cattle or starve. Inspector Cook also revealed that mixed bloods and "white husbands" served as a conduit for the sale of Oglala cattle to off-reservation whites. This was especially a problem with "white husbands" because they did not require a permit to sell their stock. Clearly,

[313] Report to CIA from Inspectors H. S. Traylor and Fred S. Cook, July 7, 1915, Folder 00-1915, 2 of 2, Box No. 46, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.

allotment failed to create assimilated and self-sufficient Oglala yeoman farmers.[314]

The insidiousness of allotment was exacerbated by the Burke Act of 1906, which allowed the Secretary of the Interior, who controlled the Office of Indian Affairs, to issue fee simple patents to "deserving" Indians. (One such "competent" Indian was Eugene C. Means, who received his application for half of his allotment in September of 1909.)[315] The Dawes Severalty Act of 1887 began a process that transferred over one-hundred million acres of land from Indian ownership through treaties to white ownership. The original act called for a 25 year trust period before Indians gained fee simple patents for their land. Policy makers believed within that time Native American landowners could turn their land into a productive enterprise and thus gain self-sufficiency. The Burke Act did away with the 25 year trust period. "Competent" Indians now received a fee simple title to their land immediately if so deemed by the OIA. What occurred on Pine Ridge was further resource loss as those Indians deemed "competent" often sold their land either to whites or other Indians.[316]

In August of 1917 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Cato Sells, directed W. S. Coleman to investigate reports that concerned Indians losing their allotments as soon as they received fee simple patents. Coleman's report

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[314] Ibid.
[315] Letter to Farmer Boesl, from Agent John Brennan, September 3, 1909, Ledger titled, "Letters to farmers and employees from July 26, 1909 to August 13, 1910, Box No. 741, Circulars and Letters to Farmers and Employees, 1909-1910, Vol. 6, Copies of Circulars and letters to farmers and other employees, March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.
[316] For an examination of the effects of the Burke Act see, Fowler, *Arapahoe Politics, 1851-1978*; Meyer, *The White Earth Tragedy*; and Biolsi, *Organizing the Lakota*.

found that out of 778 tribal member granted fee simple patents "a considerable majority of patented lands have been alienated by the Indians, principally to the white land buyer." He went on to report that only the "best element" of the reservation received their patents. Yet it was these "best element" Indians that seemed to have fallen victim to mortgage swindles when they found they could not repay their loans and had to sell their lands. He also noted they did not receive market value for their lands. Despite this, Coleman said that the tribesmen "lost nothing" in regard to their income accept the lost value of their lands and the Indians were in the same condition as before. He also noted that leasing income was about to increase dramatically because large tracts of 150,000 to 250,000 acres were being leased that summer. He happily reported that the reservation would hold its largest population of cattle in its history. Unfortunately for the Oglala, the cattle belonged to someone else.[317]

Petitions both for and against leasing to off-reservation cattle operations circulated around Pine Ridge throughout the spring and summer of 1906; however, many outside cattle outfits continued to gain access to tribal resources by skirting the law.[318] Two cattlemen, Mr. Hibbs and K.T. Johnson, were reported to Agent Brennan as trespassing cattle in Pass Creek District during the summer of 1908. Brennan instructed instructions to J. J. Boesl, the District Farmer, to tell them to remove their stock and if they did not then hold

[317] Report to Cato Sells, CIA, from W. S. Coleman, Subject: Conditions Among Indians Who Have Been Granted Patents in Fee, September 9, 1917, Folder 87995-17, Box No. 47, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.
[318] See Petition, both for and against leasing, March 29, 1906, and April 20, 1906, Box No. 358, SC-191 PR 1900-1907, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.

the stock and make them pay damages.[319] That fall Agent Brennan ordered all District Farmers to prevent Indians from selling issued stock to "white husbands" because these men then turn around and sell the stock to large cattle companies off-reservation. He reiterated that transactions between Indians and "white husbands" needed his approval and he forbad this practice.[320]

