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Comprobado que el expediente académico de D./Dª Maria Elena Serrano Moya reúne los requisitos exigidos para la presentación de la Tesis, de acuerdo a la normativa vigente, y habiendo presentado la misma en formato: ☐ soporte electrónico ☒ impreso en papel, para el depósito de la misma, en el Servicio de Estudios Oficiales de Posgrado, con el nº de páginas: 455 se procede, con fecha de hoy a registrar el depósito de la tesis.

Alcalá de Henares a 2 de julio de 2019

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INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO
DE INVESTIGACIÓN EN
ESTUDIOS NORTEAMERICANOS
"BENJAMIN FRANKLIN"

En su tesis doctoral titulada *Views of Native Americans in Contemporary U.S. American Cinema*, Mª Elena Serrano Moya realiza una aproximación original a una de las poblaciones minoritarias estadounidenses más investigadas, analizadas y estudiadas, los nativos americanos. Frente a los tradicionales análisis que se han llevado a cabo de esta minoría desde el punto de vista del hombre blanco, siempre definida como lo opuesto a lo que la sociedad y cultura la cultura dominante representa, Mª Elena Serrano Moya propone un estudio de esta minoría diferente, fundamentándolo en la evolución del personaje del 'indio' en el cine de los últimos veinticinco años. Una imagen, ésta del nativo americano, que va cambiando en tanto en cuanto el multiculturalismo y la empatía con el 'Otro' se hacen un hueco en la sociedad de Estados Unidos, sin alcanzar, pese a todo, y tal y como demuestra la doctoranda, un elevado grado de influencia dentro del medio fílmico hollywoodiense.

En este trabajo, la autora recorre la presencia de los nativos americanos en las grandes producciones cinematográficas del país desde los años 90 del pasado siglo, coincidiendo con el quinientos aniversario de la llegada de Cristobal Colón al Nuevo Mundo. Esa representación, principalmente en el género del Western, ha determinado en gran medida la percepción que de esta minoría se tiene en la sociedad estadounidense. Utilizando películas desde los años 90 hasta la actualidad, Elena Serrano recorre la historia de los nativos americanos, desde el conflicto con los colonizadores occidentales y sus ejércitos, hasta la realidad de este grupo tal y como es hoy en los Estados Unidos. Una realidad marcada por la opresión, la discriminación y, lo más duro, el desdén y la indiferencia. Sólo en los últimos años, y ya con los algunos nativos americanos al mando de producciones cinematográficas propias, ha sido posible recuperar y reescribir la historia de estos pueblos nativos en territorio norteamericano.

Dados los postulados planteados, la metodología utilizada, los resultados hallados y las conclusiones resultantes, yo, Julio Cañero Serrano, profesor titular de universidad de Filología Inglesa, investigador adscrito al Instituto Franklin-UAH, y codirector del presente trabajo, doy mi consentimiento a la presentación para que se proceda a su ulterior tramitación y lectura pública de la tesis doctoral *Views of Native Americans in Contemporary U.S. American Cinema* presentada por la doctoranda Mª Elena Serrano Moya.

En Alcalá de Henares, a 22 de abril de 2019

Julio Cañero Serrano
Instituto Franklin-UAH

Universidad del País Vasco | Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea

LETREN FAKULTATEA
FACULTAD DE LETRAS

D...DAVID RIO RAIGADAS....., (Catedrático de Universidad del Dpto de *Filología Inglesa* de la *Universidad del País Vasco (UPV/EHU)*, informa

Que Dña. María Elena Serrano Moya ha realizado bajo mi dirección la tesis doctoral titulada "Views Of Native Americans In Contemporary US American Cinema", que está concluida y que reúne, a mi juicio, las condiciones necesarias exigidas para acceder al grado de doctor.

(Justificación)

La presente tesis supone un importante avance en el estudio sobre la representación de los nativo-americanos en el cine norteamericano contemporáneo (1990-2015) tanto en el género "western" como en películas que no responden a las convenciones clásicas de este género. La tesis pone de manifiesto la limitada evolución en la imagen cinematográfica de los nativo-americanos y la permanencia de determinados estereotipos estrechamente ligados a la mitología fronteriza en la representación de este grupo étnico.

Los objetivos de la tesis, centrada básicamente en explorar la imagen de los nativo-americanos en el cine contemporáneo de los EE.UU., están correctamente definidos y se presentan con claridad y rigor.

Asimismo, la metodología utilizada por la doctoranda en esta tesis se adecúa plenamente a los objetivos de la misma y es explicada de forma detallada. Se defiende correctamente la utilidad de los "Film Studies" (o estudios de cine) y de los estudios culturales como marco teórico de la tesis y se hace un análisis pormenorizado de trabajos previos que avalan la validez de esta propuesta metodológica.

Por otra parte, las fuentes utilizadas para la elaboración de esta tesis son las apropiadas para un estudio de este tipo y la selección del corpus de análisis resulta también adecuada. Además, la bibliografía utilizada es pertinente y correcta

Por todo lo anteriormente expuesto, puede concluirse que esta tesis constituye una destacada aportación a la investigación sobre la representación de los nativo-norteamericanos en el cine contemporáneo de los EE.UU.

En ...VITORIA-GASTEIZ....., a 21... de .....JUNIO..... de 2019

Fdo.: David Río

DAVID RIO

Universidad de Alcalá

Francisco Manuel Saez de Adana, Coordinador de la Comisión Académica del Programa de Doctorado en Estudios Norteamericanos

INFORMA que la Tesis Doctoral titulada Views of Native Americans in Contemporary US American Cinema, presentada por D/Dª María Elena Serrano Moya, bajo la dirección del / de la Dr/a. Julio Cañero Serrano y David Río Raigadas, reúne los requisitos científicos de originalidad y rigor metodológicos para ser defendida ante un tribunal. Esta Comisión ha tenido también en cuenta la evaluación positiva anual del doctorando, habiendo obtenido las correspondientes competencias establecidas en el Programa.

Para que así conste y surta los efectos oportunos, se firma el presente informe en Alcalá de Henares a 24 de junio de 2019

Fdo.: Francisco Manuel Saez de Adana

Programa de Doctorado en Estudios Norteamericanos

VIEWS OF NATIVE AMERICANS IN CONTEMPORARY U.S. AMERICAN CINEMA

Tesis Doctoral presentada por

Mª ELENA SERRANO MOYA

Directores:
Dr. Julio Cañero Serrano
Dr. David Río Raigadas

Alcalá de Henares, 2019

Firstly, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to Dr. Julio Cañero Serrano and Dr. David Río Raigadas, for their support, trust in the research even when it was at an initial stage, and their never-ending patience as this dissertation has taken a lot of time, effort and courage.

Special thanks to my friends and my colleagues who have been encouraging me even when my confidence and trust in myself were tumbling down. Receiving all kinds of emails, voice notes, and messages cheering me, helping me stay calm and focused have been more rewarding than you could ever imagine.

This work is dedicated to my mom, my dad and my brother. Their endless support and faith, even in those moments when I just wanted to quit, have been the most decisive element in the completion of this dissertation. This research, this dream is possible because of their caring, understanding, and unconditional love. Without them, this dissertation could have never been finished.

INDEX

To be Indian in modern America is in a very
real sense to be unreal and ahistorical
(Deloria "Custer" 2)

Introduction

The introductory quotation by Vine Deloria is a clear summary of the misuse and mistreatment Native Americans have been receiving in all spheres of mainstream America since the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the American continent. Due to that mistreatment, Native Americans have faced denial, racism, discrimination, as well as social, political and cultural genocide in the name of progress, civilization and identity.

Probably, they were —and still are— one of the most researched, analyzed and studied populations of all times. Their exceptional and extraordinary legal, political, and social relationship with the United States of America and with the founding colonies in the past have attracted researchers, sociologists, politicians, scholars and artists. Either vanished, protected, demonized or, in the last part of the twentieth century, admired, American Indians have never been considered or analyzed on their own. Although fascinated by their stories and their unique history, researchers usually have the tendency to study and analyze them in relation to the history of the white man and from a white man's point of view. Thus, they have always defined Indians or Native Americans as the opposite to what white society and culture were and still are (Deloria, "Playing Indian" 20-21).

This interpretation of Native American culture and history has led to a great amount of work, especially in the visual world, attempting to represent what Native American people and culture are without considering their tribal distinctive features and their own cultural differentiations. Thus, the industry of cinema has been the major force in creating specific images and language in relation to American Indians.

The importance of this image relies on several facts. On the one hand, cinema is one of the easiest mediums to reach and influence a broad audience in a short period of time due to the development of technology and the appearance of multiple formats. Secondly, going to the cinema is relatively cheap, even in times of economic crisis, and it is easily accessible, as a minimum of one cinema is a common feature in nearly every city or town. Lastly, the experience of escapism or living a parallel reality, which may be another reason to go to a multiplex center, makes the filmgoer accept that fabricated image as real and truthful, which leads to a distorted account of Native American people and their relationship with American society.

The image of Native American is undoubtedly linked to the Western as it is one of the defining elements in the plot, the relationship between civilization and savagery, represented by the white hero and the Indian. Yet, this usual film genre has the disadvantage of placing Native Americans in the past with no presence in current America. Therefore, apart from studying the Westerns and the portrayal of Native Americans in current Westerns, it is also necessary to study if Native Americans appear in other genres and how they are portrayed.

Goals of the study

- To find out whether the 500th celebration of Christopher Columbus' arrival sparked the production of more truthful accounts of the Frontier years.
- To examine the image of Native American in films produced in the period 1990-2015.
- To analyze how Native American characters are included in the narration of Westerns, how they are portrayed and what kind of language is used.
- To examine Native American characters and their relationship with other characters within a film in genres different from Westerns.
- To assess if Native American stereotypes have been erased in contemporary films.

Organization of the study

Chapter one provides, firstly, an introduction to Film Studies and the importance of the influence of political and social changes in films and especially in the portrayal of Native Americans in the history of cinema. Then, we reflect on the main studies carried out in the analysis of Native American depictions in film. Finally, we comment on the rationale behind this dissertation and how it is organized according to the research questions.

Chapter two offers an analysis of the relationship between the United States and Native Americans regarding treaties, wars and main policies, which influenced the view society has had of Native Americans. Then, we explore the evolution of Native American image before film and the main stereotypes

attached to them. Lastly, we provide a summary of the main films of the 20th century up to the 1990s regarding the portrayal of Native Americans as an introduction to our analysis of the films covered in the dissertation.

Chapter three starts by providing a brief historical background of the relationship between the United States and Native Americans during the 1990-2015 period, which is the time span of the films included in our dissertation. Then, we analyze the Western genre with its format, and the importance of the development of characters and topics around the genre. In this theoretical explanation, we will review key and influential concepts like the Frontier and the Going Indian myth. Finally, we explore the films produced during the period 1990-2015 and analyze their setting and plot and the portrayal and relationship of Native characters and white characters within the film.

Chapter four is dedicated to the study of films that are not Westerns and which are set in current United States. Thus, we will encounter two types of Indian: one still living in the past, that of the feathers and bonnets; and, an ordinary Indian living within American society. As in the previous chapter, we will discuss on setting and plot and the portrayal and relationship of Native characters and white characters within the film.

Finally, we present the conclusions obtained from the study and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 1:
Framework

1.1. Theoretical and Methodological Framework

The study of a film as a product derived from a concrete culture and society at a specific moment and time needs an analysis from different theoretical and methodological frameworks. Thus, our analysis of the representation of Native American people in films from 1990-2015 will be based on various methodological approaches: Film Studies with a brief mention to Cultural Studies, Post-colonial Studies and Gender Studies.

Since films are our main source of information and our artifacts, we must say Film Studies as our main source of theoretical framework. When required to provide a very simple but brief and effective definition of what Film Studies is about, we could say that it is the study of how a film is interpreted and perceived and how the film in constructed. Yet Film Studies has borrowed or has been influenced by other theoretical frameworks from other areas such as Formalism, Impressionism, Surrealism, Psychoanalysis, Post-modernism, Post-structuralism, all these mixed with other interpretative analysis such as the Auteur Theory, Feminism, Queer theory, Sociology and Cultural Studies.

Patrick Phillips in the book *Introduction to Film Studies,* to which he contributed with two chapters, states that Film Studies should ask "what is a film, what is distinctive about our relationship to film material, how do we use it both in our mental and emotional lives?" (61). To him, film studies should focus on four different areas: (a) the origin of the film; (b) the format, configuration, and style of the film; (c) the meaning and importance of the film; and (d) contemporary reactions to films (65). As we can see, he examines the role of film studies in a broader context, creating a type of New Film Studies that must face new "challenges presented by new modes of production, distribution and

exhibition and by new forms of audience behavior in an increasingly interactive, highly unpredictable cultural space" (61). Indeed, he affirms the name "Screen Studies" should be more appropriate (61).

We see how film cannot be away from the culture and society within it is produced as part of the analysis of popular culture during the 1950s-1960s where there was a huge spread of mass culture, the positioning of the teenager as the target in the commercialization of films and the export of American entertainment products into other parts of the world (Turner "Cultural Studies" 195). Although both Film and Cultural Studies share an interest in popular texts and the system that produces them, Turners continues to discuss the difference between Film Studies and Cultural Studies in how both perceived films as well. For the former, the focus remains in an individual text with a fundamental acknowledgement of an aesthetic value. On the other hand, Culture Studies "disavowed the notion of aesthetic value from the beginning (...) to how it might come to grips to the gap of the operation of culture" (Turner "Cultural Studies" 195 citing Frow 1995). While Film Studies is an academic discipline already established, Cultural Studies is still in the process of being institutionalized and it is a novel addition to the academia. Lastly, the goal of Film Studies is to offer a textual analysis while Culture Studies focus on the text, the audience and other contexts such as the economic. (Turner "Cultural Studies" 195). Yet, both disciplines can offer each other a complimentary analysis since Culture Studies has focused on audience research while Film Studies informs the latter of why the audience is captivated by specific works (Turner "Cultural Studies" 199-200).

This idea of the collaboration between both disciplines is also emphasized by Richard Dyer when he affirms that "the aesthetic dimension of a film never exits apart from how it is conceptualized, how it is socially practiced, how it is

received; it never exists floating free of historical and cultural particularity" (9). Why is this important in our dissertation? Firstly, our focus is not the techniques used to represent characters or the post-production work in the film, although at times we will mention them if they affect the way the story is presented, or the character is portrayed. Secondly, our main goal is to examine the way Native American characters are depicted in the films in comparison with the white protagonist, the place they inhabit, how their image is constructed also by language and to finally explore their stereotypes. In this sense, we could not agree more with Dyer and his emphasis of a Cultural Studies' perspective as

> Its central position of all kinds and brows produces, reproduces and/or legitimizes forms of thoughts and feeling in society that the well-being of people in society is crucially affected and shaped by this. Who we think we are, how we fell about this, who we believe others to be, how we think society works, all of this is seen to be shaped by culture. Cultural studies stress the importance of power, the different statuses of different kinds of social groups and cultural product, the significance of control over the means of cultural production (8).

This view is shared by Pramaggiore and Walls who affirm that we need to focus on how films can be studied as products of the social and cultural atmosphere they are created in and thus how films can be comprehended in relation to other cultural products (309). They affirm the goal of a film analysis is to make (a) a descriptive claim by providing an outline of the plot; (b) an interpretative claim by informing about the importance and meaning of the film; and, lastly (c) an evaluative claim by grading "the film as good, bad or mediocre" (26-30). In this analysis, both the social attitudes and experiences as a group and as individual are brought into the context offering Film Studies a thorough

analysis of the film. Indeed, according to Patrick Phillips, this is what Film Studies will focus on in the next few years (118).

In our times, we have taken for granted the powerful impact cinema has in our society. When cinema first started, movies were just ten minutes long approximately but the excitement of watching people talking on a white screen lasts forever. Nonetheless, the world of cinema is not immune to the social and political realities of the time when a film is produced. Film was the natural successor of photography and painting in taking the role of presenting and communicating the reality to society. As Kilpatrick states, "the films must be viewed as art, and art is social, historical, cultural artifact – a socially situated utterance, a reflection of the film's time of birth and the social and political milieu into which it was born" (xiv). Cynthia-Lou Coleman states that the mass media in general construct social meaning in cultural facts and then, cinema as a cultural fact is a channel which is composed of different roles such as the construction and transmission of social meanings and values; the engagement in an industrial activity and functioning as a form of entertainment (276). Once again, this has to do with the paradigm of Cultural Studies, as we said before, as an interdisciplinary field that examines the relationship between culture and power and how its resulting beliefs, practices or behaviors are implanted in society (Barker citing Bennett 7).

To convey specific messages and meanings (ideology or propaganda), a film must use a specific language, specific visual techniques and a specific style. Filmmakers, reviewers, and the audience need to agree on the form of those messages so, to convey those messages, filmmakers must use conventions or a code that is recognizable for the audience and everybody involved in the film, i.e., a genre (Bordwell 108-111; Maltby 59; Speidel 80-81). The audience responds to

those conventions based on personal experience of the real world and the expectation we have from a film (Speidel 81)

It is hard to define what a genre is, as genres can be arranged according to themes, iconography, film techniques, or even plots. On the one hand, as audience, we have expectations when we watch a film in terms of code. If we go to see a Western, for instance, we expect specific elements to catalog that film as such: the frontier, Monument Valley, the clash between whites and Indians, the sheriff, the Indian fighter, the Cavalry, the good guys and the bad guys… On the other hand, when we decode a film, we interpret it according to our point of view and ideological position.

Paul Watson in the chapter entitled "Approaches to film genre – Taxonomy/Genericity/Metaphor" within the book *Introduction to Film Studies* edited by Jill Nelmes considers genre as (a) a safe economical cover for those involved in the making of a film as it reduces monetary risks because it sets the standards for successful implementation; (b) a set of conventions and assumptions for the audience to examine their view; and (c) genre is a structured frame for critics and reviews to negotiate between the success of the product and the audience's appreciation (189).

Genres, however, do not stay fixed as filmmakers can rearrange conventions or forms to innovate, to improve or to reverse the genre or simply because the audience changes with time. Therefore, its social and cultural meaning may change or vary throughout history, as people who watch it are different in each period. As Robert P. Kolker affirms, "a film is made for an audience and will survive only as far as the audience finds it acceptable" (14).

However, according to Benshoff and Griffin, genres do not usually seek to call into question the ideological and political biases; rather, they repeat over and

over again conventions and stories (28). We partially agree on this. On the one hand, we will see in the analysis of the movies how in the last 25 years the intention of some Westerns has been to revise history and to add the voice of those who were left behind or forgotten in the Conquest of the West, i.e., Native Americans. Yet, in the very use of the same conventions, filmmakers fall repeatedly into the same kind of mistake: they continue to offer a stereotyped version of Native Americans to match the audience's expectations. At least, more and more native actors and filmmakers are involved and are starting to offer their alternative views.

On the other hand, we must take into consideration that, whenever you want to break the conventions to challenge those biases, you need to count on the audience approval and the possible financial consequences. This is one of the reasons why studios may have previews for specific audiences in order to test the movies (Maltby 55). For instance, John Ford is considered the filmmaker that established the 'Hollywood Indian' in movies such as *Stagecoach* (1939) or *The Searchers* (1956). However, in *Cheyenne Autumn* (1964), the audience turned his back on him, the film was not a hit at the box office because he wanted to challenge the very image he created in the past. Was the audience ready for that change? Were Ford's directing skills different?

Therefore, films do not only reflect the ideological, political and social values of mainstream society, but also of the ones who made it (Kolker 12), i.e., film is the final artistic product made up from the work of different people involved in the process with the ultimate goal of making money (O'Connor 30). Thus,

> in any film, we are witness to a rich and often conflicting structure of imaginative, cultural, economic and ideological events. Because most films

> are made for profit, they attempt to speak to the largest number of people, and by so doing have to appeal to what their makers believe are the most common and acceptable beliefs of a potential audience. But audiences often respond in ways the filmmakers don't expect. The result is that the film text often lies at a nexus of expectation and response, of cultural belief and individual resistance (Kolker 13).