Nonetheless, "white husbands" and mixed bloods continued to facilitate the pirating of reservation resources to off-reservation cattle interests through familiar schemes. In June of 1909 Agent Brennan again contacted District Farmer J. J. Boesl, who came under suspicion of collaboration with outside interests, to make sure trespassing stock was removed. He stated that many allotted "white husbands" and mixed bloods in southeastern Pine Ridge graze large numbers of alien stock in return for either cash or a share of the profits from the sale of the cattle. Boesl was ordered to make sure all cattle had either the owner's individual brand or the FOF brand, and that all owners possessed a complete bill of sale.[321]

That same month Brennan noted that off-reservation cattlemen gained support from financial institutions in surrounding communities. Brennan sent a letter to Chief Special Officer William E. Johnson stating that James Wilde bought stock on the reservation without a permit and that the Pennington

[319] Letter to J. J. Boesl, Farmer, Pass Creek District, from John Brennan, Agent, November 5, 1908, Ledger titled, "Letters to Farmers and Employees. From October 2, 1906 to July 23, 1909, Vol. 5, Box 741, Vol. 5-8, Copies of Circulars and Letters to Farmers and other Employees, March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.
[320] Letter to Additional Farmers from Agent John Brennan, November 11, 1908, ibid.
[321] Letter to District Farmer J. J. Boesl, from Agent John Brennan, June 1909, ibid.

County Bank of Rapid City, South Dakota provided the money he needed to make the purchases. He asked if Mr. Johnson might tell the bank to be more careful in their lending operations in the future.[322]

Brennan noted that the problem might be in the administrative process involved in selling of Indian cattle. He noted that both the seller and the buyer were required to obtain permits, which led to confusion. He wondered if Pine Ridge should adopt the system used at neighboring Rosebud Indian Reservation. Rosebud employed a superintendent of livestock that oversaw all such transactions, and no buyer is listed on the permit. This would allow the Indian to sell his cattle to the highest bidder instead of one purchaser. He asked for District Farmer B. J. Gleason's opinion on the matter. However, Pine Ridge policy did not change.[323]

Indian Agent Brennan continued to believe raising stock offered the Oglala their best opportunity to achieve self-sufficiency and stated that by now every Indian on the reservation should own a good sized bunch of cattle. He called on his District Farmers to issue less permits for the selling of issued heifers by newly allotted tribesmen. Moreover, he derided the farmers for allowing the Indians to sell or kill female cattle of breeding age. He called on them to allow Indian to sell only older cattle no longer useful for breeding, and steers over two-years old. Brennan's well-meaning yet stridently

[322] Letter to Chief Special Officer William E. Johnson, from Agent John Brennan, June 26, 1909, ibid.
[323] Letter to District Farmer B. J. Gleason, from Agent John Brennan, September 30, 1910, Ledger titled, "Letters to farmers and employees. From August 13, 1910 to May 8, 1911" Vol. 8, Box No. 741, Vol. 5-8, Copies of Circulars and Letters to Farmers and other Employees, March 10, 1896-April 9, 1914, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.

paternalistic view of the Oglala prevented him from seeing the existing contradictions in his own policies.[324]

He promoted both Allotment and Leasing as being in the best interest of the tribe. Brennan did so predominantly because he believed the tribe needed the resources, either material or monetary, in order to survive. However, he fundamentally disenfranchised the tribe, both full blood and mixed blood, from its greatest resource by supporting and implementing these policies. He revealed his condescension and ignorance toward Native American society when he stated the following. "Many of the Indians think the only thing in life worth while is to kill a cow and dance the Crow dance or some other fool dance. (Emphasis his) They should be weaned away from this habit as much as possible." Infants need weaning, and that is how he perceived the Oglala Lakota.[325]

The Progressive Era ideal of creating a better society for all, including minorities, came with a price. One needed to conform to American ideals of citizenship, which meant individual land ownership and taking part in a market driven consumer economy. No room existed within this cultural landscape for communally owned cattle herds being harvested by nomadic equestrian hunters, even if that provided them their best chance at economic independence. Furthermore, the federal government counted upon Native Americans' dependency upon material support as a weapon to enforce assimilation. Ironically, the espoused desire to create independent yeoman

[324] Letter to George C. Dawson, District Farmer Porcupine, from Agent John Brennan, February 9, 1911, ibid.
[325] Ibid.

farmers wilted under regional political and economic pressure to divest the tribe from its land and Indian policies that demanded increased control over its wards.[326]