As O'Connor says, we need to consider some issues when a film is produced. In the first place, we have what he called the "dramatic considerations" ("Hollywood's Indian" 30). The main role of a film is to tell a story visually, but the filmmaker may use different technical devices to influence the audience's perception or point of view such as the use of a narrator, the position of the camera, the edition work done afterwards or even place of the characters in specific scenes (O'Connor 30-32).

These dramatic considerations can be affected by "commercial considerations" (O'Connor "Hollywood's Indian" 33), i.e., these issues open the possibilities of a change in the plot, the types of characters and their portrayals. As an industry itself, the main goal of the studios, producers and filmmakers is to "appeal to the broadest audience possible" (O'Connor "Hollywood's Indian" 33), which will make their film successful. For instance, the development of the image of Native Americans throughout the history of cinema has depended on the era or decade in which the film was made.

Finally, we must consider political issues as well, which at the same time also affect business issues (O'Connor "Hollywood's Indian" 35). Obviously, the film industry and the films they create are products of the time because they spread the opinions arising from a specific point of view or ideology. For example, in the 1970s, Indians were used to criticize the government intervention and the

atrocities committed in Vietnam, so they use Native American massacres to make a stand (O'Connor "Hollywood's Indian" 37).

However, as audience, we must be aware that what we see is the fictional recreation of an event or issue. It is a product invented according to a point of view that may be interpreted differently depending on who is watching the film and when. Scholars like Robert Stam warn that taking fictional depictions as history may be historical consequences (10-29). Films must be read "with sensitivity, care and discrimination" (Rollins "Columbia companion" xii). For instance, the way John Ford depicted Native Americans in the 1950s – 1960s is still engraved in mainstream society and in the studios, so it is very difficult to fight against that representation.

Since films are our popular memory, we tend to confuse our perception of the past with reality; this is why we need to differentiate real history from a historical movie because we may not be aware of that. Films are aimed to provide entertainment, while the goal of History is to tell the truth about the past and not to support any kind of ideology. As Shohat and Stam state in *Unthinking Eurocentrism,* "cinematic recreations of the past reshape the imagination of the present, legitimating or interrogating hegemonic memories and assumptions" (62), meaning that when we watch a film, we have some expectations that need to be fulfilled.

When describing genre and conventions we briefly mention that filmmakers could modify, adapt, revise or reverse the set of conventions established in order to innovate or simply because the taste of the audience changes along history or because socially some behavior, thoughts or views have to be included in order to update the telling of a story, the director is obliged to

make changes to the way the story is told, or to the techniques used when presenting the story and the characters.

Although in chapter three of this dissertation we will talk about Revisionism, it is also necessary to mention it in this part of theoretical framework. Armando Jose Prats, in his book *Invisible Natives: Myth & Identity in the American Western* (2002), widely explains the failure of the revisionist movement from a racial and cultural point of view and defines revisionism as

> a near-doctrinal system of iconography and ideology, of narrative tropes and generic types, that articulates the *reaction against* the Myth of Conquest ... Revisionism does not so much break with the Indian Western as it engages it dialectically. Revisionism, then, is the Indian Western's supplementary ideology, and the solitary consciousness (and conscience) that labors for a figure of the true Indian is but one of its abidingly seductive illusions. Revisionism's implied motives and unanticipated consequences often obscure its stated claims and supersede, perhaps even subvert, both its apologia for the Indian and its polemic against the conqueror (127).

In relation to the failure of Revisionism, Prats points out three reasons why Revisionism fails. Firstly, the Indian portrayed in the films is a vanishing Indian, who is living his last days in society and, consequently, whose place in history is the past (127-128). Secondly, the Indian character never does the revising as he is vanishing or completely vanished so, the Indian depends on a "reformed conqueror" (129), in other words, the white hero, who does not share Indian's fate and who is an extraordinary character as he is suitably excluded from the Myth of Conquest (130). Finally, Revisionism fails because the "Indian character authorizes, validates and confirms the white hero's claims and strategies and tropes of the supporting narrative agencies" (130). Thus, the

revisionist does his revision from a white point of view, not the Indian, because his narration marks his own exceptionality as a full American character as he is the only connection between the present and the past, represented by current American society and the Indian (132-136)

Therefore, we may assume that Revisionism will produce new images that are more in agreement with the new and current social reality and, consequently, it will require a new language and new perspective of the myth of the frontier and the conquest, i.e., viewers will have a new set of images, a new ideology and new portrayals will be created out of this mixed act of nostalgia, guilt, and a desire to display a historical truth.

Thus, Jeanne Thomas Allen in her article "Film History: A Revisionist Perspective" provides a classification of three styles or categories of Revisionism in History that we could apply to other areas (5). The first category claims that old arguments, views, traditions or ideas were incomplete and mistaken, so it is necessary to present new evidence to challenge the old (6). The second category calls for new questions and perspectives to "uncover a whole new topic as well as better explanation of historical events" (6). Lastly, the third category of Revisionism examines the presentation of new topics and ideas due to the use of non-traditional documentation and the analysis of new disciplines to give visibility of other members of society (6-7).

In addition, The New Western Historians, especially Patricia Limerick, with her work *The Legacy of Conquest* (1987), challenged Turner's idea of the frontier as the unique element in the process of Americanness as the process of conquest was not unique in the region of the West; on the contrary, it took place in other areas of the nation. Indeed, she claims the boundaries of the Western frontier are somehow unclear (26). For her, the most important feature is that the West "was

an important meeting ground" between different cultures and that "the conquest tied diverse groups into the same story" where both "minorities and majorities occupied a common ground" and, yet, where "the pursuit of legitimacy in property overlapped with the pursuit of legitimacy in way of life and point of view" (27).

This new approach to Western History in the 1980s, together with the countercultural movements in the 1960s-1970s, the appearance of Native American political movements and literary works, and new scholarly research on Westerns, made this myth of the frontier to be re-considered. Thus, the myth was has gone through "a process of transformation, deconstruction and re-mythologization" (Cawelti 102).

William McClain in his article "Western, Go Home! Sergio Leone and the 'Death of the Western' in American Film Criticism" comments how Sergio Leone's films have not been well received by American critics due to the changes he proposed in his Westerns, specially the Dollar's trilogy. Considering Western a national genre (57), McClain does a review of the main tenets of the Western in terms of symbols, topics and characters according to different authors and how critics have despised Sergio Leone's transformation of the genre different from the modern and adult Westerns other film directors were doing in order to modernize the genre but keeping the key features into play (60) . Here it lays two interesting concepts: is it Revisionism or reversion of the genre, or a mixture of both? (58). As McClain affirms in the article it seems the critics referred

> to an even broader phenomenon: the emptying of such films of their more traditional themes and meanings, often undertaken in what they believed to be a more or less cynical guise of "realism" that rejected grand thematic gestures in favour or moral ambiguity or, perhaps indifference (60).

What we understand is that to critics going away from the tenets of the Western was not a revisionist Western but something different. To us, there are no reversion in the films we are going to examine in Chapter Three when we explain the genre and its main features; rather than that, what we see is a revision of the topics, setting, plots and characters to include more voices and more points of view but they keep the Western as its basics.

Our dissertation takes the role of revisioning the way the Native characters are portrayed individually and in relation to white characters as the 'Other' in films. One of the first works that dealt with the study of the 'Other' is Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), which is considered by many scholars the seminal piece of work of Postcolonial Studies (Selden and Widdowson 189; Singh and Schmidt 16).

In his work, apart from doing a review of the cultural relationship between Europe and Asia, he indicates how the image of the 'Other' (the 'Orient') has been built by Western scholars producing stereotyped negative portrayals of idleness, deceitfulness and inferiority about the Orient in cultural products such as writing, films and paintings (Selden and Widdowson 190; Singh and Schmidt 16). Thus, this distinction between the East and West is a distinction based on power and knowledge and linked to imperialism that has affected the 'Other' understanding of itself even though the official structure of colonialism finished in the 1960s (Singh and Schmidt 16-17).

Then, how do we define Postcolonial and Postcolonial Studies? Selden and Widdowson explain how postcolonial criticism brings to light how non-Western ways of life and culture have been excluded giving away the power relations between the 'Orient' and the 'Eastern', using Said's words (188-189). Singh and Schmidt in their book *Postcolonial Theory and the United States: Race,*

Ethnicity, and Literature (2000) affirm how the term postcolonial is as varied as the experiences of the nations that have been under the colonial system for centuries (17) and that it "is a name for certain textual moods (ambivalence), styles (hybridity) and tendencies (interdisciplinary) rather than as the name for a historical period" (xvi). In fact, they comment how the term has derived lately into 'neocolonialism' as the new way of keeping nations subjugated is through capitalism (19). In addition, Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin in their work *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures* (1989) affirm that they use "the term 'post-colonial'... to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (2). Despite their attachment to postcolonial literary theory, they clearly explain how

> the idea of 'post-colonial literary theory' emerges from the inability of European theory to deal adequately with the complexities and varied cultural provenance of post-colonial writing. European theories themselves emerge from particular cultural traditions which are hidden by false notions of 'the universal'... Indigenous theories have developed to accommodate the differences within the various cultural traditions as well as the desire to describe in a comparative way the features shared across those traditions (11).

At this point, two questions arise: Can we regard Native Americans as postcolonial subjects? What does it have to do with Native Americans and their stereotypes, our focus in this dissertation? To answer the first question, we look at scholars like Kuprat who defend the idea of the Native Americans as colonial subjects as they have not gone over the colonialism phase as politically and economically "subalternity" (Krupat 73). Indeed, he defines the relationship

between Native Americans and the US government as that of internal colonialism.

Since our dissertation does an analysis of the portrayal of Native Americans and how they have been stereotyped in film industry and, basically, they have been labelled as the 'Other' within American culture as we will see in Chapter Two, it was necessary to link this idea of the 'Other' with Postcolonial theory. Yet, Homi Bhabha goes a little bit further and in 'The Other Question' explains how "the objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction" (70). Indeed, Bhabha joins the idea of the stereotype with the concept of fixity. Thus, he describes the stereotype as

> a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always 'in place', already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated...as if the essential duplicity of the Asiatic or the bestial sexual license of the African that needs no prove can never really, in discourse be proved (66).

In terms of the construction of the 'Other', he defines 'fixity' as "a paradoxical mode of representation: it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repetition" (66). We agree that stereotypical representations may contain some range of rigidity as they are both repetitive and somehow monolithic. However, at the same time, as we are going to see, those stereotypes change and add new elements as the society 'acquires' new ways of seeing the 'Other', therefore, creating new images.

In our dissertation, apart from describing how the Indians have been portrayed, the otherness is marked also by the space they occupy. Thus, Jose

Armando Prats in his book *Invisible Natives: Myth and Identity in the American Western* (2002) explains how the Myth of Conquest has placed the Indian in the border of the white hero where he is less visible and human, thus converting the Indian presence in the key element in the definition of the space (74). Then, the 'Spaces of the Same' are characterized by the ideas of possession and dominion of the land where whites can fulfill their role in the name of progress. Indeed, not only are they defining the space they inhabit, but also the land where the Indian is going to be located. Thus, the 'Spaces of the Same' are culturally defined spaces where identity is determined. However, it is also necessary to define where 'the Other' is going to be located. To Prats, the 'Spaces of the Other' are located at the margins of the spaced owned by white settlers. Indeed, it is "the space of savage spectacle" ("Invisible" 12); it represents the justification of the violence that belongs to the Myth of Conquest. Therefore, 'Spaces of the Other' must be a requirement of the 'Spaces of the Same' ("Invisible" 82-83); without it, the Myth of Conquest cannot be built or justified. Yet, once the Indian disappears, as it is usually the topic in the Western, the 'Spaces of the Same' stop having a specific perimeter ("Invisible" 88).

In the construction of the 'Other' we will also pay attention to how white hero constructs and adopts the identity of the Indian. The concept of 'Going Indian' which Robert Baird describes comes into play. He described this concept as "the white discovery of, and the renaming and adoption into, the tribal society of the American Indian" (Baird 195-196). This process, according to Prats undergoes two phases. First, *the mystique of cultural appropriation* by which the white hero transforms into an Indian to triumph while he retains his features as hero ("Invisible" 201). Secondly, *the illusion of cultural divestment* by which the hero and the country would take off the Indian features once conquest and

progress has been achieved ("Invisible" 229). Yet, Prats calls this amalgamation of the hero the Double Other ("Invisible" 185-186) as he "alien to the Indians as to the civilization for whose sake he destroys them, the beau ideal of the American, yet ever denied participation in the new order of the ages ("Invisible" 195).

Lastly, since Postcolonial theory, as we have seen, is closely linked to the relation of knowledge, power and culture, we need to mention also an important actor within Postcolonial Studies, the women of color. Since they are double-repressed, not only because she belongs to the 'Other' but also because she is a woman. Thus, her characters have been demonized and sexualized as we prove in our dissertation taking as models the studies carried out by M. Elise Marubbio in her *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film* (2006) and Elizabeth S. Bird in her article "Gendered Constructions of the American Indian in Popular Media" (999) when she explains how American Indian women have been converted into 'squaws' or 'princesses'

1.2. Research Sources

Basing part of the title of their book on the infamous sentence credited to Philip Sheridan, a General US Army during the Indian Wars, Ralph E. Friar and Natasha A. Friar published in 1972 one of the first reference books in the study of the depiction of Native Americans in film: *The Only Good Indian...The Hollywood Gospel* (1972). In their book, they catalogued the movie industry's abuses related to the history and culture of Native Americans from the silent era to more recent pro-American Indian era reflected in films like *A Man Called Horse* giving us the impression that the general attitude of Hollywood

productions is parallel to the sentence on which the book is based on. Thus, the book does not offer any positive future on the portrayal of Native Americans. In the recent years, some scholars, such as Angela Aleiss, have been very critical to this book, as it categorized Hollywood as a racist industry especially because the Friars forgot to include key movies that tried to challenge the traditional image of Native Americans as savage.

The next film analysis of American Indians was Gretchen Bataille and Charles L. P. Silet's *The Pretend Indians: Images of Native Americans in the Movies* published in 1980, which is a compilation of articles previously published. Although published right after the social and political activism of the 1970s, the book is edited with a calmer tone than the one by the Friars', whose tone reflected the social and, why not, scholar and political, natural turmoil in which it was written. Introduced by Vine Deloria, Jr., *The Pretend Indians* is an overview of the treatment and depiction of Native Americans in film and other forms of art, like literature. Section five is especially relevant as it specifically deals with the portrayal in films. Within that section, we find Vine Deloria's "The American Indian Image in North America," Philip French's "The Indians in the Western Movie," or Dan Georgakas' on "American Indians in Film". As researchers, this compendium of articles and books on the popular images of Native Americans in the American film the editors provide is very useful.

The same year John O'Connor published *The Hollywood Indian: Stereotypes of Native Americans in Film,* which relates Native American portrayals on screen with the production data as, ultimately, those creating the image projected on a screen for the audience to enjoy are the studios and the individual filmmakers. As such, for the first time, scripts, financial records and correspondence are carefully examined and analyzed in ten films.

Only two years later, in 1982, Raymond Stedman carried out an analysis of stereotypes of Native Americans in American culture and media in general in his book *Shadows of the Indian*. Thus, views of 'the enemy', 'the *belle sauvage*' or 'vanishing Americans' are the excuse to explore key themes about American culture and society. All those stereotypes have a common trait: they are white inventions and they are attempts to define Native Americans according to the historical era. The most significant feature of the book is that Stedman offers the readers eight questions we should ask when we encounter Native American images:

> Is the vocabulary demeaning? Do the Indians talk like Tonto? Do the Indians belong to the feather-bonnet tribe? Are comic interludes built upon firewater and stupidity? Are the Indians portrayed as an extinct species? Are the Indians either Noble or Savage? Is the tone patronizing? Is Indian humanness recognized? (pp. 234-255).

When Michael Hilger published *From Savage to Nobleman: Images of Native Americans in Film* (1995), the United States of America was still recovering from the echoes of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the American continent. Therefore, at that time, Hilger's book was a necessary shout-out to new generations who had suddenly discovered Native Americans in films. His analysis is based on the traditional stereotypes of the Noble Red Man and the Savage. However, not only does he enlist the movies of each decade with a small summary of the plot, but he also groups the movies in thematic subcategories, i.e., within the Savage image, he specifies the type of savagery 'Attack on Trains', 'Attack on Soldiers', 'Kidnapping' and so on.

Twenty years later, he published a second part of the book, *Native Americans in the Movies: Portrayals from Silent Movies to the Present* (2016).

This book was an update of the previous edition with a different organization plus an analysis of the last decades of the twentieth century and the first two decades of the twenty-first century and adding more information about current films developed by Native American filmmakers and producers.

In 1996, S. Elizabeth Bird edited *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture*. Taking as a reference the controversy on Pocahontas' portrayal and changes in the story, Bird undertakes the task of doing a summary of the changing image of Native Americans from 1830s to 1990s (from Noble Savage to government-funded deadbeats to the spiritual man of the 1990s). Bird's goal is for the audience to understand the mechanisms by which white man's Indian was fabricated in the past. Thus, the eighteen articles included in the book deal with a whole range of disciplines such as tourism and national monuments, advertising, boarding schools, sexual appeals, literature and, of course, images related to TV and film in different periods of time. Related to film, Robert Baird's article on the blockbuster *Dances with Wolves* gives us the opportunity to revisit the old myth of the foundation of a truly American identity by going Indian and to justify the success of the movie according to the theories by Levi-Strauss, R.W.B. Lewis and Freud.

Bird, as she states in the introduction of the book, does not intend to offer magic solutions to the inauthentic, distorted and false depictions of Native Americans, as it is the reader, hence, the individual from mainstream society, who needs to leave aside the complacency when 'enjoying' those cultural products and act consequently to change the views.

The traditional method of analyzing the portrayal of Native Americans in the history of film has been taking each decade and critically commenting and studying the way American Indians are depicted providing a whole list of films of

the decade. In this case, what the scholars Peter Rollins and John E. O'Connor did in *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film* (1998) is to examine and reinterpret a significant movie in film history and discuss the meaning and the impact of Native American portrayals from John Ford's films and the institutionalization of the white man's Indian to Ted Jojola's summary and comments on some of the latest productions at that time, TV shows included, and the negative Native response to the usurpation of American Indian roles by non-natives. Indeed, the conclusion of the book could be, in Jojola's words, that "the Hollywood Indian is a mythological being who exists nowhere but within the fertile imaginations of its movie actors, producers and directors" (12).

In 1999, Jacquelyn Kilpatrick published her overview of the depictions of Native Americans in the last century, *Celluloid Indians*. The importance of this anthology relies on how she analyzes each decade of the twentieth century studying the changing image of Native Americans according to the historical and social events taking place in every decade. It is especially important the last chapter where she includes a "talk-back" study of Native American productions and filmmakers in the last thirty years.

In her book, Kilpatrick divides Native Americans stereotypes into three categories. On the one hand, there are mental stereotypes, by which Native Americans are considered to have a lower level of intelligence than the white man. Thus, at times they are considered innocent, stupid or primitive; the second type of stereotype is the sexual, by which American Indians were considered both sexually intense and lustful, especially related to the danger that they represent for white men (xvii) and, at the same time, the sexual appeal of the Native American princess or Maiden. The last category, the spiritual one, is related to the image of American Indians as the guardians of the Mother Earth, thus, their

knowledge and their spiritual relation to Nature turn them instantly into the official protectors of the Environment.