Not surprisingly, the complicity of mixed bloods and "white husbands" in aiding off-reservation cattle interests to trespass continued unabated. In August of 1911 Indians complained about large numbers of cattle being brought onto the reservation. Again, the accusations included mixed blood and "white husband" collaboration with outside cattle outfits. Brennan, ever the champion of his wards in such cases, ordered all residents with more than one-hundred cattle to provide a complete bill of sale. He threatened expulsion from the reservation for any offending parties caught with cattle branded other than with their individual mark or the Pine Ridge Reservation FOF.[327] Brennan told Farmer Boesl that Mr. Reynolds of Lusk, Wyoming and Mrs. D. W. Whitcomb of Moorcroft, Wyoming were trespassing large numbers of cattle on the reservation. Farmer Boesl was to prevent Mrs. Whitcomb from removing her cattle until she paid grazing fees of one-dollar per head. Brennan also told Farmer Boesl to let Reynolds remove his cattle but be sure to fine him as well, if he refused to pay then

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[326] Hoxie, *A Final Promise*; see also, Adams, *Education for Extinction*; Margaret Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination since 1928* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999); and Wilcomb E. Washburn, *Red Man's Land/White Man's Law: The Past and Present Status of the American Indian* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995).

[327] Letter to J. J. Boesl, Pass Creek District Farmer, from Agent John Brennan, August 4, 1911, Ledger titled, "Letters Addl Farmers": Farmers & Employees From May 9, 1911 to January 24, 1912, Circulars and letters to Farmers and Employees 1911-1912, Vol. 9, Box No. 742, Vols. 9 through 11, 1911 (end)- 1913 (part), Copies of Circulars and Letters to Farmers and Other Employees March 19, 1896-April 9, 1914, Administrative Records, RG 75, NARA-KC.

confiscate his stock. Strangely, Brennan eagerly sought to both promote Oglala cattle herds while simultaneously pushing for allotment and leasing and he never considered the inherent contradiction.[328]

Supervisor of Farmer, Charles Davis inspected Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in the summer of 1913. He drew special attention to the disparity of cattle numbers owned by mixed bloods and "white husbands" and full bloods. Of the 22,479 cattle owned by residents on Pine Ridge, the mixed blood/"white husband" segment herded 16,298, with only 6,181 owned by full bloods. Davis believed policy needed to change in regard to the ability of mixed bloods and "white husbands" to purchase issued heifers and bulls from full bloods. He questioned why their cattle numbers remained low when one considered that the government issued almost 22,000 head of breeding stock during the five previous years. Davis went on to state that cattle issued directly to individuals led directly to cattle being siphoned off-reservation. He called for an end to the beef ration, and wondered why it was necessary. Overall, he described a crumbled reservation political economy that left the majority of its residents in a state of poverty.[329]

When Mr. Davis' report reached the desk of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, along with other complaints, Indian Agent John R. Brennan stood accused of inadequate supervision of Pine Ridge. Brennan denied the charge. He provided evidence to support his competency in a rather extended letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in January, 1916. Agent Brennan

[328] Ibid.
[329] Letter to CIA from Supervisor of Farming Charles L. Davis, September 3, 1913, Folder 00-1913, Box No. 45, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.

described the poor condition of the reservation when he arrived. He noted that in 1900 every Indian's name appeared on the ration roll and most "were still wearing blankets." Agent Brennan called the OIA's attention to his tremendous responsibility of running a 3,000,000 acre reservation with 30,000 head of stock. By 1907 he removed over 4,000 Oglala from the ration roll and noted that they made a living with little governmental assistance. That number remained constant through 1915.[330]

Agent Brennan drew attention to the fact that during his administration of the reservation allotment began in 1904 and was almost completed, and that leasing of unused Indian lands provided increased income for the tribe. Furthermore, he argued that the reservation economy was not a total disaster. He referred to the reports of inspectors Cook and Traylor, which showed about 6,000 head of cattle were sold and shipped to market every year by Indians. Moreover, the tribe killed, with permits, between 600 and 800 head a year that, coupled with the sale of horses, brought annually to the reservation about $400,000. Brennan also supplied a segment of the Superintendent of Livestock's report concerning Pine Ridge, which reported 14,253 cows and heifers and 198 excellent breeding bulls of Hereford and Shorthorn stock on Pine Ridge.[331]