The book that represents a basic influence in our methodology is *Invisible Natives: Myth and Identity in the American Western* written by José Armando Prats in 2002. Prats analyzes the figure of Native Americans in the Western genre and how Westerns reflect society's political and cultural transformations. He states that Native Americans are virtually absent because of their lack of voice in the narration of the story, their absence as an individual figure, and their place outside civilization. Thus, revisionism fails in presenting the Native American case, the crimes committed against them, as immoral because the Myth of Conquest, the formation of the nation and their features are still fully used. Indeed, Prats mentions two important concepts. On the one hand, *the mystique of cultural appropriation* by which the white hero transforms into an Indian to triumph while he retains his features as hero ("Invisible" 201). On the other hand, *the illusion of cultural divestment* by which the hero and the country would take off the Indian features once conquest and progress has been achieved ("Invisible" 229).

In 2003, Peter Collins compiled a very ambitious collection of articles entitled *The Columbia Companion to American History on Film: How the movies have portrayed the American Past*. In it, seventy scholars and researchers analyzed how filmmakers and films have interpreted the American Past, organized around specific topics such as Themes, Places, Eras, Notable People or Groups. In relation to Native Americans, they are included in three different groups: Wars and Other Major Events (Westward Expansion and the Indian Wars); Notable People (Indian Leaders); and, finally, the Groups section

(Native Americans), written by Jacquelyn Kilpatrick, who offers a summary of the evolution of Native American portraits over the twentieth century.

In 2005, the scholar Angela Aleiss published her analysis of the portrayal of Native Americans in the film industry entitled *Making the White Man's Indian*. The goal of the book is to show how film industry created the American Indian image and how and why it has been transformed over time. In her analysis of the development of Native American characters since the beginning of the history in the most significant movies of each decade, she shows how American Indians' depictions have evolved in cycles over the past hundred years instead of evolving in a lineal pattern, resembling the forth-and-back policies towards Native Americans in the twentieth century. She also includes an analysis of Canadian movies and offers an example of the most representative genuinely Native American films in recent years like *Skins* (2002), *Edge of America* (TV movie, 2003) or *Skinwalkers* (TV movie, 2002).

In 2006, Edward Buscombe also published an analysis of Native Americans in the film industry -although his work focuses exclusively on Westerns- entitled *Injuns!" Native Americans in the movies*. In addition to this, he devotes a whole chapter to the depiction of Native Americans in the European Westerns, especially in Germany due to the popularity of the novelist Karl May. The last chapter in the book centers on the Taos Society of Artists, an association created by artists at the beginning of twentieth century. These artists became fascinated with the life and culture of the Taos nation, whose portraits became an alternative to the traditional portraits of Native Americans at the time but who, as the rest of Indians, became a commodity for white man.

Although scholars have somehow included references to the depiction of Native American women when analyzing films in their books and journal articles,

there was not a specific book dealing with the 'Celluloid Maiden', as M. Elise Marubbio calls her, until the publication of her book *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film* in 2006. Marubbio defines her as "a young Native American woman who aligns herself with the white hero and who dies as a result of her choice" (ix). Apart from facing the double dichotomy of Noble/Savage as his male counterpart, her depiction includes mixed features related to gender and sexuality. Either depicted as a princess or as a fetish femme fatale, Marubbio establishes a classification of three types of celluloid Native American women: (a) the *Celluloid Princess* whose main presence is during the silent era and in the 1950s; (b) the *Sexualized Maiden* in the 1940s, 1950s and 1990s; and, finally, (c) the *Hybrid Maiden*, mixing traits of the previous two types, in the 1970s and 1990s.

Other contemporary books dealing with Native Americans have also been key resources for this dissertation. For instance, in 2001 Shari Huhndorf published her book *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination*. In the book, Huhndorf focuses on the representations of Indianness throughout the history of America and on how Native Americans have become the contradictory element of a society which, at times, veneered them as predecessors of the real American man, and, at the same time, celebrated and encouraged their violent disappearance. Thus, going native is part of a strategy to idealize, imitate, celebrate and appropriate a collective identity and, at the same time, it represents a resource to reenact, once again, their domination and conquest over Native Americans.

In the twentieth century there were no more violent events in the name of conquest and progress, yet, there is a new way to celebrate the conquest of Native Americans: culture and identity. For instance, Huhndorf recalls the centennial

expositions in the last quarter of the nineteenth century where progress was the main topic in contrast to the primitivism reflected in the way Native American culture was exhibited. Other examples of appropriation of identity are Forrest Carter's tremendously popular and successful *The Education of Little Tree*, which in words of the author was an autobiography; and the cultural and identity appropriation of the New Age movement, which took Native Americans as the natural guardians of the Mother Earth and emulated rituals and ceremonies.

Since in Chapter Three we are going to analyze the image of Native Americans in Westerns, it is necessary to understand how the genre developed, what the historical and literary origins are and how the genre has changed since its origins. One of the key books in the analysis of the Western genre is Jane Tompkins' *West of Everything* (1992), in which she examines the importance of Western in popular culture. She divides her book into two parts. In the first, she dedicates a chapter to the elements of a Western: death, women, language, landscape, horses, and cattle. Remarkably, she explicitly says, "there were no Indian characters, no individuals with a personal history and a point of view (8). The second part of the book deals with her literary influences on her vision of the West such as the novel *The Virginian*, or the authors Zane Grey and Louis L'Amour.

Scott Simmon with his book *The Invention of the Western Film* (2003) revises Westerns from the last years of nineteenth century to the first half of the century. His intention is to show that the Western genre is more than Indians and whites competing in the vast territory in the name of progress and how the frontier molded the way Americans see themselves. According to his views, the Western emanates from different cultural manifestations and ideologies that have been used by politicians in order to deliver their message to society. The

book is divided into three parts: the first one focuses on D. W. Griffith's westerns and how the western changed when the film industry moved West too, which coincides with the American Indian vanishing from films and with the obsession for the concept of space. The second part deals with the first 'talkies" and the interaction between the A-Westerns and the B-Westerns in relation to the way they solve the idea of History in their plots. Lastly, the third part of the book focuses on the interrelation of the film noir and Westerns and how that relationship created the 'classic' Westerns of the 1940s and 1950s.

Stephen McVeigh's *The American Western* (2007) establishes a chronological history of the Western in the US and how quickly the significance of the frontier was transformed into a symbol and a myth that has reached current America. Thus, he analyzes the myth using different resources: from politics, embodied in Theodore Roosevelt and Frederick Jackson Turner, the importance of the figure of Buffalo Bill Cody in the formation of the West experience, or the literary developments with *The Virginian* and *Shane* and its cinematic versions, to the New Western History and the influence of more recent political and social events like 9/11 on recent Western productions.

In 1998, Jim Kitses and Gregg Rickman edited a twenty-eight-article volume, *The Western Reader,* whose main purpose is to take a stand and declare the validity of the Western genre nowadays. Kitses claims that the persistence of the Western in the popular memory and in the film industry nowadays relies on its adaptability, such as the reinvention of the Western and its frontier in racial and gender terms or the appropriation by other genres of key Western features or iconographies. The book is divided into three different parts. The first deals with the definition of the Western and its features through specific movies and landscapes. Once we have established the main tenets, we have the analysis of

different movies and directors from the classic period of the Western from John Ford to Sergio Leone's films. The last part of the book deals with the new vision of the Western including a post-analysis of John Ford movies and Indian characters and the revision of gender roles in movies like *The Ballad of Little Jo* and the analysis of new Westerns like *Dances with Wolves* and *Dead Man*.

Maybe the most influential book we are going to use is John Cawelti's *The Six-Gun Mystique Sequel* (1999). First published in the 1970s, Cawelti analyzes the structural characteristics of the Western novel and film in chapter three. In the new edition, he has added more information dealing with the history of the Western with an emphasis on the influence that Western still has on American culture. Yet, he also examines the development of critical approaches, which has been applied to the Western: a moral assessment on the meaning of Western, an artistic assessment and a social and cultural analysis in relation to American culture.

Another chronological study on the Western is *Hollywood's West: The American Frontier in Film, Television, & History* edited by Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, which comprises thirteen essays presented at the 2002 Film and History Conference. The essays are divided into four sections combining the analysis of films and TV shows from four periods in the US history.

Almost 30 years after its publication, *The White Man's Indian* by Robert Berkhofer is still one of the key references in the study of the image of Native Americans and one of the first resources we used when we started this research. In his book, Berkhofer comprised a well-documented history of the development of the American Indian image throughout history, considering the social and cultural points of view of the times he was describing from the arrival of Columbus to his days.

From a Native American perspective, one of the key books to understand how Native Americans have been portrayed in literature and film is Ward Churchill's *Fantasies of the Master Race: Literature, Cinema and the Colonization of American Indians* (1998). The theme that unifies all the essays is the genocide, cultural and physical, Native Americans have suffered along history: American Indians have been expelled from political, social, religious and cultural spheres and have become plain commodities used by mainstream society while Indian battles for justice and recognition have been continuously ignored.

The appropriation of a Native American identity to define America and, at the same time, to sentence Native Americans to be American is the main theme of Phil Deloria's *Playing Indian* (1998). Although his main purpose is not to analyze movies, the reading of his book is a must, as he exposed how Americans have negotiated their cultural identity by acknowledging Native Americans while equally condemning them, as they need to disappear in order to get a full American identity. Thus, Americans must deal with the contradictory appropriation of an identity by playing Indian and to cope at the same with the violent formation of the identity as a country with the extermination of Native Americans.

This extended list of research books and authors who have previously reviewed, analyzed and commented on the portrayal of Native American in cinema are the key reference for this dissertation, especially the research carried out by Michael Hilger, Jacquelyn Kilpatrick, Angela Aleiss or M. Elise Marubbio. Their extensive and thorough works are the cornerstones of any work related to the portrayal of Native Americans. Yet, what we pretend to do with this dissertation is to complete the gap of the last years with the release of new films with Native American characters in their stories and include films that have been

left out from further analysis because the Native American characters or roles within the story are minor ones.

If we review the contents of each of the books most of them focus only on Native American-themed movies where the Native American character is a co-protagonist or one of the leading characters of the films especially in Westerns, in other words, previous research have focused on Western films or Native American oriented film but they left out other genres where Native American characters could be partially involved in the plot of the story or they were just characters the main protagonist encountered at one point in the film but whose presence does not have any relevance in the plot. Thus, other genres such as road movies, teenage drama, comedy or adventure are included in the analysis and we see Native Americans beyond the Frontier and the Western genre. We understand this addition as something necessary and natural as multiculturalism was hitting hard in the United States, so the response was giving more space and visibility to Native characters in genres other than Westerns.

Yet, we asked ourselves, what if Native American characters are just part of the film, i.e., what kind of Native American character we can see in film when he/she is another ordinary character in an ordinary American society. Are we able to see those characters? How are they portrayed? This is the rationale behind chapter four in this dissertation. We wanted to see what Native American person can be seen in film, in genres away from the traditional place of Western. We are aware that in some of the films Native American characters represent a stage in the protagonist's story, so their visual presence is minimal and in some other cases the Native American character is one of the leading characters. To us, what is important is the quality of the portrayal, that is, we do not count the number of minutes the audience can see the Indian character, but rather, we place the value

on the quality of the image. In other words, we are interested in how filmmakers portray Indians and how American society sees them within their society.

1.3. Genesis of the Dissertation

The decision of carrying out this research on the image of Native Americans in the film industry derived from an initial analysis of the portrayal of Native Americans in painting during the colonial times in our postgraduate studies in the United States. During our graduate studies, their history, their art, and their stories were somehow not thoroughly studied; and when we did, they were in relation to white history. Thus, we never had the chance to listen to their story or their voices.

This view was reinforced with the viewing of Westerns in several Spanish TV channels, where the only image we had, and still have, is that of the feather-bonnet Indian of the late nineteenth century. To complicate things even more, the success of films like *Dances with Wolves* (1990) or *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), both released after the much celebrated and criticized anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus to America, raised several questions about the accuracy of Native American portrayals in films even in supposedly pro-Native films.

With that background, we discovered *Smoke Signals*, the very well-known first all-Native American cast movie, during one of the classes on Native American culture and history we enrolled during our stay at Bowling Green State University. That moment was kind of a revelation because we could see that Native Americans still existed as ordinary people, that they were not dead and, of course, they did not wear a tomahawk or feathers. The course was very influential

because the teacher, also Native American, introduced us to the analysis of the portrayal of American Indian characters in blockbuster productions such as *Geronimo* (1993*)*, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), or *Thunderheart* (1992). In addition, we were able to compare those portrayals with native productions, like *Grand Avenue* (TV movie, 1996) or the Canadian *Dance me Outside* (1994), in which the main protagonists of the stories were modern and real Indians. Thus, we discovered not only a different and current Native American portrayal in movies, but also American Indian directors, actors and even literary figures such as Sherman Alexie, whose stories are the base for *Smoke Signals*. The objective of this course was to compare the portrayals of Native American included in white mainstream films and to those in more-oriented Native productions.

Thus, this influential course gave us the inspiration for our research: the key question and the starting point of this dissertation is whether we could be able to recognize specific types of images and stereotypes, and establish a possible classification based on the images in the films. In addition, whether we could see any change in the representation of Native Americans from the classical Westerns to those films produced right before and after the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival to the continent, which brought forward the production of some blockbusters; or on the contrary, whether there was a continuum where spaces and dates could change but types remain.

Multiculturalism became a key word in the 1990s as it was supposed to embrace all the different cultural realities existing within the United States. The final goal was to give voice to those minorities who were marginalized and never had the opportunity to speak for themselves with their own voice, so the rest of society could 'see' and appreciate their culture, their history, and their stories as part of the cultural and social values of the country.

However, such celebrations and festivities encountered the protests of the Indigenous people, who saw the different events, parades or celebrations as acts of celebrating racism and cultural genocide, making emphasis on the death of millions of people with the 'discovery' and 'conquest' of the continent without taking into account their personal stories and voices in the retelling of the tale. Thus, to them such celebration was an insult to the sufferings of the aboriginals who have suffered the different policies carried out throughout the last two centuries in the United Sates in order to assimilate, terminate or relocate them in the name of progress and civilization. These protests, which still take place around the country every year, led several cities and states to replace the festivity for 'Indigenous People's Day' or 'Native American Day' with the intention of including Native Americans' point of view and to educate the general public in a more truthful account of History.

These protests made Native Americans more visible to society in general, and therefore more research has been conducted since 1992 to measure how people see them. One of the most surprising studies was the one carried by JoEllen Shively, who carried out a survey among Native American and white audience in 1992 on how both groups perceive Westerns, one of the most used genres when representing both Indian and white conflict. The survey was conducted among 40 males (20 Anglos and 20 Indians), and the chosen Western was *The Searchers,* as it is one of the most significant films of this genre whose central plot is around an Indian hater, Ethan Edward (John Wayne), and his search of his niece kidnapped by Scar, a Comanche chief.

Although Shively's assumption was that both groups would respond differently to the experience, her findings were quite surprising as both groups liked the Western; none of them identified with the Indian Chief; and, more than

half of both groups identified either with Ethan Edward or with Martin Polly, Edward's companion. Maybe the most striking fact of the study was that none of the Indians linked their own ethnicity to Scar but "identified with the characters that the narrative structure tells them to identify with the good guys" (728), who were not the Indians. Shively also interviewed the males taking part in the survey on the reasons why they liked the movie and she found out that Indians regarded the Westerns as a representation of freedom, independence and land, whereas the white males associated this genre to their own history and ancestry.

In 1996, Mary Ann Weston published her book *Native American in the News: Images of Indians in the Twentieth Century Press*, which represented the first analysis of Native American portrayals in the press. The book is divided in decades, but it follows the traditional dichotomy of good/bad Indians depending on how whites were affected by specific issues: land issues, religion, attacks, gold and, more recently, the mascot issue and casinos; the latter, developing new and current stereotypes. Although Weston's book deals exclusively with the written media, the research and its findings are important as it reflects how the press helped to mold the characterization of Native Americans and how it helps to introduce new ones.

Two years later, in 1998, Debra Merskin surveyed Native Americans students about how they saw Native representation in the media they used, film and television, especially after the worldwide success of film productions like *Dances with Wolves* or *The Last of the Mohicans,* and television phenomena like *Northern Exposure* or *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*. Surprisingly, the results of the study showed that respondents perceived portrayals in a more positive way in films than in television (340). The research also showed that those characters were included in historical-based productions that influenced the idea of Native

Americans as people from the past because they are not portrayed in current situations and/or everyday life situations (341).

In 2001, a Native American oriented newspaper, *Indian Country Today,* carried out a survey about how Native Americans would describe the portrayal of Native Americans in the cable industry[1]. The survey was made up of four questions divided in pairs. The first pair dealt with the portrayal of Native Americans on television or in the media. While the respondents were somehow divided about recalling having seen an accurate portrayal of Native Americans on television (Yes 49%; No 50%), the results were appalling as around only 10 % of the respondents thought the depiction of Native Americans in the media was accurate. On the other hand, the second pair of questions dealt with the efforts made by the media moguls to offer a current and real image of Native Americans and including Native staff or resources. Thus, 48 % of the respondents felt that very little effort was made in providing an accurate portrayal of Native Americans in the media, against only a 3% who viewed there was a great deal of effort. In addition to this, 67% of the interviewees thought the media industry has made minimal effort in including Native American staff or resources against 2 % of the respondents who thought the media has made a strong effort.

An interesting report was the 2002 "The Reading Red Report: Native Americans in the News: A 2002 Report and Content Analysis on Coverage by the Largest Newspapers in the United States" published by the Native American Journalists Association and News Watch. In this report, the goal was to search in

[1] "American Indian Opinion Leaders: Diversity in the Cable Industry" *Indian Country Today*, September 12, 2001. https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/american-indian-opinion-leaders-diversity-in-the-cable-industry/

the top nine newspapers[2] in the US the type of news covered from 1999 to 2001. This will give us an idea of what was the general image related to Native Americans that mainstream society received from the media. The main issues about Native Americans were catalogued around three main topics: casino gaming by tribes (13%), the issue of the mascot team names (11%) and "on the res" datelined stories (20%). The Red Report of 2003 focused on the news coverage on the issue of team mascots, which has become a hot issue in the relationship between Native Americans and the American society. In 2007 and 2008, a third and fourth report were issued. These reports focused on the way Indian Country was reported in areas with the highest percentages of Natives.

In 2010, Michael Ray Fitzgerald analyzed the image of Native Americans in television. In his article,[3] he applies Steve Clark's model of four stages in the representation of minorities in television to Native American representations. Clark defined four main stages in the representation: (1) *non-recognition stage* in which the character does not even exist to society so he/she undergoes 'symbolic annihilation'[4]; (2) *ridicule*, describes how the minorities are portrayed as less intellectual; (3) *regulation*, presents minorities as enforcers of the law; (4) *respect*, depicts characters as equals leaving space to interracial relationships. In the end, after analyzing different recurring Indian characters in different TV shows, Fitzgerald concluded that most of Native American characters were taking

[2] *The Chicago Sun-Times, Houston Chronicle, Los Angeles Times, New York Daily News, Newsday, The New York Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal and The Washington Post*.

[3] 'Evolutionary Stages of Minorities in the Mass Media: An application of Clark's Model to American Indian Television Representations, *Howard Journal of Communications*, vol. 21, no. 4, pp. 367-384.

[4] Term used by Gerbner and Gross in 1976 and mentioned in Clark's article and in Debra Merskin's article "Sending up Signals: A Survey of Native American Media Use and Representation in the Mass Media" (1998)

part in some kind of law or military role (376 and 379). Yet, people portrayed were still ahistorical and in a distant and safe past.

A more recent study was conducted in 2011 by Celeste C. Lacroix, who focused her research on the new stereotype created in the media: the 'Casino Indian', "the new political and economic threat" (18). In order to do so, she analyzed the images and plots in six major TV shows[5] between 1999 and 2005. Although relying on previous stereotypes (lazy, vanished or characters from the past, Tonto-like speech, etc.), the TV shows exploited three main topics related to the 'Casino Indian'. First, they sell their culture for money, which contradicts the traditional image of Indians as a non-materialistic culture; secondly, casinos are run by corrupted and amoral Native Americans; and, thirdly, the Native American identity may questioned during the plots.

As we said before, the anniversary of the arrival of Columbus to the American continent gave fuel to the film industry to revisit the origins of the nation by releasing some key movies that, in one way or another, pretended to retell History by taking advantage of the developments of technology. The goal was to delete old clichés, old stereotypes and old forms to give a new point of view to include those voices and stories that were silenced during the making of the nation and that were portrayed on the screen in a very politicized and partial point of view. The movies that represent our starting point are *Dances with Wolves* (1990), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), and *Geronimo: An American Legend* (1993).

[5] *Family Guy, Saturday Night Live, Chapelle's Show, The Sopranos, South Park* and *Drawn Together.*

1.4. Research Questions

Because of the landmark of 1992 and the results of these introductory studies, we are going to analyze the image of Native American in movies produced from 1990s onwards, especially to examine if after the 500th anniversary there has been any change in the features when depicting American Indians. Therefore, some of our initial questions are:

- Are Native Americans more visible within mainstream American society after the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Columbus to America?
- What kind of policies have been implemented throughout the last centuries with regards to Native Americans?
- How has the image of Native Americans changed in art?
- What kind of stereotypes have been developed?
- In what kind of movies do we find Native Americans?
- Are they still attached to the Western genre? Can we find different trends?
- Are Native Americans characters played by non-native actors?

At a time where the 'discovery' was celebrated, it seemed appropriate to release films that were linked to the formation of the American identity, the life in the frontier, and the one element that made the frontier mythical: the American Indian. The frontier has been used in American history and culture as the mythical point of the formation of the American identity and a recurrent topic and plot in the history of American cinema from its origins, mainly in the genre

of the Western, which has been the main responsible of building the image and the role of American Indians in films.

The role of American Indians in the classic Western was that of a savage whose only goal was to kill any person who dared to cross paths even without any apparent previous conflict or confrontation. However, the cinematographic development of the genre together with the social progression paved the way for a revision in the way of representing Native Americans along the century. Thus, stoic characters in *The Silent Enemy* (1930), *Stagecoach* (1939), or *The Searchers* (1956) are changed into complex ones where they are not the hostile elements in the plot but, quite the opposite, the victims, who usually become the representation of white values and attitudes as in *Broken Arrow* (1950), *Little Big Man* (1970) o *A Man Called Horse* (1970).

Within that evolution or development of the image, the three movies that mark the beginning of our analysis represented a clear innovation since, apparently, the point of view represented was not that of the white men but of Native Americans. This change in the point of view is embedded in the revisionist approaches in cinema initiated in previous decades with the purpose of adapting the plots, images and genres to the new multicultural reality of the American society.

Patricia Limerick published in 1987 *The Legacy of Conquest*. In this book, she challenged Frederick Jackson Turner's definition of the Frontier "as the meeting point between savagery and civilization" (26) and as "the line of the most rapid and effective Americanization" (26) and how civilization disintegrated wilderness as it was social evolution. What New Western historians like Limerick or Richard White claim is that the frontier was not a natural process but a process of conquest, invasion and colonization, which has nationalistic and racist

connotations, where different people converge. Thus, the goal is to rewrite the history from the perspective of those who were excluded from Turner's vision.

Obviously, in the world of cinema, it supposed a revision of the images and tropes of the Western because it was the genre associated with the idea of the frontier and American identity. This revisionist movement has been defined as "a system of iconography and ideology, of narrative tropes and generic types that articulates the reaction against the Myth of Conquest" (Prats "Invisible"127). Thus, it intends to present an alternative view of what happened during the frontier years with the formation of the country, which gave America its peculiar attitude. In that way, Natives would be presented as real human beings, round characters, talking in cinematographic terms, not as the silent, furious, stoic or flat characters that we have seen in previous decades. Moreover, we were supposed to get to know American Indian culture and history; consequently, a more truthful account of history would be also presented to add more cultures and histories that are part of the nation. Therefore, the development of our questions is the following:

- Is the revisionist movement successful in presenting a new and real image of the Indian?
- What kind of language do filmmakers and characters in the movies use?
- Which is the role of Native Americans in the films? Can we find positive traits in that apparently change of attitude?
- Are the old stereotypes overridden? Which are the new stereotypes?

- Is Native American culture and history incorporated into the plot of the movies?
- Is there any difference in the representation of the Indian depending on the genre, for instance Western vs. road-movie or war movie?
- Whose story is told?
- How is the treatment of Native American women?

In chapter three, we focus our attention on the Western genre and we define the genre using different sources such as Jane Tompkins and her *West of Everything* (1992), Scott Simmon and his *The Invention of Western Film* (2003), Stephen McVeigh and his *The American Western* (2007), Jim Kitses and Gregg Rickman edition of *The Western Reader* (1998). Yet, we have vastly used two other sources. On the one hand, John Cawelti's *The Six-Gun Mystique Sequel* (1999) as he establishes three main elements to focus on in the Western genre: the setting, the plot and the characters. Therefore, Cawelti's work has given us the framework for our analysis, as we have divided our chapters three and four according to that division. On the other hand, another key influence in our methodology is *Invisible Natives: Myth and Identity in the American Western* - written by José Armando Prats in 2002- in terms of setting and the relationship setting-characters and analyzing the process of white character conversion into the hero the new American society needs.

In terms of setting, Prats establishes three ways in which the Indian is presented in Westerns: the first one is through fragments or portions of Indian culture, i.e., the Indians are a literary synecdoche; the second one is through the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other'; and, lastly, through the voice-over narration of a white character. Out of the three, our focus when analyzing

the setting is going to be the concepts of 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other', whenever it is clearly differentiated in the film.

Traditionally, the Myth of Conquest has placed the Indian in the outskirts of the white hero's view, where he is less visible, thus converting the land in the element of defining the racio-cultural identity (Prats "Invisible" 74). Thus, the presence of the Indian defines the space where the white settlers move. Then, the 'Spaces of the Same' are characterized by the ideas of possession and dominion of the land and the inhabitants. Therefore, the Indian must be removed so the whites can fulfill their role in social order and progress. Indeed, not only are they defining the space they inhabit, but also the boundary where the Indian is going to be located. Thus, the 'Spaces of the Same' are culturally defined spaces where identity is provided. However, it is also necessary to define where 'the Other' is going to be located. To Prats, the 'Spaces of the Other' are located at the margins of the spaced owned by white settlers. Indeed, it is "the space of savage spectacle" ("Invisible"12); it represents the justification of the violence that belongs to the Myth of Conquest. Therefore, 'Spaces of the Other' must be a requirement of the 'Spaces of the Same'; without it, the Myth of Conquest cannot be built or justified. Yet, once the Indian is vanished, as it is usually the topic in the Western, the 'Spaces of the Same' cease to have boundaries ("Invisible"88).

At this point is very important to mention that we will use the concepts of 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' not only in the chapter dedicated to the analysis of Westerns but also in chapter three where we analyze other types of genres as we consider that there are instances where the setting influences the development of the plot and the development of the characters and their actions. Therefore, depending on which space the action takes place, the characters will reflect specific features.

Although our focus is Native American depictions in films, there are films where the white hero adopts Native ways, so it is necessary to examine this figure when commenting on Native American characters as these are the ones who usually authorize the white hero. Prats also mentions two important concepts especially related to the white hero, which will be analyzed in the dissertation. On the one hand, *the mystique of cultural appropriation* by which the white hero transforms into an Indian to triumph while he retains his features as hero ("Invisible" 201). On the other hand, *the illusion of cultural divestment* the illusion of cultural divestment by which the hero and the country would take off the Indian features once conquest and progress has been achieved ("Invisible" 229). In this sense, the concept of 'Going Indian' which Robert Baird describes as "the white discovery of, and the renaming and adoption into, the tribal society of the American Indian" (Baird 195-196) comes into play as well in our analysis. Some of the features are the adoption of the name, usually provided by the Native American tribe where the hero is embedded, is related to the natural world (Baird 203) or with an activity for which the person is known; exchange of clothes; learning of Native language.

In chapter two we include a definition of what a stereotype is, and we provide a thorough list of some of the names Native Americans have received in the film industry. Furthermore, we include the list of stereotypes provided by authors like Rick Hill, Mary Alice Money, Michael Hilger, Jacquelyn Kilpatrick, Celeste Lacroix and S. Elizabeth Bird. Yet, in order to analyze the Native American characters, we have also used Raymond William Stedman's questions included in his book *Shadows of the Indian: Stereotypes in American Culture* (1982), as they will help us define the character and especially because he considers language, as an important feature characters are built upon:

- Is the vocabulary demeaning?
- Do the Indians talk like Tonto?
- Do the Indians belong to the feather-bonnet tribe?
- Are comic interludes built upon firewater and stupidity?
- Are the Indians portrayed as an extinct species?
- Are the Indians either Noble or Savage?
- Is the tone patronizing?
- Is Indian humanness recognized? (pp. 234-255).

1.5. Scope

Covering the whole 20th century and its productions of films would have been an endless and repetitive task from our point of view. First, the main genre examined would be the Western, a genre that has been vastly commented on from almost all points of view. However, we admit that more readings of the films from a feminist point of view or from a queer perspective could also be possible. We are aware that especially after the 1960s more genres and new portrayals were going to be introduced due to the social and political changes in the United States at that time and, besides, we are aware that new analysis and readings of classic Westerns films are often published and increase the value of films as perceived by the audience.

Yet, we decided to choose the date of 1990 as our starting point. This was not an arbitrary decision; rather, the choice was heavily influenced by one specific landmark: the anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1992, which fueled a renewed interest and celebration of diversity and multiculturalism, and a new view of Native Americans, which is the key point of our research. Indeed,

the three films we have chosen as the key films were released between 1990-1993. The reason why we chose those three key films is two-fold. On the one hand, those three films have a Native American co-leading character as protagonist and they have a Native American theme in their plots, i.e., the films could not be understood without the presence of Native American characters. On the other hand, out of the films chosen for this study these three films were the top grossing film at the box office in the year of their release, Dances *with Wolves* in 1990, Last *of the Mohicans* in 1992, *Geronimo, an American Legend* in 1993[6]

That gives us a comparative strategy when dealing with the analysis of the setting, plot and the relationship of the characters, which are our focus in this dissertation. Then, the end of the period of research would be 2015. We consider that the effect of the 500th anniversary must be analyzed not only on a short-term basis but on a long-term basis. We assume that in the years right after the anniversary productions are going to be numerous and with a similar plot: making of the nation, the first encounters between newcomers and indigenous population, etc. Yet, in the years farther from the anniversary, we assume that new plots, new genres and, consequently, new images could be produced. In fact, the idea of dividing the movies into Westerns and other genres in two different sections give us the opportunity to compare the genres and the images of Native Americans they created. It is also important to mention that 2015 also marks the 25th anniversary of *Dances with Wolves*, one of our key films.

Our second requirement is that all films had to be released on widescreen cinema in the United States, i.e., those that have been released straight-to-video, DVD and Blu-ray format or were specifically made for TV have been discarded,

[6] Box office figures from www.imdb.com, and https://www.boxofficemojo.com

as our theoretical base is film studies. We are aware of the numerous studies related to the analysis of recurrent Native roles on TV shows like *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*, *Walker Texas Ranger* or *Northern Exposure* and small appearances in shows like *Criminal Minds* or *X-files*. Moreover, the development of streaming sites and channels like *HBO, AMC* or *Netflix* with their own TV shows and TV films like the recent *The Son* (2017) or *The Ridiculous 6* (2015) emphasize the fascination in the past of the American nation that is still embedded in American society. We reckon that those images produced for TV series must be considered for further research as the characters have more space and time for development and the plot and its turns depend in some cases on ratings rather than on the plot; consequently, the portrayal and the relationship between characters may vary from season to season, if the series is lucky enough to come back for a second season.

Apart from this, we decided that the films to be analyzed could not have any Native American in any of the stages of decision-making, i.e., films directed, produced, written by any Native American person have been discarded. We believe that having a Native American person making decisions may alter the images projected on the screen, exactly what we want to analyze. For example, we dismissed the beautiful film *From Above* (2013), also known as *Chasing Shakespeare*, where the love of a mix-raced couple through the years is told, because a Native American writer developed the script. A similar case is *Christmas in the Clouds* (2001), which was produced by Chris Eyre, the Native American filmmaker and director of *Smoke Signals* (1998) and *Skins* (2002). We strongly believe in the collaboration of both, Native Americans and white filmmakers, producers and screenwriters in the erasure of stereotypes images, as we have seen in some of the movies we have discarded. However, our focus is

Native American images created by white filmmakers to check if their depiction of Native Americans has changed throughout the years, especially with a more pro-multicultural society.

Another requirement is that Native American characters included in the story need to have a 'presence' on the screen, i.e., the Native American character needs to interact with other characters. During our research of Native American actors, we found in some films there was no interaction between the Native American character and the rest of the characters during the movie or simply it was impossible to 'see' them on screen. Therefore, if they do not have voice or presence on the screen, they do not contribute at all for our analysis. For instance, the Native American actor Tatanka Means appeared in the credits in *Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials* (2015) or *The Host* (2013), however, it was impossible to find him in the movie because he did not even have a line. This fact is worth mentioning as there must be a significant part of dialogue between characters as we not only analyze the image but also how the image is built upon language.

Consequently, we ruled out this kind of movies from our research. This does not mean that we have only focused on films in which the Native American characters act as co-protagonists or main protagonists. On the contrary, we have considered of all types of genres where the presence of Native Americans may be minimal but important for our research. Moreover, we think that the inclusion of Native American characters in other types of films apart from Westerns reflect the reality in American society, i.e., Native American people can be found in all layers of society and in any given context.

Finally, we decided that films must be American productions or, at least, American co-productions like in the case of *Jimmy P* (2013). In our search of films with Native Americans characters, we have encountered non-US films, so

we decided to discard all those productions, as we believe it affects the viewpoint of the story and the characters. Thus, Canadian movies like *Black Robe* or *Clear Cut*, widely analyzed by scholars, have been dismissed.

With these requirements the initial list of approximately 150 films were reduced to the final list of 82 films which are divided into two. On the one hand, films belonging to the Western genre (36) and, on the other hand, an amalgamation of the rest of the genres (46), which represents almost 60% of the films examined. To us, this was a surprise as we initially though that most films will be Westerns, especially since their revival from the 1990s onwards. In this sense, those TV movies discarded were mostly Westerns rather than other genres, which may lead to further research in TV studies.

Organization of the study

Although in the introduction of this dissertation we offered a brief view of the content of the chapters, we think it is worth widening that information. In the introductory chapter, we explain the scope and the organization of our research, delimiting it to films produced from 1990s onwards. In addition, we introduce the main studies carried out in the analysis of Native Americans in movies plus other scholars' work, which will help us analyze the films. The studies carried out by scholars like Angela Aleiss, Michael Hilger, Jacquelyn Kilpatrick, Ward Churchill or Jose Armando Prats, just to name a few, are key figures in the study of Native Americans and their portrayals in cinema nowadays, therefore, their works and their knowledge in the subject have been crucial for this research. However, we cannot forget other scholars like Jane Tompkins, John Cawelti, Scott Simmon, Jim Kitses or Robert Berkhofer who will help us to understand the

formation of the Indian image and the main elements in the Western genre, as it is the focus on Chapter Three. All these researchers and their works have focused mainly on blockbuster productions and, mainly, in the films produced right after the 1992 landmark where the main topics were the first encounters between two different civilizations or the clash between both worlds. Yet, these films included rounder Native American characters especially because the films had, finally, a supposedly Native American leading character. However, not much attention has been given to minor success-oriented Western productions or other genres where Native Americans characters may appear in a leading role, supporting roles or just minor roles. The same way we believe the key to avoid and erase stereotyped depictions of Native characters should be the collaboration between white and Native artists, we believe that the best way to view Native Americans as living entities part of American history and society is to introduce Native characters in ordinary situations with ordinary people, away from the framework of the Western genre. Thus, the intention of this dissertation is to take a step further and include other films that may have gone unnoticed to the public, researchers and reviewers but that offer another view of Native Americans. This is the reason why the dissertation has been divided into two parts, Westerns and other genres, so we are able to compare Native American depictions in different settings playing different roles.

In our second chapter, we will examine the evolution of the image of Native Americans. In this sense, we will provide a summary of the development of the US–Native American relationship with the main policies enacted throughout the history of the USA to deal with Native Americans up to the 1990s. Also, we will provide a possible definition of what a stereotype is with some classifications some scholars have carried out. Then, we will move on to a historical account of

the evolution of the image of Native Americans in the arts from the first written accounts of the first settlers. Firstly, we will deal with literary prose in the forms of captivity narratives and James Fenimore Cooper's *The Leatherstocking Tales*, which are responsible for the establishment of the dual image of Noble and Savage Indian. Then, we will examine how painters like Karl Bodmer, Charles Bird King, or George Catlin provided us with scenes from Indian life. Some of these portraits were highly idealized as they presented Indian culture as if white contact has not been produced yet. These paintings also were a record of the magnificent of American landscape with some of the original inhabitants, who are already vanishing among the advancement of civilization. With the development of technology, photography took its place especially in the hand of Edward S. Curtis and his desire to record Indian life before it is completely gone. However, although some of the photographs perpetuated the stereotype image of the Noble but stoic Indian, they represented a marvelous ethnographic study of Native American Nations, as we will see.

Later, still images evolved into images in motion, i.e., creating the first reels, which can be considered the first filmed movies. Thus, in this part of the research, we will be reviewing some of the most important films representing Native Americans from the silent period to the late 1980s, going from the big classic Westerns of the 1950s to the convulsionary decades of the 1960s and 1970s. Thus, we will see the changes in the point of view using Native American themes as a metaphor for the social unrest in American society. Although Western seemed to be dead in the late 1980s with the failure of *Heaven's Gate* (1982), at the end of the decade we encounter two movies which presented somehow current Indian characters.

In our third chapter, we will examine the first part of the films viewed for this dissertation, all those that belong to the Western genre or deal with topics related to the frontier and the clash of civilizations. Yet, the chapter will start with a brief historical summary of the relationship between Native Americans and the US government, especially in terms of policies enacted during the presidency of George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama to examine if they had an impact on the films and how this relationship is portrayed in the movies. As we are dealing exclusively with those movies that can be categorized as Westerns, it is essential to provide a comprehensive explanation of the features of the Western genre in terms of setting, plot, and characters. In terms of setting, it is important to analyze how the location where the action takes place influences the behavior of the characters and affect the development of the story. That place, the frontier, has become the most important event in the formation of the country and the personality of the characters. Indeed, the setting influences the way the characters relate to each other and how they behave in the story, which shapes accordingly the plot. As our focus is on Native American characters, we will examine specifically the relationship between Native Americans and white characters, including those who decide to cross the boundaries between the two civilizations and become part-Indian.

In the following chapter, we analyze films from other genres in which Native American characters may have a leading role, a supporting role or, on the contrary, only a minimal participation at a specific point of the film. Following the same structure of the previous chapter, we focus on three aspects: setting, plot and characters. In this part of our study, we are going to find two trends: on the one hand, some films will be set in contemporary America but introducing an Indian character who seems to live in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. On

the other hand, the rest of the films, with the variety of genres, characters and settings, present modern Native Americans and our goal will be to check if this representation is that of the real and ordinary Native American or, on the contrary, they still portray a stereotyped figure.

Our final chapter will deal with the conclusions from the analysis of the films and the American Indian characters included in the films. At this point, we will compare the results from both Chapters Three and Four to check if that depiction changes depending on the genre of the film. In addition to this, we will offer some thoughts about where our future research will lead us.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

During the research, analysis and writing of this dissertation, we encounter several setbacks that led to some decisions, especially related to the films that were going to be included. As we said in the chapter, we decided to analyze films with the following characteristics: (a) they were produced during the time span of 1990-2015; (b) they were United States-produced of co-produced; (c) the films were released in the United States; (d) no Native American people could be in any of the making-decision process; and, (e) Native American characters must have an interaction at some point with the main character or leading characters, i.e., there must be a significant part of dialogue between characters as we not only examine the image but also how the image is built upon language.