While Brennan's self-defense proved effective, he stayed on until 1917, he failed to note, or understand, the deepening economic problem facing Pine Ridge. With allotment completed and Oglala lands being leased with

[330] Letter to CIA from Agent John Brennan, January 6, 1916, Folder 24968-14, Box No. 46, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.
[331] Ibid, pages 23,24.

increased frequency the tribe faced economic ruin. Mixed bloods and "white husbands," who found themselves threatened by decreased access to grazing lands, turned against leasing. William "Denver Bill" McGaa's own son William Jr. signed a petition against leasing.[332] It is also important to understand that as the tribe's access to pasturage decreased so to did the size of their herds. Supervisor Davis counted 22,479 head of Indian owned cattle in 1913. Yet just two-years later inspector Long found only 14,253, a decrease of over 8,000 head of stock! Fittingly, in one of Agent Brennan's last acts as Indian Agent for Pine Ridge he purchased 40 bulls and 800 heifers to create a cattle herd for the timber reserve in Bennett County.[333]

A little over one-year later, in May, 1918, a new Agent named Henry M. Tidwell wrote the Western South Dakota Stock Growers Association. Agent Tidwell asked that Pine Ridge Indian Reservation's membership in that organization be renewed, for 6,000 head! Moreover, he noted that a "large number of cattle (was) coming to the reservation under leases executed during the past year and…large shipments…will be made this fall." The tremendous drop in Indian owned cattle during this period occurred for two primary reason. One was related to the demand for more canned beef for the soldiers of World War I. Under pressure from Agent Brennan, Special Agent in Charge C. L. Ellis, and Agent Tidwell, and influenced by a chance to make money, most Indian owned reservation cattle were sold at market. This left a

[332] Petition, against leasing, March 29, 1906, Box No. 358, SC-191 PR 1900-1907, Special Cases, 1821-1907, RG 75, NARA.
[333] Letter to CIA, from Agent John Brennan, January 30, 1917, Folder 121702-1916, Box No. 573, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.

vacuum eagerly filled by off-reservation cattle companies.[334] The second reason for the drop in cattle numbers was related to a previously discussed problem, that of the mixed bloods and "white husbands" who sold reservation stock they purchased from full bloods to off-reservation cattle operations. Combined these two factors led reservation cattle numbers to plummet.[335]

By 1919 the dream of self-sustained communally owned cattle herds that could provide sustenance for all Oglala tribal member had nearly died. Agent Tidwell reported that mixed bloods who ran cattle faced economic disaster because of overwhelming numbers of leased cattle on Pine Ridge. Before the war mixed bloods grazed their cattle on large portions of unused allotted lands. As the war continued and tribally owned cattle numbered decreased off-reservation cattlemen greatly increased their demands for access to grazing lands on Pine Ridge. Convinced by Agents to lease their lands for promised remuneration, more and more allotted lands came under the control of outside cattle companies such as the Newcastle Land and Cattle Co. and the Matador Land and Cattle Co.[336]

One individual who faced numerous complaints from Oglala cattlemen was W. D. McKeon, who leased 460,000 acres of Pine Ridge Reservation. McKeon's apparent disregard for Oglala cattlemen and his terse nature led to a general council meeting of Pine Ridge Indians on August 20, 1919.

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[334] Letter to Mr. F. M. Stewart, Secretary, Western South Dakota Stock Growers Association, from Agent Henry Tidwell, May 9, 1918, Folder 40611-1918, ibid.
[335] Letter to Mr. J. M. Woods, From E. B. Meritt, Assistant Commission of Indian Affairs, June 23, 1918, Folder 6862-18, Box No. 137, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.
[336] Letter to CIA from Agent Henry Tidwell, June 7, 1919, Folder 1718-1919, Box No. 263, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.