One of the first limitations is the availability of some of the films, especially when they are indie productions or with a limited release, which in some cases were directed to video/DVD release. In this sense, although we used the main three search engines for films, Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com), Film

Affinity (www.filmaffinity.com) and All Movie Guide (www.allmovie.com), we also visited the websites of the films, if they existed, or the website of the production company so we could complete data about the films. However, the availability of the film in DVD or video and some data were at times hard to find, so we ended up in legal streaming sites. Obviously, those films that were impossible to find were left out of the study.

Since some material might not be included in the study, we are aware that specialists could claim that the research is not exhaustive. Yet, we hope this study serves as an indicator of the trend in American film when portraying Native Americans considering that some of the films, especially those belonging to Chapter four, have not been included in some of the literature we commented at the beginning of this chapter as they are not Native American-related films. In most cases, the Native American character is present in the film for a small amount of time, sometimes even just some minutes. Therefore, this adds some difficulty on how to find films with Native American characters, which leads us to our next limitation.

Native American actors and actresses are at times scarce or difficult to find information about. Again, the film search engines used have been useful in finding information about the actor/actress, information about the characters they play and, most importantly, their acting career. This information was basic as it helped us find more films in which Native American characters were played. Yet, this added another difficulty: discerning which films were directed or produced by Native Americans and which ones were not. This leads us again to the first limitation we encounter: information about the film and its availability.

One of the conclusions we reached when searching Native American actors was the recurrent use of these actors throughout the films independently of the topic of the film or the tribe they were supposed to represent. Actors like Graham Green, Wes Study or Tantoo Cardinal are the big names within Native Americans although in recent productions young Native American actors like Tatanka Means or Adam Beach are taking roles in big productions making them more visible to the general audience.

1.7. Terminology

There has always been a controversy around the appropriate way of referring to the aboriginal people from the United States. Terms like American Indians, Native Americans, Indians, Indigenous People of the United States, Aboriginal People, First Americans, North American Indians or First Peoples can be seen and read throughout the academia and scientific world, TV shows, newspapers, blogs, and media in general. The term, used by non-native and native people themselves, carries a cultural and a historical meaning, which is very difficult to elude.

The objective of this dissertation is not to solve this long dispute and debate on the exactness or incorrectness of any of the terms stated above. However, all the expressions previously mentioned will be used interchangeably throughout this dissertation. Moreover, if it is possible, the specific native nation names will be used if they are clearly stated in the films studied included in our research.

At the beginning of our research we decided to take a stand against one specific term, *Indian,* as we totally agree with the explanation stated by Robert

Berkhofer Jr. in his book *The White Man's Indian* (1978) when he exposes the difference between the terms 'Indian' and 'Native American':

> Native Americans were and are real, but the Indian was a White Invention and still remains largely a White Image, if not stereotype [...] By classifying all these many peoples as Indians, White categorized the variety of cultures and societies as a single entity for the purposes of description and analysis [...] To the extent that this conception denies or misrepresents the social, linguistic, cultural and other differences among the peoples so labeled, it lapses into stereotype (3).

However, consulting Native sources or media we found that there is not a general agreement even among them. On the one hand, we found online media outlets as *Indian Voices*, *Indian Life*, *Indianz* or *Indian Country Today* that explicitly have the term 'Indian' in their names as a sign of pride. On the other hand, some other Native media outlets prefer using the terms of Native nations or the general terms of American Indian or Native Americans such as *Native News Online*, *Native American Times, Chickasaw Times*, or *Navajo-Hopi Observer*.

Apart from this, we have used MLA style 8th edition in the citation and in-text quotations.

In this first chapter, we have established the framework of our dissertation. First, we have defined and justified our study taking as a reference previous investigation carried out by different scholars and researchers, which will be our key reference to analyze the films. Secondly, within that framework, we have established the requirements our objects of study need to fulfill to be considered

for this dissertation. In the next chapter, we will offer a detailed description of the evolution of the image of Native American within the arts, and especially, within the film industry up to the 1990s.

Chapter 2:
Evolution of the Image of Native Americans

As we truly believe that films are products of the time they are created, it is important to compare how the enactment of policies and the historical events in American History may have an impact on the portrayal of Native Americans within American society. Indeed, the impact of those policies is also reflected in the audience's interpretation and response to a specific character, image or theme in a specific film. Thus, we offer a summary of the main policies up to 1990s enacted regarding the relationship between Native Americans and US.

Furthermore, in order to understand the ways in which films construct stereotypes of Native Americans, we believe it is important to provide a definition of what 'stereotype' means and the main nicknames Indians have received throughout the history of cinema. Secondly, we are going to summarize the construction of Native American image in art, mainly painting, literature and photography, as the antecedent in cinema. After this summary, we are going to provide some scholar's attempts to establish a possible classification of stereotypes. Finally, before analyzing the films included in our research, we will provide a reduced filmography with the main significant films from each decade of the twentieth century up to the 1990s.

2.1. Native Americans in the United States: A Brief Historical Approach

Incorrectly thinking that he had arrived in Asia, Columbus called the inhabitants of the new lands *Indians* (*indios* in Spanish). That name was transferred not only in written accounts from the explorer's letters and journals describing the new land and the first encounters with those Indians, but also in the first images sent from the new vast continent. These explorers carried along

sketchers and painters whose only function was to record not only the geographical features of the newly discovered country, but also the exotic and strange population inhabiting that new land.

The term 'Indian' was loaded with religious and cultural pejorative connotations which accentuated the differences between white and Native American cultures, assigned a moral and intellectual assessment and, what is worse, erased any existing diversity in terms of language, social and political organization and religious and cultural practice within Native American nations (Berkhofer 26-27). Thus, the Indian, not the Native American, as an entity, was created to stand for an abstraction of all the nations explorers encountered in their trips, coining the idea that was later expressed by Ward Churchill in reference to the image of Native Americans in film that once 'seen one Indian, seen them all' ("Film Stereotyping" 374).

As we said, new settlers viewed, evaluated and defined Indians according to their prejudiced social, cultural and religious standards. Therefore, the written and visual descriptions of the first Indians were not faithful reproductions of Native Americans but mere interpretations based on the artist's assumptions, recording and judging what they saw according to their own moral standards and, at the same time, creating a faulty and biased ethnographic study of the people living in the new continent. Indeed, as Rennard Strickland states in the foreword of Raymond William Stedman's *Shadows of the Indian*, for the white man, 'the Indian himself became a mirror' (x).

At the same time, in the political and social spheres, the new continent was going through some internal turmoil related to: the relationship between the colonies and the mother country; the wars among different nations over the control of territory; and the relationship with Native Americans, allies or enemies

depending on whose side they fought with. In that game of wars, Native Americans found themselves unprotected and mostly deprived of their lands and rights, as they were mere witnesses of the exchange of land between the European countries in the new continent, as it happened during the French-Indian War or the Seven Years' War (1766-1763) and later in the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783). The Declaration of Independence of the United States did not help at all to improve the situation of Native Americans, as the newly formed country started a crusade against their former allies in colonial wars over the expansion of the territory in the West.

In addition to this, Science was used to explain, measure and quantify which policies and which behavior the government and the society could implement towards Indians, and to explain the supposed lower range of Indians in the evolutionary scale of the human race that justified the superiority of the white race (Berkhofer 59). On the one hand, from the 1830s onwards Native Americans were defined as the Savage Other or, using Philip Deloria's words, "the exterior Other" ("Playing Indian" 26), someone who is located outside social boundaries and who is the enemy and a threat to American expansion and progress. On the other hand, as we have already mentioned, Americans defined themselves from the very beginning against Native Americans, as the latter represented what whites were not.

However, the image of Native Americans gained a positive connotation when in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Americans needed to define themselves against other countries, especially the United Kingdom. In order to do so, the colonists used the most exotic element of the continent, i.e., Native Americans. Thus, using Philip Deloria's words, Americans created "an Interior Other" ("Playing Indian" 26) that could differentiate them from their European

roots. One of the first and clearest example in this attempt was 'The Boston Tea Party', where the colonists protested against the Tea Act and destroyed a shipment of the East Indian Company in Boston. The key point in this story is that the protesters disguised themselves as Indians to make a stand for their distinctive identity as Americans.

This act, that could be defined as 'Playing Indian' in Deloria's words or 'Going Native' in Shari M Huhndorf's words, considered two issues: on the one hand, the use of the stereotypical image of Native Americans as savages, at a time when savagery of Native Americans justified the dispossession of land. On the other hand, the use of Native Americans as a unique form of self- identification, crossing legal, social and political boundaries. To Philip Deloria, 'Playing Indian' means a new identity by which Americans are European, aboriginal, and neither of them at the same time (35). To Shari Huhndorf, 'Going Native' "expresses European American's anxiety about the Conquest and serves in part to recast this terrible history by creating the illusion of white society's innocence" (21). How America and Americans would reconcile these two contradictions has been the key point to understand the different policies and initiatives implemented not only during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries but in the twentieth century as well. Those policies and initiatives were enacted mainly through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which was created in 1824 under the supervision of the War Department, which gives some idea of the political views at that time, and, later, under the supervision of the US Department of Interior.

Among the policies enacted during the nineteenth century that challenged the identification with Native Americans as a unique American element and emphasized them as 'the Other' there were two pieces of legislation, whose goal was to end with the so-called 'Indian problem'. The first one, the *Indian Removal*

Act in 1830 by the Five Civilized Tribes had to leave their native lands in the South East in exchange for lands to the west of Mississippi River, the New Indian territory (21st Congress, 1st Session, Chapter 148, Sec. 1). This terrible expulsion has been known as the 'Trail of Tears' as it had terrible consequences for Native Americans such as starvation or exposure to diseases that meant the loss of more than four thousand people along the trail (Dunbar-Ortiz 112-114).

The second piece of legislation passed was the *General Allotment Act*, also known as the *Dawes Act* in 1887. The objective of this law was the assimilation of Native Americans into mainstream American society by providing land to Indians with the purpose of converting the 'uncivilized' into civilized farmers like white men and by awarding American citizenship to those who accepted (Sec. 1- 5). Due to this piece of legislation, Native American land was exposed to non-native ownership and left available for railroad construction and oil exploitation, which was the main hidden agenda of the legislation (Dunbar-Ortiz 157-161)

As we have seen, the mixture of conquest or colonization, progress and civilization, race and nationalism gave Americans a contradictory view of themselves and of the history of their own country. Two events at the end of the nineteenth century emphasized even more this idea: the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition and the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. The first one celebrated the American character based on three tenets: the Pioneer spirit, Republicanism and Progress (Huhndorf 25). As such, the exhibition was organized reflecting the scientific ideas of the time and trying to whiten the conquest and colonization, and their effects on Natives. Thus, the presentation took as model the lineal and natural movement of progress by exhibiting first those more primitive objects from a more primitive culture, obviously the first inhabitants of the continent, and, later, those more technologically advanced

tools from a more advanced society (Huhndorf 28). This continuum emphasized the idea of progression and the place of Indians in America's past (Huhndorf 33-34).

The 1893 exhibition marked the 400th anniversary of the arrival of Columbus to the new continent at a time when massive flows of immigrants were getting to America, and the US army was having their final military rows with Native Americans. It is also necessary to mention that the exhibition took place only three years after the Wounded Knee massacre in the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, in which around three hundred people, mainly women and children, were killed in the attack led by the 7th Cavalry. This massacre represented the end of the Indian Wars and established the idea of Native Americans as defeated and vanished from the American mind.

Bearing this idea in mind, the main theme of the exhibition was the celebration of Columbus and the New World. Once again, the organizers turned to the supremacy of white civilization over the savage Native people and the natural order and progress by reproducing Native villages and their daily life, as a primitive stage, and, later, presenting the benefits of the Indian Boarding School system. As in the previous world exhibition, American Indians were both presented as the conquered inferior race but, ironically, as a necessary element in the national identity against Europe.

However, the most significant event during this exhibition was Frederick Jackson Turner's speech *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*. In that speech, Turner proclaimed the frontier closed. He defined the frontier as "the most rapid and effective line of Americanization" (Chapter 1) and regarded the Indian as a previous phase of the American pioneer, and as necessary step for civilization, implying the colonist must go back to wilderness and savagery, (to go

Native) in order to overcome them so he can expand progress (Huhndorf 56). Then, his theory claimed that (a) the colonist became the only inheritor of Native Americans; consequently, (b) it redeemed the guilt from the violent origin of the country, denying the genocide of Native Americans by describing conquest and progress as natural and inevitable movement; and, (c) it places Native Americans in the past without any place in current United States (Huhndorf 56- 59).

At the turn of the century, Clark Wissler and Franz Boas, both American anthropologists, led the change in the perspective when studying Native Americans. The academia world shifted from a comparison with the white culture based on cultural imperialism, hierarchical analysis based on physical and intellectual attributes, and evolutionary theories and scientific racism, to studies and analysis where the goal was to understand the diversity of Native American society, culture and history. However, this shift had a flaw: it did not take into consideration Native Americans as living entities in current USA (Berkhofer 62-69).

Although vanished and partially assimilated into white mainstream society and partially living in reservations under the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the transfer of land to individuals, controversy over the treatment and the situation within reservations of Native Americans started to worry social agents and politicians. At the same time, thousands of Native Americans volunteered to fight during World War I, although most of them was not even considered American citizens at that time. Partly as a way of recognizing their efforts and participation during the war and partly as a final step for the full assimilation into American society, the *Indian Citizenship Act* of 1924 granted full US citizenship to Native American people during Calvin Coolidge presidency.

This apparent pro-Native American bill confronted a 1928-study of the situation of Native Americans across the country especially after the *Dawes Act*. Entitled *The Problem of Indian Administration* but widely known as *The Meriam Report*, Lewis Meriam and his team assessed the problems of Native Americans in key areas such as health, education, economic conditions, family, women, or the community. The report confirmed that not only have Native American legislation not improved the American Indian situation but, on the contrary, it had worsened it, leaving Native Americans unprotected in the educational, cultural, economic and social spheres (Berkhofer 180-181).

The Meriam Report provided much of the data used to reform American Indian policy through new legislation. Thus, President Roosevelt included Native Americans in his *New Deal* program and, as such, he enacted the *Indian Reorganization Act* of 1934 (Nagel 117). The goal was to reverse the previous policies towards assimilation (especially the Dawes Act) and, at the same time, to encourage tribal self-governments and to restore Native Americans' management of their assets (Sec. 3- 5). However, the act was not free from controversy, as those tribal self-governments had to resemble white political system erasing cultural and traditional collective rights (Dunbar-Ortiz 171-173). In addition, in economic terms, the act was not able to grant economic autonomy from the federal government. Therefore, in the 1950s, the policies again changed toward a termination policy. In a more positive side, this tribal self-government increased political activism within Native American nations during those years (Nagel 160-164).

The enlistment of Native Americans to fight in World War II not only helped the assimilationist policies, but it also helped with the creation of a Pan-Indian communication and ethnic pride among Native Americans (Nagel 117). At

war, with the system of communications advancing at a fast pace, it was important to deliver messages quick but, most importantly, encoded so that the enemy could not know in advance of the military strategy. Thus, in World War II, the Marines enlisted a group of Navajo Code Talkers, whose main role was to transmit military strategies in battles in their language. This military tactic proved to be successful, especially in the Pacific, and the code remains to be undecipherable[7].

However, at the home front, politicians recommended the termination of Native American tribes as a plan to cut federal expenses on American Indian policies (Weston 99-101). A key point in this policy was *Indian Relocation Act* of 1956 by which the government fostered Native Americans to leave reservations and migrate to urban areas by providing training, transportation, and accommodation (Dunbar-Ortiz 174). The goal of this policy was the deletion of Native American identity and culture and its fusion with mainstream American culture. The increase of urban Native Americans makes intertribal connections easier and deeper (Nagel 119-121).

Yet, the assimilationist policies did not hinder Native Americans' preservation of their historical identities. Pan-Indian communities started to flourish in the cities demanding the compliance of treaty rights, self-determination, religious freedom, the end of termination policy or civil rights and sovereignty. The use of the term 'Red Power' became a key symbol of this era during the celebration of the National Congress of American Indians and the foundation of the American Indian Movement in 1968 (Nagel 158-178). Taking as an example the African-American movement and its protest actions, Native

[7] https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/06/us/chester-nez-dies-at-93-his-native-tongue-helped-to-win-a-war-of-words.html?_r=1

Americans did their own actions such as fish-ins to ask for the restoration and respect of their treaty rights. Furthermore, delegations were sent to the UN reporting US violation of treaties (Nagel 161-164). There were also demonstrations and public occupations of federal sites like Mount Rushmore in 1971, the BIA headquarters in Washington DC in 1972 or Wounded Knee in 1973, and the Longest Walk in 1978 (Dunbar-Ortiz 181-186).

After World War II, the television was the most popular form of communication in the United States and it became the most influencing way of shaping public opinion. At the same time, the harsh images coming from the Vietnam War, together with the long and tiring American involvement and later defeat, and the Civil Rights Movement riots, made it possible for anti-war sentiments and countercultural movements to spread within mainstream American society. As in the past, mainstream white America turned to Native Americans and their beliefs, once again, as examples or guides for self-discovery. Thus, communes were established, apparently following Native American spiritual beliefs and tenets, and New Agers did their own interpretation of American Indian culture by appropriating it (Weston 132-136).

In all these movements, Native American culture and identity was silenced and was turned into artificial artifacts for mass consumptions, i.e., they were commodities which proved that, like in the formation of American identity in the past, "whenever white Americans have confronted crisis of identity, some of them have inevitably turned to Indians" (Deloria, "Playing Indian" 156). This goes in correlation to the trend of using Native American as political metaphors for what it was taking place within American social and political arena, as we will see when analyzing the main films produced during this era.

In terms of legislation related to American Indians, although the termination policies were not definitely abandoned until Nixon's presidency, the first steps were taken through the *Indian Civil Rights Act* of 1968 under the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson. What this act ensured was that all Native Americans enjoyed full constitutional rights as the rest of society within tribal organizations. Legal jurisdictions between tribal governments and federal courts had been for a long time a point of controversy and this act ensured the interference of federal government and its courts within tribal lands.

In the 1970s, termination policy was finally erased due to the political protests and the running of activism of Native Americans, the failure of termination policies, an abandonment of ideological racist theories and, mainly, a more participatory and inclusive Congress in the enactment of self-determination policies (Nagel 218-224). President Nixon himself in 1970 stated, "the time has come to break decisively with the past and to create the conditions for a new era in which the Indian future is determined by Indian acts and Indian decisions" (564-567, 576-76). Thus, in 1975, one of the most important pieces of legislation was passed: the *Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act*, whose goal was to attain more autonomy from the Bureau of Indian Affairs in dealing with tribal programs (Dunbar 209; Nagel 178, 218). This law was accompanied with the *Indian Education Act* of 1972, by which funds were provided for tribal educational programs; *the Indian Child Welfare Act* of 1978, which protected children from adoption outside Native American communities; and a final one, the *American Indian Religious Freedom Act* in 1978 enacted by President Jimmy Carter. This act promoted American Indians' freedom to practice their religion, including the access to their sacred sites, and the use and possession of sacred objects (Nagel 218).

In the 1980s, economic self-sufficiency was the goal of the Native American policy promoted during Reagan's presidency. Thus, the final goal of the approved and signed laws was to allow tribes to collect funds from different initiatives within Native American tribal lands and to reduce federal investment on Native Americans, therefore, the policies were considered semi-termination policies. (Weston 153). For instance, *Indian Tribal Government Tax Status Act* was issued in 1982. This act allowed tribes to tax non-Indian companies working on the reservations. Also in 1982, the Congress passed the *Indian Mineral Development Act*, by which tribes were allowed to establish business with private business in relation to tribal mineral resources. And, finally in 1988, the *Indian Gaming Regulatory Act*. This act regulates Indian gaming as a means of producing income for the tribes. Although intended to provide tribes with revenues, it has remained one of the most controversial bills due to the confusion of jurisdiction and sovereignty (Dunbar-Ortiz 210), the establishment of a new stereotype related to Native American, 'the 'Casino Indian' (Lacroix 18). Yet, these drawbacks contrast with the use of money to revitalize, reconstruct and lobby to favor American Indian culture and history (Dunbar- Ortiz 210; Nagel 53).

During this decade, we also witnessed the development and establishment of a new historical trend, the New Western History, led among others by Patricia Nelson Limerick and Richard White. This new school claimed the faulty vision of the West and the frontier personalized in Frederick Jackson Turner's speech delivered to the American Historical Association in 1893 in Chicago, which stated that the movement of moving West has molded not only the American character identity, but also the American democracy. The New Western History school claimed that the history of the American West must be reviewed in order to include those who were oppressed and conquered such as Native Americans,

African Americans and other minorities who were the victims of that progress and whom the national identity was built upon.

With these policies and new trends, we entered the 1990s marked by the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival to America. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed a Congress resolution that marked November as the *National Indian Heritage Month*. This resolution has also been proclaimed and signed by later presidents such as Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama[8].

This 'celebration' renewed the historical and cultural interest in Native Americans not only in the US but all around the world involving organizations such as the United Nations declaring the International Day of Indigenous People, or the Nobel Peace Prize to an Indigenous person (Dunbar-Ortiz 198). Yet, Native Americans or Indigenous Peoples were involuntary participants in Columbus' voyages, not only because they were the 'guests' in the festivities, but also because that interest in Native Americans caused the reproduction of old stereotypes and old themes without taking into consideration the Native American point of view and side of history.

One factual source we can consult to check if there has been a revival in Native American culture is the American census. Since in the 1960s and 1970s activism made minorities more visible and there was a call for ethnic pride, the figures from the census should confirm that.

We need to warn that we have taken the figures of the US census that result from the sum of American Indian and Alaska Native alone and, secondly, that the

[8] The complete list of proclamations can be read at the Library of Congress: https://www.loc.gov/law/help/commemorative-observations/american-indian.php

responses are completely based on self-identification. Therefore, it was necessary to compare that figure with the US enrollment figures coming from the data provided from the federally recognized tribes. (567 at the time of writing this dissertation). Yet, not all of them provide updated data as the American Indian Population and Labor Forced Reports state. For instance, in the 2001 American Indian Labor Force Report, only 468 of the 562 federally recognized tribes provided enough information (i).

It is also important to notice that we have included in the last two censuses the total number of people identifying as American Indian and Alaska Native alone or in combination with one or more other races because since the 2000 census people had the choice for the first time to select more than one category. We thought that data is important to compare with the official enrollment figures. The difference in figures can be explained in different ways. On the one hand, the federal government establishes the specific requirements a tribe must fulfill in order to be officially recognized. On the other hand, some tribes may have their own requirements for their members to fulfill like the controversial blood-quantum criteria or the proof of lineal descent from a tribal member. The last reason for the difference in figures is that, as we have said, not all the tribes provide enough information.

YEAR	U.S. CENSUS[9]	U.S. CENSUS (more than one race)	U.S. TRIBAL ENROLLMENTS
1950	357, 499	-	403, 071
1960	523,591	-	-
1970	792,73	-	-
1980	1,418, 195	-	949,047
1990	1,937, 931	-	1,001,441
2000	2,475,956	4,119,301	1,816,504
2010	2,932,248	5,220,579	1,969,167

2.2. Stereotypes

Some of the 'names' Native Americans have received throughout the history of cinema, apart from the dual image of the Noble and Bloodthirsty Savage, have been the following: the "Celluloid Indian" (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians"); the "Cinematic Travesties" (Churchill "Fantasies" 173); the "Cinematic Indians" (Churchill "Fantasies" 168; Coleman 275; Prats "Image" 10); the "Hollywood Indian" (Anderson 137; Benshoff and Griffin 108; Jojola 12; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 18; King 11; O'Connor 26; Prats "Image" 10; Rollins and O'Connor 2; Stedman 127); the "Injuns" (Buscombe "Injuns" 21); the "Imaginary Indians" (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 35); the "Instant Indian"

[9] The information related to the Census and US tribal enrollments from 1950 to 1980 are taken from: Thornton, Russell. "Native American Demographic and Tribal Survival into the Twenty-First Century." American Studies, vol. 46, no. 3/4, 2005, pp. 23-38 /Indigenous Studies Today, vol. 1, 2006. The rest of the years are taken from US Census Bureau reports of 1990, 2000 and 2010 and American Indian Population and Labor Force Reports of the years 1991, 2001, 2013.

(Friar and Friar 93: Bataille and Silet "Anachronism" 40); the "Invisible Natives" (Prats "Invisible" 2002); the "Movie Indians" (Blake 210); and the "Shadow Indians" (Stedman 5); the "Reel Indians" (Churchill "Fantasies" 184).

If we look up in the American Thesaurus for a synonym for 'stereotype', we find words like 'convention', 'custom', 'mold' 'pattern', 'formula', 'received idea', etc. the Oxford Dictionary provides a more thorough and comprehensible definition of what a stereotype is: "a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing. A person or thing that conforms to a widely held but oversimplified image of the class or type to which they belong."

Willard F. Enteman in the article 'Stereotyping, Prejudice and Discrimination' offers a quite interesting definition of what stereotyping means. According to him, a stereotype's goal is converting

> real persons into artificial persons. In our stereotypical acts, we ignore the individuality of people and treat them as proxies for some group we have decided they should represent. We stop treating them as real persons in their own right and treat them instead as artificial persons, which means as extensions of a category we have constructed. In short, we deny them their humanity. (10)

Since our scope of analysis ranges from 1990s up to 2015 and we need to understand Native Americans today in general and in the cinema in particular, it is important to know and understand why and how stereotypes were created in the past (Hill 112). There have been some attempts to draw up a classification of Native Americans although it is a complex issue. Indeed, Native American characters or images do fall into more than one category and it is a Herculean task to identify a unique trait for a single character. However, even in written

works and still images, stereotypes are constructed and transferred in such a very clear format that they are easily identifiable by the audience.

Hill lists ten stereotypes he found not only in written media but especially in photography:

> the Indian as warrior; the Indian as chief or medicine man; the Indian as naked savage; the Indian maiden as sex fantasy; the Indian as prisoner; the Indian as noble savage; the Indian as vanishing America; the Indian as object of study; the Indian as tourist prop; and, finally, the Indian as victim (114-116).

In 1997, Mary Alice Money offered seven-staged images in her article "Native Americans in Popular Western" included in the book edited by Dane Morrison *American Indian Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Contemporary Issues* (1997)

1. - The "other"/the faceless, alien, bloodthirsty savage/the enemy
2. - The "respected enemy"
3. - Exotic object of anthropological study/Alien passion
4. - The pitiable victim/the doomed victim / "Lo, the poor savage"
5. - The mascot/The pet/The subservient inferior/ the "good Indian"
6. - The noble savage/The mystic/ the wise old chief
7. - A human being/Us/ The same (355-356)

Michael Hilger, author of *From Savage to Nobleman* (1995) and *Native Americans in the Movies* (2015), divides the stereotypes in just two images: the Noble Red Man and the Savage Indian. The Noble Red Man is the Indian who is friendly to the white man and accepts the superiority of white civilization and his destiny. Thus, a new stereotype is born: the vanished or doomed Indian. On the

contrary, the Savage Indian is the one who is constantly fighting with the white man; he is cruel to women and does not accept the conquest.

Jacquelyn Kilpatrick in her book *Celluloid Indians* (1999) divides the stereotypes into three: mental, sexual and spiritual (xvii). According to the feature of the mental stereotype, Native Americans show less "mental acuity" (xvii) than their white companions. Secondly, American Indians are portrayed as sexual objects inspiring fear or desire, depending on the situation to both women and men. The sexual stereotype will be taken over by S. Elizabeth Bird in her article "Gendered Constructions of the American Indian in Popular Media" in 1999 when she explains how American Indian women have been converted into 'squaws' or 'princesses', and the male Indian has been made into an object of desire. Finally, the third stereotype is related to the spiritual side of Native Americans. By this portrait, Indians have become the official guardians and protectors of Nature.

Celeste Lacroix in 2011 added a new stereotyped image: the Casino Indian. Due to the gaming regulations, many Native American tribes have established casinos in their tribal lands. Due to their profitable economic activities, Native Americans are regarded by society as gold-diggers from the past taking a negative feature, which contrasts with some of the aforementioned stereotypes such as the Indian as a guardian and the spiritual Indian.

Apart from this list, it is also necessary to mention one stereotype referred exclusively to the female Indian. Although we previously mentioned S. Elizabeth Bird's article, the origin of the female stereotype can be traced back to Rayna Green and her article "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture". In the article, Green explains how the American Indian woman has been portrayed as exotic, extremely beautiful, and, at the same time,

as dangerous, yet not as savage as her male counterparts; yet, she is powerful enough to avoid both the killing of her white friend and her people although in some instances she needs to be removed from her community. This was transferred to the film industry with the creation of the 'Celluloid Maiden', as M. Elise Marubbio states in her book *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film* (2006). According to her, the Native American female takes the form of three figures: the *Celluloid Princess*, the *Sexualized Maiden* and, the *Hybrid Maiden*, as we will see in our analysis.

Although our research is focused on cinema and in the last two decades of the history of film, we must do a review of the evolution of the image of Native Americans since the arrival of the white man to the new continent. Thus, this review will consider not only the first reports and literary writings of the first settlers and artists, but also the evolution of their image along the evolution of the world of the arts in painting, sculpture, photography and finally the first documentaries.

2.3. Evolution of Native American Image in the Arts

Two images of Native American have been engraved in American society since the very moment Columbus stepped in the new continent: the noble Savage and the bloody-thirsty Savage. Both figures have been used repeatedly from the letters of the explorers through the first American literary and artistic works, such as captivity narratives and paintings of European-descent artists, to the first visual documents in the film industry in the silent period and the big blockbusters of the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries. Spanish, French and English

explorers offered detailed descriptions[10] of the people they encountered and offered their own interpretation of those exotic people, judging them according to white standards, specially related to appearance, religious practices and social behavior. In doing so, those interpretations created an 'Indian', whose image colonists and settlers would believe as fact (Berkhofer 10-18). Consequently, their biased interpretation would affect the relationship that the newcomers would establish with the native people, i.e., they made Native Americans a mirror of their own society in order to define not only 'Indians' but themselves (Berkhofer 26-29; Weston 10).

According to those first accounts, the Noble Savage was friendly, brave, hospitable, and possessed a great physical appearance. When the people from the old continent received those accounts and the first visual images of Native Americans, they soon incorporated those exotic people into the European literary forms. Writers and philosophers like Jean Jacques Rousseau, Hobbes, Locke and other Enlightenment authors used Native Americans as an antithesis of what Europe and its corrupted institutions were. Thus, Native Americans became a symbol of the primitive man basing his decisions on instinct, living in harmony with Nature away from the social constrictions of modern European civilization, where reason and common sense were cultivated (Berkhofer 76).

However, together with this idyllic image, another one was developed: the bloody-thirsty image, which derived from two basic interpretations. On the one hand, Puritans and Catholic believers interpreted Native religious, social and political practices in opposition to their own system of beliefs; therefore, they defined the Indians as degenerate, illiterate, and whose behavior derived from a

[10] Robert Berkhofer in *The White Man's Indian* reproduces descriptions by Columbus, Americo Vespucci and some Puritans as Whitaker or Samuel Purchas.

kind of anarchist and cannibalistic system against their own people. Christian and Puritan believers interpreted all these ideas as both a threat and test sent by the Creator to prove their path toward total salvation. Thus, Native Americans were regarded either as an aid in their salvation or as an evil figure to obstruct their road to God's world (Berkhofer 28-29).

On the other hand, as more settlers were coming to the new continent, the possession of land became an issue of conflict as both societies regarded land in opposite views. Native Americans did not have an ownership system as they considered the Earth a sacred space that could not be owned as it is the source of a spiritual communal identity; on the contrary, the white men thought of land as the source of progression and wealth (Dunbar-Ortiz 55). Therefore, for the development of new cities it was necessary to be able to collect more land to accommodate newcomers and to develop an American economy. These conflicting views derived into the creation of a conflict iconography, which had two branches in the world of art: the first, in the world of literature, with the development of the captivity narratives or abduction stories; and the second one, the production of works of art by painters such as Carl Wimar or Charles Deas.

Considering this white-Indian animosity for the possession of land together with the resulting conflict iconography, it is natural that literature also reflected that reality. On the one hand, the fear for Indians was clearly described by the so-called 'captivity narratives'. This subgenre of literature, specialized in the narration and description of the abduction of white people and their lives within Native American society, had a religious background, as they considered the evil Indian was a creature acting as part of the Creator's plan to test their religious faith (Berkhofer 81). Probably, the most famous captivity narrative was Mary Rowlandson's *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God: Being a Narrative*

of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson, which was published in 1682, six years after the abduction took place.

These captivity narratives had a threefold objective. On the one hand, these kinds of narrative helped to construct the idea of the Native American as the Savage Man, as the outcast or as the Other. This is emphasized by the fact that the narratives are not only a recollection of the feelings and attitudes of the captive, but also a source of information about the captor's way of life, which was used to emphasize the difference with the captive social and cultural 'norms'. Therefore, once again we have the image of the Native American constructed by what they are not in comparison with the white people. One way of constructing the difference between both races, for instance, is the constant use of words like 'heathens', 'barbarous creatures' or 'beasts' by Rowlandson. Indeed, Yael Ben-Zvi goes a little bit further and states in his article "Ethnography and the Production of Foreignness in Indian Captivity" that captivity narrative produces the idea of the Native Americans as foreigners at some point, as well as object of US culture, as their presence is linked to the idea of sovereignty, colonialism and US nationalism.

On the other hand, captivity narratives had a religious goal. Native Americans were regarded as a part of the Creator's plan to test the strength of faith, either as a Satan kind of figure or as an agent of God who helped the settlers in life. Thus, the noble and bloody-thirsty Native American is also a religious convention as they are the messengers of God's divine plan. In fact, the journey into the wilderness the captives had to endure with their captors is part of the tests they take for the final reward of Salvation (Berkhofer 82-83). Therefore, it is considered a metaphor for the spiritual journey the individuals had to go through in order to prove themselves as good Puritans.

The third goal is linked to the previous two in the idea of presenting the Native American as a sexual threat to white women. Although Rowlandson made clear she was never sexually assaulted by Native Americans, the act of explicitly stating that in her account gives us an idea of the sensationalist use of the "Indian as a sexual threat to white women", which was the trend in the nineteenth century (Buscombe 42). Indeed, sexual behavior was another feature that Native Americans were attached to, in order to emphasize their otherness or deviant behavior. In addition, from a religious point of view, she had to claim for her physical and spiritual purity. Later, in the film industry, especially in Westerns, directors play with the women's fear of facing "a fate worse than death" (Telotte 120). For instance, *The Searchers* (1956) describes the protagonist's obsession with the rescue of his niece and his intention to kill her as she has mingled with the Natives. Another more recent film that plays with the idea of a potential sexual attack is *The Missing* (2004), as we will see in the third chapter.

However, if we need to think of an influential literary figure in the depiction of Native Americans it is, of course, James Fenimore Cooper. We owe to him the development of Native Americans as the sidekick (developing a white-Indian friendship), and the use of landscape as place for freedom, especially with his *Leatherstocking* tales: *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Deer Slayer* (1841), *The Prairie* (1827) and *The Pathfinder* (1840). They all share common traits in terms of plot, characters and setting, which have become a canon imitated by later authors. Indeed, they share the same nationalist ideological objective: to build an American identity. Thus, to build that American identity, Cooper turned to the Indians and the landscape.

Although some scholars regard Cooper as the original creator of the Western and the frontier as the encounter between Indians and Whites, Cooper's

frontier was somehow different as it was not in the West but in the forest of upstate New York (Buscombe "Injuns" 44; Simmon 14). However, it is true that Cooper uses landscape for the first time as the "place open to freedom from civilization and its absurd laws, for perceptions of something genuine, even for rare bonds among the races" (Simmon 14-15).

Another asset in Westerns that we owe to Cooper is the friendship or bond between two characters from different races. On the one hand, the Native American characters are depicted as noble, as they share common traits with the white hero; in addition, they are usually the last member of their tribe and live apart from a social group (Berkhofer 93; Kilpatrick "Celluloid" 3), thus, they do not present a threat to the larger society. Their function is mainly to be a preliminary stage between savagery and civilization becoming, in Simmon's words, a parent (28). As such, Native Americans become the teacher of the other side of the friendly relationship, the white man. A white man who dwells between places (frontier and city) and between races (white and Indian). Thus, this white man gone Indian would become a primitive version of the symbol of the new American identity, as the Indian was vanishing (Berkhofer 90; Kilpatrick "Celluloid" 3); so, he is a blend of the good qualities of Indians and of the good qualities of white society. Yet, he cannot be too Indian, nor too white to show that ambiguity mainstream white American society had at the time.

Together with these images of the Noble Indian and the Indianized white man, Cooper created another figure to counteract these romanticized portraits: the Savage Indian. These characters were usually depicted with the traits the readers were eager to read and in consonance with the policies enacted by the government: enemy of progress and civilization; physically powerful and sexually

threatening; and, reflecting a brutal and sadistic behavior. Again, they were described and portrayed as what white men were not.

The importance of Cooper's depiction of Indians and the 'gone Indian' man is that they remain as the source for the recreation of Native American characters in current films. A proof of its almost eternal validity are the multiple adaptations of some of his works, especially *The Last of the Mohicans*, which has been adapted at least five times with changes in the plots, in some of the events, but which keeps the Native American as a vanished and marginalized figure. It is important to notice that at the time Cooper was producing his literary work, American identity was at stake; therefore, America needed distinctive elements, so they could forge their own identity against that imposed by Old Europe. Those distinctive elements were the Indian and the landscape (John 177)

The flourishing of the written press and the development of the railroad made the first literary works and magazines circulate rapidly. The dime novel became very popular adapting conventions from captivity narratives and Cooper with stories of Indian hating, savagery and brutality (Huhndorf 20). Although Native Americans' massacre at Wounded Knee meant the closure of the Indian Wars, Americans were still fascinated by the stories of the struggling settlers in the West and the conflict between Indians and whites and the stories of romance and tragedy along the frontier. Thus, in 1860, Ann S. Stephens published what is considered the first dime novel entitled *Malaeska, the Indian Wife of the White Hunter* (Buscombe "Injuns" 48). These dime novels, issued in serials, were cheap short works of fiction, sold for a dime and featured illustrations to provide visual references to the adventure. They focused on the pioneer experience in the American West of frontier and on cowboys, Indians, and frontier settlers. These

novels were the previous stage of the Wild West Show by Buffalo Bill Cody and the first films.

The first visual works, paintings, where Native Americans were portrayed saw the Indians and their culture through the white point of view (Truettner "Ideology" 44) or as an antithesis of what white culture was not (Berkhofer 26; Schimmel 149). Thus, the paintings can be divided into: (a) those that portray the Noble Indian, as a friendly figure to the white man; (b) those that portray the Savage Indian, as an obstacle to white civilization, especially related to land issues; and (c) those that portray Indians as if they were cases of an ethnographic study. Between the paintings that portray the Savage Indian and those that seems to record the Indian as an ethnographic study, there is an intermediate state of the vanished or doomed Indian, as we will see. It is also important to point out how in the nineteenth century American art, or Western art, which represents white cultural values, is ideologically charged as art is the visual manifestation of the clash between two different civilizations (Dippie 70).