According to witnesses McKeon allowed his cattle to eat alfalfa and hay planted by Indians, cross over to areas he did not lease, and when confronted about his misdeeds he barked at the Indians and refused to listen to them.[337] At the time McKeon ran 12,000 head of cattle and 11,000 sheep on his leased lands. Despite the meeting McKeon continued to lease tribal lands, and probably remained a prickly neighbor. Amazingly, even the weather turned against the tribe. A drought in the summer of 1919 led Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells to request more land be leased so off-reservation cattlemen could provide for their herds! It is clear that when Agent Brennan's decided to lease Oglala lands he put a final nail in the coffin of the tribe's political economy.[338]

A census commenced on Pine Ridge in 1920. Inspector John W. Bale counted 7,237 residents on the reservation, 4,199 full bloods and Indians of more than ½ blood, and 3,036 mixed bloods of ½ or less blood quantum.[339] His method of counting meant that most likely, mixed bloods now constituted a majority of reservation population. Today, mixed bloods make up a concerted majority of Pine Ridge residents. Bale found that "it is estimated that from 20 to 25% of the Indians of the Pine Ridge Reservation live on their allotments, but very few of these are engaged in cultivating same, other than a

[337] Proceedings of the Council of the Pine Ridge Indians with E. B. Linnen, Inspector on August 20, 1919, Folder 95443-1919, Box No. 575, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.
[338] Letter to Agent Henry Tidwell from CIA, August 8, 1919, Folder 59484-19, Box No. 137, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.
[339] Inspection Report of John W. Bale, Inspector, November 30, 1920, Folder 97973-20, Box No. 48, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.

garden, as the lands are largely leased."[340] This also mirrors today's economic conditions on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

When the Oglala entered the reservation era they intelligently, dynamically, and determinedly sought to recreate their culture within the vast boundaries of The Great Sioux Reservation. The tribe increasingly centered its political economy on the establishment of communally owned cattle herds pastured on communally owned lands. They hoped to maintain their equestrian culture as they followed and hunted these herds from horseback like they did with buffalo during previous decades. Both environmental conditions and their own historical experiences led the tribe to choose this path. Unfortunately, both the American government and the American people were not willing to suffer a mounted, well-armed, and independent Oglala Nation. The federal government set out to assimilate the Oglala within an increasingly homogenous American culture. As a result the tribe faced continued challenges that prevented the fulfillment of their economic strategy.

Moreover, federal policies evolved to ultimately preclude the tribe from the achievement of its goal. Increased institutional control dramatically limited Oglala economic freedom and led to a tribal division based largely upon blood quantum. Subsequent treaties or Congressional acts greatly reduced the tribal land base. Finally, American Progressive Era ideals concerning Native American land use and citizenship, in combination with a

[340] Inspection Report of John W. Bale, Inspector, November 30, 1920, Folder 97982-20, Box No. 264, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, NARA.

land starved regional Anglo cattle industry, acted to effectively disenfranchise the tribe from its land through first allotment and then leasing. The ultimate result of American paternalistic machinations for the Oglala was economic poverty and political impotence. The year 1920 marked a significant turning point in Oglala history. The tribe lost a long and determined struggle to maintain cultural continuity and economic, and thus political, independence. However, while the tribe still experiences extreme poverty, a mixed blood-full blood dichotomy, and a lack of political freedom to this day, they remain truly and uniquely Oglala.

CONCLUSION

Between 1750 and 1920 the Oglala Lakota experienced significant changes to their political economy as they chose to center their economic foundation on two great ungulates of the plains. First, the Oglala migrated west and left behind a wooded landscape crisscrossed by abundant streams and rivers to enter the expansive Great Plains. In doing so they soon sought to harvest the energy of the greatest resource available within the immense thermodynamic system of the northern Great Plains, that of the *Bison, bison*, or buffalo.

As *Wi* the sun warmed the earth, *Maka,* they together brought forth immeasurable fields of grass on the northern Great Plains. *Tatanka*, the buffalo, then consumed the grass and grew strong and numerous. As their numbers grew, the buffalo dispersed widely in order to equally partake in the Earth's abundant bounty. Conflict arose when the buffalo people met the Lakota people upon their return to the plains, and a war ensued. However, the White Buffalo Woman made peace between the two peoples, buffalo and man. As a result the Oglala Lakota undertook a buffalo centered culture that brought them both abundance and great power. It also brought great change.[341]

As the tribe faced new environmental situations and cultural challenges it adapted well. With the acquisition of the horse the Oglala's spatial mobility increased greatly. As a result the seven tribes of the Lakota Nation spread across the plains to follow the widely scattered buffalo herds

[341] Walker, *Lakota Belief and Ritual,* 50-52.

and to provide their horses with fresh fodder. As the tribes became less spatially and physically connected to one another the Oglala found their socio-political structure evolving. The *tiospaye* and band strata became the most significant tribal political structure, which allowed increased socio-political flexibility to deal with this liminal period in tribal history.