Since the first letters and journals, the fascination with Native American culture has been evident because they represent a different civilization but also because they were regarded as exotic. It is important to notice how the first drawings were influenced by European style. One of the first examples of this is Jacques Le Moyne de Morgue's *Rene de Laudonniere and the Indian Chief Athore visit Ribaut's Column* (c. 1564). This painting symbolically reflects the meeting of two cultures, the old one represented by the Indian chief; and, the newcomers represented by René (Wilmerding 49).

In the eighteenth century, more artists reflected the Indian in their paintings and the American landscape as they wanted to differentiate their works from their European counterparts and make a stand about their new American

identity (John 177-180). Thus, known for his historical paintings, Benjamin West introduced Native Americans in his works to make his pieces identifiable with the new continent and the wilderness. One of his earlier paintings and, probably, the most significant, is *Death of General Wolfe* (1770). The historical painting represents the death in battle of General Wolfe during the French-British War in the colonies. Soldiers are dressed in the contemporary clothes of the time and all the individuals but one are grouped around the figure of the dying General Wolfe (Toler 93). The one individual who is placed alone, dressed differently than the rest, is the Native American. The individual is not a threatening or scary figure but, rather, he seems to "adore" General Wolfe's historical importance especially as Wolfe seems to adopt the position of Lamentation of Christ (Toler 93). Among all the figures in the painting the Indian stands out as the most meaningful figure as he is portrayed in a classical manner but representing Nature (Toler 93) as he is half-naked.

This Indian figure is the representation of Indians according to West. In his paintings, the Indian is represented as the "timeless ideal of natural man, combination of innocence, intelligence, thoughtful and masculinity" (Sheardy 93). Thus, in another West's painting, more focused on portraiture, was *Colonel Guy Johnson,* which depicts Colonel Guy Johnson with a Mohawk chief, Karonghyontye (David Hill). The importance of his historical portrait relies on the fact that West wanted to represent "a picture of political power … but also an alliance of nations" (Reinhardt 290). Reinhardt, in her article "British and Indian Identities in a Picture by Benjamin West", performs a thorough analysis of the clothes of both Guy Johnson and Karonghontye (David Hill) representing not only a demonstration of power but a careful ethnographic study of both figures (290-291). On the one hand, Johnson is wearing moccasins and a Mohawk

blanket (curiously wrapped in a similar way to the Mohawk chief) to show his intimacy (an alliance) with Indian ways while his red coat and long rifle serve as a reminder of his powerful position (291). On the other hand, the Mohawk chief wears a robe, moccasins and bands of wampum, which reflects West's interest in recording authentic Indian costumes (292).

As more settlers and new colonists were arriving to the new land and the United States were being formed, it became necessary to use more land to accommodate the increasing number of inhabitants. However, the land was not empty: Indians inhabited those lands, yet, they were perceived as an obstacle and impediment to the development of the country and their Manifest Destiny. Therefore, the conflicts with the Native American inhabitants increased. This derived in one of the saddest moments in the history of the United States: the *Indian Removal Act* in 1830, by which Native American tribes, especially in the South of the United States, were obliged to move to the west of Mississippi River in exchange of lands for white settlers.

As we said before, artists were not indifferent to the escalation of violence and turned to create paintings where Indians were portrayed as the enemy (Schimmel 161-162). If captivity narratives like *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God: Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1682) became the written manifesto of those barbaric acts by Indians, some painters as John Vanderlyn reflected again that animosity in his paintings. One of his most famous paintings is *The Murder of Jane McCrea* (1829) in which he portrayed a woman facing death at the hand of two savage Indians (Stewart 50). The importance of this image is pointed out by Robert Sheardy Jr. who affirms that "it is this image, one of horror and unimaginable atrocity that has dominated American visual and literary history since nineteenth

century" (93). Sheardy continues to comment that Vanderlyn "is the first painter to portray violence – between them – interracial violence and inter-gender violence - exploiting the vulnerability of women" (96-97).

Women attacked by Indians is also the main topic in John Mix Stanley in his *Osage Scalp Dance* (1845) in which Indians surround a woman with a child in her arms trying to protect her child from what it seems a final death strike by the Indian. As Schimmel states the painting depicts "the struggle between the forces of civilization and those of savagery, between the forces of light and darkness" (164), emphasized by the skin color contrast when depicting both cultures (164).

Two more important paintings retake the topic of women's captivity and their stay among Indians. On the one hand, we find George Caleb Bingham's painting *Captured by Indians* (1848), which is less violent visually. In this painting, a woman and her sleeping child are sitting among some Indians at night, partially lit by a fire. This painting also plays with the idea of light-dark to represent the difference between the two civilizations. On the other hand, we find Carl Wimar's *The Abduction of Daniel Boone's Daughter* (1853), in which he depicts Daniel Boone's daughter, Jemina, being taken captive from her boat (Stewart 45). Again, Native Americans fearfully fulfill the role of savages abducting the daughter of Daniel Boone, the American icon, while the young girl in her quasi-Mary-Magdalen pose seems to be praying for a rescue or anything that could free her from her captors (Stewart 52-53).

Apart from women, the attack on pioneers or hunters in nature, especially after the 1804s and the discovery of gold in California, which resulted in the westward migration of families, was the topic of some of the most important paintings of the time. For instance, Carl Wimar painted *The Attack on an*

Emigrant Train in 1856, in which two symbols from two different civilizations meaning two different ways of life clashing stand out: on the one hand, the rifle in settler's hand which apparently has shot dead two Indians, and, on the other hand, the tomahawk in Indians' side who has hit some settlers too. According to Rick Stewart, the painting can be interpreted as the pioneers 'defending not only their train but also, symbolically, their perceived right to move west and introduce civilization to the frontier' (56).

Other examples of this clash of civilizations, where the white men are the victims and in combat with Indians are Theodor Kaufmann and his *Westward The Star of Empire* (1867), Charles Deas' *The Death Struggle* or Arthur F. Tait's *The Prairie Hunter, "One Rubbed Out"* (1852) or Wimar's in *Massacre at Wyoming Valley* (c. 1805s) (Schimmel 145). The first one focusing on the new way of progress in the West, the railroad; the next three focusing on an individual fight between a man and Indians.

Once the problem between Indians and Whites seem to move from raw violence to attempts of resolution, some artists turned to the Native American and Nature as national symbols for future development, especially to differentiate from Europe (John 177-180). Regarding Native Americans, artists started to portray the Indian as a distinct element in their paintings but as a doom civilization facing the exceptionality of American landscape and progress (John 184). As we will see in the sample paintings we have chosen, the Indian is a tiny figure in the vast Nature and land of the new country or someone who has lost in the fight against progress. John mentions in his article that in literature this term was coined 'The Cult of the Vanishing American' by G. Harrison Orians (184).

In painting, one of the first examples is Thomas Matteson's *Last of the Race* (1847), in which we see a family contemplating the sea and their dark clouds

probably heralding their future. The painting seems to depict melancholy for what is left behind and uncertainty for what is coming next (John 184; Schimmel 169). A similar painting is *Last of their Race* (1857) by John Mix Stanley, which represents that "Indians would eventually be buried under the waves of the Pacific" (Truettner "Ideology" 44). In these kinds of paintings, the Native American uncertain future, probably in the form of acculturation or living apart from civilization, is emphasized by the word 'last' in the titles of the paintings, which indicates the end of their way of life and probably the extinction of their tribes or nations. This adds a somber and melancholic tone in the paintings not only because we contemplate a metaphorical sunset of a race but also the sunset of the frontier life for white culture too.

Frederic Remington, artist specialized in portraying the American West, specially images of cowboys, American Indians, and the US Cavalry. Although he was more interested in depicting actions typical of the West, as if they were pictures of actions about to happen (Buscombe "Injuns"54), he also represented Indians hunting, holding spears, wearing war bonnets, i.e., the image the public was used to watching and reading on newspapers or on illustrations. However, he also depicted the vanished Indian. For instance, in his painting *The Last of His Race, also known as Vanishing American* (1908), we see an Indian isolated, facing his loneliness with Nature, staring off.

As Native American culture and Native Americans themselves were regarded as extinct or lost, some artists turned to catalogue Indian people and their culture as if they were artifacts of ethnographic study before the Indian way of life, culture and people completely disappeared or acculturated (Truettner "Ideology" 44). However, these paintings, especially portraits, were a kind of artificial paintings as they "portray Indians [...] as if colonization had not yet

introduced epidemics, alcoholism, and tribal disintegration caused by removal" (Schimmel 151).

Charles Bird King depicted Native Americans almost focusing on portraits to make an ethnographic study and to understand Native-white relationships (Hutchinson 315-317). In fact, some of the portraits were requested by Thomas L. McKenney, responsible for Indian Affairs at the time and who wanted to have a record of the Native people he met at Washington to a kind of gallery of notables (Hutchinson 319). Thus, one of the first examples is *Hayne Hudjihini (Eagle of Delight)* (c. 1822), who is painted in European style and resembles the portraits of white women (Schimmel 152). It is important to point out, on the one hand, that the Native leaders meeting McKenney could be aware of the codes of clothing and behavior and they wanted to show themselves in an equal position (Hutchinson 325); and, on the other hand, King himself introduces changes in their attire in order to "reinforce a sense of individual character" (Hutchinson 326). Probably, his most celebrated portraits in reflecting the Noble Indian figure is *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri and Pawnees* (1822), which he painted while the Indian chiefs were visiting Washington. Attired with traditional blankets, and holding tools like the tomahawk and some jewelry, including a necklace bearing the image of President Monroe, which emphasizes the image of nobility, peaceful but primitive, these Indians do not pose a threat to white civilization but a reasonable race (Schimmel 153-154).

Like Bird King, Seth Eastman set off to record Indian way of life before it was too late during his military assignments. Thus, his paintings reflected Indians in their daily lives: hunting and fishing, growing crops, dancing and playing traditional games but also he painted their graves and their burial ceremonies (Johnston "Eastman" 42). According to McDermott, "for Eastman, the Indian

was not a debased creature or a noble primitive or an element in frontier adventure but a man with traditions or customs of his own" (4). Thus, one of his most famous paintings is *Lacrosse Playing among the Sioux Indians* (1851), a game to display physical power and skills of players that also had a ceremonial value (Schimmel 157-158). In addition, it is important to notice that the people depicted are neither posing nor wearing costumes but clothes, i.e., "to present the him as he was" (McDermott 110); thus, we are presented with an image less artificial and superficial than other painters commented before.

Like Eastman, the Swiss painter Karl Bodmer devoted part of his paintings to Indian subjects, customs, ceremonies and portraits. Bodmer travelled along the Missouri River with a German prince in order to record the territories they were exploring (Buscombe "Injuns" 39; Schimmel 155). For instance, his *Scalp Dance of the Minitarres* (1843-1844) or *Horse Racing of the Sioux* (c.1836) are clear examples of his interest in of Indian culture (Buscombe "Injuns" 39). Both paintings show us different ceremonies among Indians. In the former, the painting gives us a glimpse into Indian life, although from a distance. The men and the women are depicted facing different angles imitating the dance movements. Bodmer also did individual portraits of Indian chiefs as we can see in his *Leader of the Mandan Buffalo Bull Society* (1834) or *Chan-Chä. Uíá-Teüin* (1833). These portraits, once again, reflected the Noble Savage Indian tradition but they were, somehow, manipulated to show the Indian that was appropriate at the time, as Charles Bird King did before.

Yet, the most influential painter of Native American images in history has been George Catlin with his *Indian Gallery*. Although he depicted Indian life and created "a fantasized West – a West of the imagination" (Herring 230), he is mostly well-known for his individual portraits of Indian people, being one of the

first artists to depict Plain Indians whose image of feather-bonnet Indian hunting buffalo in the Plains is still used in the film industry. Yet, these Indians were idealized figures and whose noble image serve to give America a national and distinct identity (Herring 230).

His original *Indian Gallery* includes around five hundred paintings from forty-eight different tribes that he painted during his trips around the West in the 1830s (Herring 230). His goal was not only to capture the essence of Indian culture, their lives, their individuals and to collect artifacts, but "to bring to the public's attention the imminent threat to these Indians' way of life and to preserve at least some record of them before that life was destroyed' (Buscombe 36). In order to understand the Indian way of life and to acquire more knowledge of the tribes and, why not, more advocates for his cause, it was very important to record their games, ceremonies or rituals by which Indian life was guided, honoring "their primitive existence as a source from which civilized men could learn again the lessons of the wilderness" (Truettner "A Natural Man Observed" 117). Thus, paintings like *Grizzly Bears Attacking Indians on Horseback* (1832-1833) *The Cutting Scene, Mandan O-kee-pa Ceremony* (1832), *Ball-play Dance* (1834) or *Buffalo Dance, Mandan* (1835-1837) offer a glimpse of that Indian village life from the point of view of an outsider but helps us to understand how life untouched by civilization was among Indians.

However, as we said earlier Catlin's notorious fame comes from his individual portraits of Indians. Although not being very keen on anatomy (Truettner "A Natural Man Observed" 93), his portraits show Indians with dignity, authority and power although idealized selling the Noble Indian myth, which makes the Indian a commodity (Herring 226). The poses derived from classical portrait painting and sculpture. Individuals were seated or standing,

depending on the circumstances and the resources available. One of the features that stand out from the portrait is the costumes of the Indians (Truettner "A Natural Man Observed" 87-90). Some individuals were dressed in the simplest blanket or cloth as in *Little Bear, Hunkpapa Brave* (1832) or *Buffalo Bull, a Grand Pawnee warrior* (1832) while others were carefully dressed suggesting individual attributes or power within the tribe as the portrait of Seminole chief *Osceola* (1838) or *Little Chief, a Tapage Pawnee warrior* (1832). Some others were dressed in a mixture of white and Indians clothes depending on their grade of assimilation or reflecting the changes that were taking place within the Indian nations as his *Pigeon's Egg Head (The Light) going to and returning from Washington* (1837-1839). All these portraits share one common element: the individuals are always reproduced outdoors, i.e., in nature emphasizing that isolated, untouched and beautiful landscape and at the same time grieving the passing of the Indian (John 184). Herring in his article emphasizes the fact that Catlin reinforces the Myth of the Conquest while he distances the Indians from reality and that the Indians he 'creates' never existed (Herring 231, 243).

With the development of technology, photography also came to help record Native Americans before they were lost forever (Berkhofer 101; Buscombe "Injuns" 66). The person who has gone down in history as the photographer of Indians has been Edward S. Curtis. Curtis, a photographer and filmmaker who was commissioned by J.P. Morgan to produce a series of photographs on Native Americans (Buscombe "Injuns" 66). During more than 20 years, Curtis recorded the Native Americans along USA influenced by Pictorialism (Buscombe "Injuns" 66; Vervoot 465), whose final artistic goal was beauty. His final work, entitled *The North American Indian,* is composed of twenty volumes, which were published throughout 20 years.

Although he regarded his work as ethnographic, Curtis has been accused of staging his photographs, of reconstructing an artificial past, of altering the 'model' and the garments in order to accommodate the final results to the standard definition of what an Indian is (Berkhofer 102; Buscombe "Injuns" 66-67; Griffiths 88; Vervoot 464). In fact, he carried along some specific Indian elements he used along some portraits to modify the appearance as if there had not been white contact or any kind of contamination of white culture in Native American societies, something that it was almost impossible at the time he was carrying out this task. A fine example of portraits is *Two Moons Cheyenne* (c. 1910) who was present at the defeat of US army at Little Big Horn in 1876. In the picture, Two Moons is wearing his traditional garments and attributes as chief but in a non-threatening pose. Other photographs such as *Chief Joseph – Nez Perce* (1903), *Oglala Woman* (1907) or *Crazy Thunder –Oglala* (1907), share a similar tone and feeling.

We could say that Curtis expresses a nostalgic tone in the portraits, especially with the chiefs, and maybe assuming their time has passed. This may be emphasized by the poses and all the garments, bonnets, tools and jewelry they were wearing: this was not a spontaneous event. In fact, Curtis wanted to make sure he transmitted that nostalgic and sad tone in the picture, then, he could make changes to remove any possible sign of white contact (Griffiths 88). In addition to individual zoomed portraits, he also had chiefs posing outdoors in the vast land as in *The Prairie Chief* (1907), *An Oasis in the Badlands* (1905) or *High Hawk* (1907). This image of facing the individual chief with the land evokes the yearning for a lost culture and a yearning for a previous life before white contact, as some of the paintings we analyzed previously.

As we stated, Curtis wanted to record the life of Native Americans untouched and living in idyllic land; therefore, he pictured scenes from their daily lives like dances, war parties, weddings, religious practices and even their daily objects or dwellings. He was not interested in current Native Americans and how they had survived after wars, illnesses and contact with white civilization, but, rather, he wanted to depict Native Americans in an untouched civilization. Then, this became another form of conquering the Indian as "he is removed from his wild surroundings, tamed by the photographer and made safe for the viewer" (Hill 117).

Remarkably, Curtis took war-like pictures like *Oglala War-Party* (1907), *The Morning Attack* (1907) or *Brulé War Party* (1907). We may think that he wanted to honor the great military chiefs and battles. However, we really think these pictures express pity for what it is lost. We must remember that, at the time Curtis took this photograph, Native American-White Wars had 'officially' finished after the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890 and the government was trying to convert them into farmers with the *Dawes Act* of 1887. As we said, Curtis tried to register to catalog everything possible from the different tribes he visited along 20 years. Thus, we are witness of religious ceremonies like *Sun Dance in Progress – Cheyenne* (c. 1910), *Prayer to the Mystery* (1908) or *Offering the Buffalo – Skull – Mandan* (1909); we get to know daily life chores like *Drying Meat – Flathead* (1910) or *Cutting the Centre – Pole –Cheyenne* (1911) or objects from the tribes like *Medicine Bags - Piegan* (1910) or *Kalóqutsuis- Qágyuhl* (1914).

By the late nineteenth century, as we have seen, the theme of the Savage Indian and the hero conflict was already engraved in the American mind especially through the popularity of dime novels. One of the heroes from those dime novels was William Cody, or Buffalo Bill Cody, as he is famously known.

Cody embodied the frontier experience since his birth (McVeigh 27). Born in Iowa, and raised in Kansas after his father's death, he worked first as a rider for the Pony Express and later as a scout during Civil War. In 1867, he was hired to hunt buffalo in order to feed the railroad workers of the Kansas Pacific Railroad. This job gave him his nickname. However, he got back to the Army as a scout (McVeigh 28-31). Ned Buntline, the dime novel author, was looking for a literary figure based on a real person and after observing him in an expedition, he decided to make him his literary persona (McVeigh 29; Kilpatrick "Celluloid" 35). The first dime novel with Will Cody on it was entitled *Buffalo Bill, the King of the Border* (Buscombe 57).The legend of his battles continued and dominated his life since then.

He decided to organize his first Wild West Show in 1883 with his combination of entertainment, history and spectacle. Cody's stories were mainly composed of dramatic scenes of the US soldiers against Indians (usually Lakota) around the Plains (Simmon 48) together with rodeo contests, shooting shows or real buffalos and even the famous Custer's Last Stand. Cody's goal was to show the audience how life was at the frontier, especially to those who did not experience it, and to emphasize the frontier as the place of the violent battles between two different civilizations, which will become later the main topic in Westerns. Yet, it is not very clear what parts of the show were factual events and what parts of the show were fictional tales (McVeigh 32).

One of the assets is that he employed real Indians such as Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse to add a historical and realistic tone to the show (Kilpatrick "Celluloid" 13) and to relate the image of the Indians only with conflicts and violence (Buscombe "Injuns" 60). Therefore, the image of the Indian is codified in a specific way: feather-bonnet and painted face, and ferocious Indians riding

horses and holding tomahawks ready to assault white settlers. Hollywood would later adopt in its productions this image of violence and danger (McVeigh 33).