As Richard White revealed in his seminal article, "The Winning of the West," the two expansionist powers of the United States and the Lakota Nation soon came into conflict over control of the northern Great Plains. Through the tribe's own efforts, and unforeseen circumstances, the Lakota emerged as the dominant native power on the northern plains by the mid-nineteenth century. However, the intermittent wars between the United States and the Lakota following the "Grattan Massacre" of 1854, which lasted until 1877, soon left the Oglala Lakota confined within a reservation boundary. Nonplussed, the Oglala strove to adapt to this new situation, with their ultimate goal being cultural continuity within a rapidly changing and experientially new reservation system.[342]

As buffalo numbers rapidly dropped Oglala leaders realized the necessity of establishing a new economic strategy. The Oglala turned to cattle as their best economic option partially because of their unfamiliarity with agricultural pursuits, their environmental conditions, and their observation of American regional economic pursuits. Most importantly however, cattle afforded the tribe their best chance to maintain cultural continuity and their

[342] White, "The Winning of the West," 319-343; and Hämäläinen, "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Culture," 833-862.

equestrian nomadic way of life. Cattle moved predominantly to the center of Oglala political economy following the Treaty of 1877. Oglala leaders sought to establish herds of cattle that might be owned on a tribal, *tiospaye,* or individual level. With sufficiently large herds established the Oglala might then pursue their nomadic equestrian way of life in a true pastoral manner as they moved about with their horse and cattle herds. Men could then hunt from horseback in the traditional manner of a buffalo hunt. As the Oglala bands shifted to a true pastoral social structure they sought to simultaneously maintain both familiar socio-economic kinship connections and political structures of power. However, United States Indian policy neither recognized nor tolerated Native American culture as a viable option for continued existence within larger American culture.[343]

Ultimately, federal officials in Washington, D.C. decided on a policy that involved the complete cultural assimilation of Native America tribes. This meant native culture needed to end once and for all in order for Indians to elevate their societies and take their place in America as productive citizens. For these officials this meant turning Indians into yeoman farmers couched in the ideals of individualism, Christianity, and materialism. As all attempts to turn Oglala men into productive farmers failed in the face of environmental and cultural reality the federal government made some

[343] For works detailing the difficulties Native Americans faced in establishing a new reservation economy see, Frederick Hoxie, "From Prison to Homeland: The Cheyenne River Reservation Before World War I," in *The Plains Indians of the Twentieth Century,* Peter Iverson, ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 55-75; Iverson, *When Indians Became Cowboys,* 52-85; Svingen, *The Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, 1877-1900,* 28-45, 56-86; Lewis, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog,* 3-34; Meyer, *The White Earth Tragedy,* 137-172; Hoxie, *Parading Through History,* 266-95.

allowances toward the notion of Oglala stock herds. However, this meant proceeding within an American stockman's cultural context. Cattle must be individually branded and owned, and each Indian needed to own their own plot of land.[344]

The contrasting ideas pertaining to stock raising led the Oglala to continually adapt to new conditions and relations to both American Indian policy and power. Full blood tribal members dynamically and determinedly resisted the increased intrusion of American institutional controls over their political economy. For many this meant physically and spatially distancing themselves from federal observation and judgment. Away from the prying eyes of Indian Agents and District Farmers the Oglala killed and ate beef when possible, acts which required permission, and lived as they pleased. Unfortunately, by removing themselves from proximal loci of power the full blood Oglala provided "white husbands" and mixed bloods an opportunity to establish relationships with federal employees and thus gain greater access to power.

What resulted was a growing dichotomous relationship between Pine Ridge Indian Reservation full bloods and increasingly powerful mixed bloods and "white husbands." The latter, more familiar with American institutional workings and marketplace machinations moved to consolidate their socio-economic and political power on the reservation. By continually nurturing their relationships to agency personnel and remaining in active contact with

[344] Hoxie, *Final Promise*; Adams, *Education for Extinction*; Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian.*

policy makers in our nation's capitol the mixed blood/"white husband" minority soon dominated the Pine Ridge cattle operation. Moreover, this reservation faction eagerly supported federal policies of allotment and leasing. Undoubtedly, the mixed bloods and "white husbands" who established a relationship with agency personnel found themselves forced to accommodate to any new federal policy in order to maintain their connections to power. This process was exacerbated by a federal government determined to punish "blanket" Indians and reward "progressives."[345]

Ultimately, the Oglala goal of maintaining their political and social structures through the creation of an economic foundation built upon cattle ended because of increased institutional controls and resource disenfranchisement. By the 1880s Indian Agents possessed control over vital economic processes such as who could buy, sell, or butcher cattle on the reservation. The threat of allotment moved the Oglala to vehemently resist the privatization of land and pasturage on Pine Ridge. The tribe required access to as much grazing area as possible in order to grow their cattle numbers sufficiently in order to provide for the entire tribe's needs.

Moreover, American federal assimilation policy proved unmanageable when coupled with profound intra-tribal factionalism and economic disparity

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[345] For examination of Indian blood and identity see, Lewis, "Reservation Leadership and the Progressive-Traditional Dichotomy," and, Strong and Winkel, "'Indian Blood.'" For an examination of Progressive Era ideology and its influence on federal Indian policy see, Steven J. Diner, *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998); John Milton Cooper, Jr., *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983); and, Alan Brinkley. "In Retrospect: Richard Hofstadter's The Age of Reform: A Reconsideration" *Reviews In American History* 13(September, 1985): 462-480. For a look at the effect of Progressivism o Native Americans see, David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995); and Hoxie, *A Final Promise*.

between full bloods and the mixed blood/"white husband" union. Full bloods constituted over three-quarters of the reservation population before 1900, yet they only owned approximately one-fifth of Indian owned reservation cattle. Still those tribal members who supported the concept of both communally owned cattle and land fought to reinforce tribal identity through social, economic, and political structures developed within the tribe's nomadic equestrian society developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Finally unsuccessful, these leaders next strove to prevent leasing of tribal lands to off-reservation cattle operations following the turn of the century. Unfortunately, during WWI the tribe sold most of its herd for the war effort at the forceful recommendation of the federal government and its agents. With few cattle remaining on Pine Ridge leasing moved apace through the machinations of the off-reservation cattle operations eager to utilize tribal lands. The Newcastle Cattle Company by itself leased nearly two-thirds of Pine Ridge Reservation lands by 1920. In the years immediately following WWI economic conditions on Pine Ridge emerged that mirror those of today. The vast majority of the tribe found themselves economically prevented from utilizing the greatest resource the reservation offered, land. The Oglala failed to achieve economic self-sufficiency and as a result faced the hegemonic control of the United States federal government. By 1920 conditions of economic impotence and poverty arose. This pernicious situation remains relatively unchanged today.[346]

[346] Folder 28114-1920, 2 of 2, Box No. 48, Pine Ridge, Central Classified Files, 1907-39, RG 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, NA.

What does the Oglala tribe's political economy reveal concerning larger historiographic issues? Perhaps most importantly it demonstrates a new avenue for both exploring and understanding a native perspective pertaining to the planning and implementation of Native American economies within a reservation setting. The Oglala did not passively and ignorantly approach reservation existence wondering what was to become of them. Nor did they merely react to changing circumstances and events. During the decades before the creation of the Great Sioux Reservation Oglala culture prospered. The tribe's political economy proved equal to all challenges that emerged during the Lakota Nation's dramatic expansion and rise to power. Not surprisingly, the Oglala turned inward to seek answers concerning their future within reservation boundaries.

The Oglala did not see the United States of America as their economic foundation and fount. The tribe's negotiation for annuities and rations during treaty councils did not imply Oglala economic passivity. The tribe clearly articulated a desire to establish large herds of cattle on their reservation in order to fully provide for their needs. In the process of making this decision the tribe carefully observed their environmental reality, Anglo regional economic enterprises, and societal condition in order to formulate an active and forward thinking economic strategy. Moreover, they did so from a unique historical perspective, one in which farming played no role. The Oglala did not sway from their goals despite unimaginable obstacles placed in their path by both the federal government and tribal factionalism. Only complete

economic truncation from reservation resources finally ended the tribe's hope of cultural autonomy.

This study further demonstrates that historical perception of reservations as economic, political, and social islands that were isolated and awash in the United States of America's "sea to shining sea," is unfounded. The Oglala Lakota both influenced and were influenced by regional and national events and processes. Western cattlemen and politicians strove to acquire access to reservation land and in doing so greatly informed tribal economic development. Yet their regional economic system focused primarily upon the establishment of large cattle operations. This process undoubtedly influenced the Oglala's economic strategy for when the buffalo disappeared. Furthermore, Progressive Era ideals coupled with Jeffersonian concepts concerning an individual's relationship with the land largely shaped both national and reservation Indian policy. Most notably, the governmental demand for steers to fulfill their beef ration obligations facilitated the establishment of the regional cattle industry on the northern Great Plains.

This dissertation also asks historians to more closely examine concepts pertaining to spatial and physical relationships to power and evolving Native American perceptions of both physical and spiritual space. As the Oglala migrated to the vast expanses of the Great Plains, and then entered reservation confinement, their understanding of distance and space evolved. Boundaries between the Oglala and other cultures became more clearly delineated geographically with the establishment of the Great Sioux Reservation in 1868.

This process continued and concepts of boundaries sharpened with first The Treaty of 1877 and finally with the Sioux Bill of 1889, which created Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Another important evolution occurred concerning Oglala spatial and physical relations to outsiders. Spatial and physical relationships to outsiders changed as first white agents, and then mixed bloods and "white husbands" came to live among the tribe. These groups did not share Oglala concepts of kinship connections as a foundation for economic and political actions. This meant that for the first time the tribe suffered the presence of outsiders who, for the most part, failed to consider the Oglala's perspective concerning what was in their own best interests. Concomitantly, these outsiders possessed considerable power over the tribe. This fundamentally altered Oglala economic and political structure. For example, centers of power became fixed as agency and district farms appeared on the landscape. I believe that the theme of spatial and physical perceptions deserves closer consideration in future Native American studies.

My desire is that this study will lead others to rethink both tribal and reservation history. It is important to break free of preconceptions concerning Native American political economies during the liminal years following confinement to reservations. The Oglala intelligently, consciously, and determinedly set out to recreate their world within the expansive boundaries of the Great Sioux Reservation and then the more spatially confining Pine Ridge Reservation. While the tribe's dream of economic independence and

political autonomy remained unmet, their hope of maintaining their cultural identity succeeded. Today the tribe remains fundamentally, uniquely, and proudly Oglala Lakota.

Interestingly, like the moon as it traverses the sky, Oglala history may yet come full circle. A contemporary effort to repatriate buffalo to the reservation gives tremendous hope to the future of the tribe. The Village Earth "Adopt-A-Buffalo" program actively seeks individuals from all over the world to fund the cost of returning buffalo to Pine Ridge. On March 22, 2007, the group acquired 2120 acres on Pine Ridge in order to expand the buffalo population carrying capacity. Each year more buffalo expand the Red Cloud Tiospaye herd near Slim Butte. It is well that this is so, for as Jesus Christ never appointed a specific date for His return, so to did the Paiute prophet Wovoka never declare when the rebirth of Native American culture might return. A bright future lay ahead for the tribe as it seeks to reconnect with what was lost.[347]

[347] For an examination of the larger movement to reintroduce buffalo to the Great Plains see, Ernest Callenbach, *Bring Back the Buffalo!: A Sustainable Future for America's Great Plains* (Washington, D.C., 1996); For information concerning Village Earth see their website, www.villageearth.org/pages/Projects/Pine_Ridge/index.php; and for a broader examination of the attempt to return buffalo to Indian reservations visit the Inter Tribal Bison Cooperative webpage, http://itbcbison.com/.

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