The huge success of the show not only in the USA but also in Europe until the first years of the twentieth century had three consequences, according to McVeigh: (a) it established the West as the main theme in the entertainment world setting the conventions that the film industry would take later in the century (32); (b) it helped establish the image of the Indian, especially the Indians from the Plains, completely related to violence, which will be taken over by the new form of entertainment in the twentieth century, the film industry (33); and (c) his shows also engraved in the American audience the figure of the cowboy as the symbol of the West and an American symbol. If Frederick Jackson Turner defined the frontier as the quintessential element of Americanness, the figure who represented that spirit of the frontier values and American spirit was Buffalo Bill (34-35).

Cody's show and the reenactment of glorious battles, especially the *Last Stand*, was not out of controversy. On the one hand, the employment of Native Americans in the shows, and the conditions in which they were treated and living during their stay at the show, was somehow questioned at that time. On the other hand, his emphasis on showing violence and showing cultural and social customs of Native Americans could hinder the government's objective of erasing any Native American cultural trait by reminding Native Americans themselves and the audience what they once were (Buscombe "Injuns" 61, Kilpatrick "Celluloid" 13-15).

2.4. Significant Films Up to the 1990s

The division established in this dissertation follows the time division provided by Jacquelyn Kilpatrick in *Celluloid Indians* (1998), Angela Aleiss in *Making the White Man's Indian: Native American and Hollywood Movies* (2005), Edward Buscombe in *Injuns! Native Americans in the Movies* (2006) and Michael Hilger and his book *Native Americans in the Movies: Portrayals from Silent Films to the Present* (2016).

The Silent Era (1900s – 1930s)

During the silent era, we encounter four key figures in the development of the Indian image in the film industry: Thomas Ince, D.W. Griffith. James Young Deer and Cecil. B. DeMille. As a general summary of the silent era, we claim that there was diversity in the portrayals of Native Americans who range from isolated people from the past with no contact with civilization to the Noble/Savage duality including interracial relationships, and Indian-themed films where Native American culture was shown (Aleiss 1- 4; Buscombe "Injuns" 82-85; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 19; Hilger "Native American Movies" 13-19). For instance, we find films such as *Sioux Ghost Dance* (1894), *The Indian Land Grab* (1910), *The Faithful Indian* (1910), *An Indian Girl's Love* (1910), *The Cowboy and the Squaw* (1910) or *The True Heart of the Indian* (1909). Indeed, movies like *Nanook of the North* (1922) or *Eskimo* (1933) brought an unusual attention to the Inuit culture, which was some fresh air away from the white-Indian conflict or love themes. However, at the end of the silent era, the depiction of Native Americans started

to change to a more hostile portrayal (Hilger "Native American Movies" 13; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 22;).

James Young Deer, a Native American director in the film industry and married to her muse Lillian St. Cyr, an Indian actress also known as Princess Redwing, dealt with some daring topics at the time like interracial marriages such as *White Fawn's Devotion* (1910) *The Yaqui Girl* (1910) or *For the Squaw* (1911) (Aleiss 2; Buscombe "Injuns" 86-87).

The move of production from the East to the West brought several changes. The landscape was not any longer a paradise but a harsh environment what therefore altered the depiction the depiction of Native Americans from a friendly perspective to a more war-like or hostile attitude (Buscombe "Injuns" 88; Simmon 37). Consequently, plots would become more violent due to the increase of the conflicts.

An example of this is Thomas H. Ince, who is known for creating the first assembly-line production in the film industry (Aleiss 12; Simmon 58) and the so-called 'Inceville', a film community complex where technicians, actors and everybody related to the production of a film lived. One of the most significant issues was, with the approval of the government, the employment of a group of Oglala Sioux, who established themselves in their own tepees for six months, with whom he filmed around eighty films (Buscombe "Injuns" 90; Aleiss 13). Some of his most important productions are *The Indian Massacre* (1912), *War on the Plains* (1912), *Custer's Last Fight* (1912) and *The Invaders* (1912), where he portrayed a mixture of sympathetic and hostile Indians Aleiss 15). Indeed, *The Invaders* has been praised not only for its authenticity in presenting individual Indian characters with real Native Americans (Simmon 64) but also for the introduction of the vast and empty landscape that "must be filled with racial

battles" (Simmon 66). In addition, Simmon also claims that from the very beginning the title is playing with assumptions of Indians as 'invaders' in the American mind; yet, during the plot, we see that the term can also be applied to the whites (58). Moreover, although the story is categorized as Western, the story lacks some of the elements of later Westerns in terms of individual characters who personalized the conflicts. Yet, we have the Cavalry, who received orders from the government; and the Indians, who are just responding to the group assault on their lands (70).

D. W. Griffith is considered one of the most important figures in the history of cinema. Throughout his films, he combined the figure of *Noble Indian* and *Savage Indian*. In *Iola's Promise* (1912), Griffith uses the dual image of Noble/Savage in two specific characters (Hilger "Native Americans" 14). Iola represents the noble character as the helper Celluloid Maiden (Marubbio "Killing" 38) as she helps the white man to find his objective, the gold, and avoids the killing of a white family. On the contrary, her whole tribe is depicted as savage as they attack a wagon train (Hilger "Native Americans" 14). At the time of the movie, the government policies demanded assimilation from Indians. Marubbio states that the film contains both assimilationist and anti-assimilationist ideas (39 - 40).

One of the most significant examples of his portrayal of Savage Indian is in *The Battle at Elderbush Gulch* (1914) (Aleiss 5; Buscombe "Injuns" 89; Hilger "Native Americans" 17). In this movie, Griffith depicts the Indian and the white as completely opposite civilizations. The brutality of the images related to Native Americans kidnapping and killing of the white family in the film, the horrible expressions of the actors and actresses, and the amount of bodies within the

murders accentuates the change of the Savage portrayal of Native Americans in the Western movies (Simmon 45).

Cecil B. DeMille directed (with Oscar C. Apfel) and produced what was the first film made in the current Hollywood (Aleiss 21; Buscombe "Injuns" 93; Simmon 80), *The Squaw Man* (1914). In the movie, DeMille entangles in three different topics related to Native Americans. Firstly, Native Americans have no place in white society because they are inferior due to their primitivism (Aleiss 21; Marubbio "Killing", 49-51). Secondly, Native American cannot be assimilated into white society, therefore, it resolves the problem of miscegenation at the time. Native Women as celluloid maidens can be depicted as lovers, helpers and have children with their white counterparts but they can never be part of white society, so her death is the natural step (Aleiss 21; Hilger "Native Americans" 15). Consequently, the film depicts the Indian as the vanishing civilization, as there is no place for them in any other culture (Aleiss 21). This is emphasized with the last image in the film: the Indian woman is dead; her half-breed son is being taken care of by the whites who protect him in the scene and the only other Indian character is shown in the corner as vanishing into history (Marubbio "Killing" 51). According to Hearne, the film also makes a political statement as Nat-U-Rich's son is a metaphor for the assimilationist policies (he will be raised in the East) and the boarding school experience (he will be taken away from Indian contact). At the same time, the child is a symbol of the unity of the country (in the past, an Indian and, currently, an American) (56).

As we have seen, the production move from the East to the West changed the depiction of Native Americans in films. In addition, although Indian actors and Indian topics were very common among the different filmmakers, non-Indian actors would assume the role of Indian characters little by little.

Consequently, Native American topics would be converted into expendable areas as well, and Native Americans would appear just through love stories or through war, which emphasized the general view of the Savage Indian in society and in the film industry (Simmon 81).

During the mid-1920s, a new trend appeared in Hollywood in which films sympathetic to the Indians were being produced so the big Western genre went into decline. 'Reform dramas' as they were called (Hearne 102) recorded the social movements of the era in which Native policies were being reviewed, especially related to education. One of these films is *The Vanishing American* (1925) directed by George B. Seitz. Starting with a kind of documentary of images emphasizing white superiority the film tells us the story of Nophaie, a Navajo leader, from his raise as a Native American leader to his fall fighting for his people's rights (Aleiss 35; Hilger "Native Americans" 15; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 30). His love interest in the film Marion is the symbol of the good-intentioned society who tries to assimilate Indians. On the other hand, the corruption and carelessness of the government is represented by the Indian agent within the reservation. Although Natives try to fight, Nophaie's death as a martyr not only does confirm the white superiority as expressed at the beginning of the film, but also the acceptance of white civilization, i.e., white religion as the only possible salvation for his people (Aleiss 34-37; Collins "Columbia Companion" 281; Hilger "Native Americans" 15-16; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 32). Therefore, the critique to government policies is somewhat reduced to the minimum.

1930s

The inclusion of the sound meant that those visual clues from previous decades were going to be explicitly enunciated by the actors. Therefore, language started to gain significant importance in the portrayal of Native American characters and their relationship with white characters. Technically, a new Hollywood Indian dialect language was being developed although at times it seemed as they were at its best just noises (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 37).

One of the first examples of this decade is *Massacre* (1934) that still follows the trend marked by *The Vanishing American*: confronting an assimilated Indian with the cruel reality of his people in the reservation and the corruption within the reservation (Aleiss 37). Released right after the *Indian Reorganization Act of 1934*, the film deals with the story of Joe Thunderhorse who goes back to his reservation and protests in Washington to speak out for his people (Aleiss 49; Buscombe "Injuns" 94). Although his people get violent, he stays by the government's side even being offered a position within the system as an Indian Commissioner (Aleiss 49-51).

Once again, we confront a whitened-out Indian who rediscovers his roots while witnessing the corruption and atrocities committed by crooked and bad whites. On the one hand, his acceptance of the governmental position accentuates his image of the Noble savage while his people remain as vanished from the story. On the other hand, the movie is in line with the policies the government was trying to enact to improve Indian's situation. However, the real problems are left behind unresolved in favor of a personal story of success (Aleiss 51).

John Ford and his film *Stagecoach* initiated the comeback of the Western in 1939. The movie deals with the story of the different characters and their trip

from East to West within the stagecoach. The movie is significant because it is the first time John Ford shot in the Monument Valley, elevating this landmark as the main feature of his films (Buscombe "Inventing" 119-120) and because he is able to build a story within the stagecoach that reaches all levels of society, i.e., the travelers are a metaphor for society in itself (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 54) who are looking forward to a new beginning not only in their lives but also in the West, the place for new opportunities for everybody.

In this film, some key elements of the Western genre are established. Firstly, the hero as the quintessential cowboy who knows the land, the Indians and their acts and whose knowledge and skills save the travelers and society in general, representing the hero Slotkin described (13-14). Secondly, the open space of the Frontier that is engraved with the meaning of a new beginning, i.e., the birth of a new man, a new American society where freedom and space molds the character of society in general. The land is open with no fences like the East and the Go West movement is a kind of rite of passage for people to achieve their position in society. As we see, Turner's vision and notion of the Frontier was a big influence in the rise of the Western genre. However, we cannot forget to mention that this notion of the frontier as the place where main action takes place limits the timespan of Indians, freezing them in a specific time and place (Churchill "Fantasies" 168).

Yet, these Indians from the Plains, are depersonalized and portrayed *en masse* and showing up out of nowhere with no voice at all (Buscombe "Injuns" 95-96; Price 159; Simmon 145). This *en masse* depiction also meant a decrease in the use of Indians in film productions (Price 159). Once they are defeated, they go back to obscurity in the desert. Thus, once again, Indians are reduced to mere expendable elements in the story and once again, their portrayal is that of the

savage Indian, being "the absent threat early in the movie and then a vehicle for cinematic excitement near the end" (Hilger "Native Americans" 19).

Somewhere in the middle between *Massacre* and *Stagecoach,* we find historical dramas like *The Last of the Mohicans* (1936) and *Drums Along the Mohawk* (1939). In the case of the former, the adaptation of 1936 brings some changes in the relationship between the different characters. In the first place, the protagonist is Hawkeye (Hilger "Native Americans" 20), the gone-Indian hero whose abilities and skills learnt from the Mohicans surpasses them. Indians are portrayed from a dual point of view. On the one hand, the Noble Indian represented by Uncas and Chingachgook, who are mere companions; in fact, they are always depicted at either side of the white protagonist (Hilger "Native Americans" 20). On the other hand, we see the Savage Indian, represented by Magua and the Hurons (Aleiss 60-61). Either way, both the Noble Red Man and the Savage Indian are pushed into the background as well with their broken English, which again emphasizes their inferiority (Hilger "Native Americans" 20). In addition to this, the romance between Cora and Hawkeye is moved to the front of the story in this version as both characters are purely white so their love story would avoid the censorship of the audience. This censorship is tested with the romance between Uncas and Alice, which ends with the death of both of them.

Drums Along the Mohawk (1939) also distinguishes the Noble Red Man from the Savage Indians. Also directed by John Ford, it is his first colored film (Buscombe "Injuns" 95). Gil Martin, the protagonist, is trying to make his dream come true in the West: to own piece of land, to be a good Christian and to raise a family. His companion is an Indian turned into Christianity, Blue Back, whose first appearance in the movie terrifies not only the audience but also Martin's wife (Buscombe "Injuns" 95-96; Hilger "Native Americans" 21). His sudden

appearance from the dark seems to confirm his savage nature as Indian, as Indians are usually confined to darkness or outside social boundaries. His Noble feature is confirmed by his religious faith, which sets him apart from savagery, as he possesses mainstream features (Hilger "Native Americans" 21).

As usual, this character is antagonized by the Savage Indian figure, in this case, the Iroquois who are depicted naked with painted face, destroying everything they encounter in their path and who are shown as drunks, what it is a sign of weakness and stupidity. Once again, they are not personalized characters, just savages doing what they do best: to terrorize the peaceful and brave whites who just wanted a piece of land to establish their families in the West (Buscombe "Injuns" 96).

1940s

As we have seen in the previous decades, the Native American portrayed as the Savage Other never occupies the same space as the white man, i.e., although whites travel around the desert, they establish themselves in farms and have contact with Indians, either peacefully with an individual Noble Man or violently when Indians try to obstruct their progress. Yet, Kilpatrick states that both races "never overlap" ("Celluloid Indians"47). Either as Noble, Vanished or Savage, Hollywood had already created homogeneous "cinematic Indians" (Churchill "Fantasies" 168): they are associated with certain actions (attack on wagon train, living in tipis, coming from darkness); they are frozen in time (1850-1880) and place (the frontier, the West, the Plains); and, they belong to an amalgamation of tribes with mixed cultural and historical features (Churchill "Fantasies" 167 – 173).

The participation of the USA in World War II and the years after the war meant a change of mentality towards the Native Americans in society. Public figures like Ira Hayes and the Navajo Code Talkers emerged as examples of the participation of Native Americans in the war effort (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 50). The aim of unifying the country against one common enemy, Fascism, favored the assimilationist policies so the Indian could not be seen as the Other but as a friend. In addition to this, new enemies were created in mainstream society: businessmen and bankers (Aleiss 60-62, 70). However, that change in films was going to take place as its own pace.

According to Aleiss, an ambiguous description of Native Americans is to be found in *Northwest Passage* (1940) directed by King Vidor. Taking place in 1759 during the French and Indian War (or the Seven Years' War), it describes Roger Rangers' trip to destroy the enemy's military lines, the Abenaki Indians camp (Aleiss 65). Yet, Aleiss also claims that Indians appear as allies too in the form of an Indian Scout and a young boy (65). However, scholars like Hilger and Kilpatrick define *Northwest Passage* as showing one of the most stereotyped and racist images of Indians (Hilger "Native Americans" 21-22; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians"49). Indeed, the savage Indians are used as a metaphor for the axis enemies in Europe (Rollins "Columbia Companion" 282). So, once again, Indians are regarded as a commodity to unite American society against war (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 50).

We find a minor racist tone in our next movie, *They Died with their Boots On* (1941) directed by Raoul Walsh. The plot deals with the life of General Custer until his heroic death at the Battle of the Little Bighorn (Hilger "Native Americans" 23). At a time when the government needed society's war effort (Aleiss 75), the symbol of an American hero (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 52-

53) and implication of minorities (Aleiss 75), Custer's story was the best option to show heroism, leadership and union in the battlefield (Aleiss 73; Hilger "Native Americans" 23).

During the movie, we find two types of enemy. On the one hand, the greedy businessmen, the agents behind the curtains who do everything they can to provoke the fight with the objective of getting the gold from the Black Hills. On the other hand, there are the Native Americans who are the cause of Custer's and his cavalry's death (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 52). Although Indians are still depicted *en masse*, Crazy Horse is portrayed in a more positive light than previous Indian Chiefs. He can confront Custer in battle and the only time he is depicted with violent traits is when businessmen break his rights (Aleiss 71; Hilger "Native Americans" 23). Yet, the Indian Chief authorizes Custer as the only guardian and trustworthy element in keeping Native American's rights, elevating Custer to a mythic figure (Aleiss 72). On Custer's side, he is the one acknowledging Crazy Horse individual figure even earning Custer's respect with his war skills (Aleiss 72; Buscombe "Injuns" 99). However, this link of respect to war leaves the image of Native Americans still associated to violence and savagery. In fact, that violence causes Custer's death and makes Custer a martyr at Little Big Horn.

In *Duel in the Sun* (1946), the Noir Western directed by King Vidor was one of the first movies that tried to break the racial barrier as it presents Native American within mainstream society as victims of prejudice facing clear examples of old West white racism within American society (Aleiss 82; Hilger "Native Americans" 24; Marubbio "Killing" 117-118). The plot centers on the figure of Pearl Chavez, a half-breed who goes to live with the McCanlen family after her father murders Pearl's mother. Since the very beginning, Pearl is regarded from

two different perspectives: on the one hand, she is referred pejoratively by Mr. McCanlen and his son Lewt; and, on the other hand, she is regarded as more accommodating by Mrs. McCanlen and her son Jesse (Hilger "Native Americans" 24-25; Marubbio "Killing" 118-119).

As both sons are attracted to her although with different intentions, the plot goes around the love triangle and the fatal events related to that 'love'. On the one hand, even though she is raped, Pearl's race and blood is constantly brought up as a cause for her internal "struggle between wanting to be a good girl and her innate badness" (Marubbio "Killing" 118). On the other hand, Pearl is always an ostracized person within society as society rejects her and avoids her assimilation or at least the respect she deserves as she diverts from role attached to white women because of her origins (Marubbio "Killing" 124). As a punishment for her daring behavior in terms of sexuality, she is 'punished' in the movie as her mother was, encouraging the half-breed femme fatale stereotype of the doomed Indian (Hilger "Native Americans" 25).

1950s

If the dual image of Savage-Noble Native American from previous decades was the norm among filmmakers and producers, WWII changed America forever and made the country deal with the minorities' new role in society after their commitment in war and, consequently, Hollywood opened the door to a more liberal, multidimensional and sympathetic portrayal of Native Americans and more sensitive to their problems (Buscombe 101; Hilger "Native Americans" 26; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 58) yet with a toll, the loss of Indian identity through assimilation (Aleiss 90).

The most famous and clear example is *Broken Arrow* (1950), whose plot centers around two individual people, the Indian Chief Cochise and the Army Scout Tom Jeffords, who are able to entangle in a friendly relationship based on respect of each other's culture and reconciliation (Buscombe "Injuns" 101; Hilger "Native Americans" 26). Although told by the voice-over narration of Jeffords, the audience can witness through Jeffords' eyes and Cochise's explanation of Apache cultural and social rituals and ceremonies (Hilger "Native Americans" 26). Indeed, Jeffords' learning and integration in the Apache life takes place through Jeffords' marriage to Sonseeahray. This marriage and integration are sending a clear message to the audience: reconciliation is possible (Buscombe "Injuns" 102). Yet, we are able to see Indian life just because a white character has been introduced into that culture, so we still need a white hero to authorize Native Americans instead of having Native Americans speaking on their own. In addition, mixed-racial romances or marriages still remain a controversial issue within American society so Sonseeahray has to die as a necessary step not only to calm the society's sanction but also as a necessary step to respect the peace between the two races (Aleiss 92; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 59) but it reflects racial tension within American society (Marubbio "Killing" 70).

In order to change the old stereotype of Indians, Cochise is an individualized figure showing his military skills, his intelligence in his decisions and in the way he deals and manages the tribe (Kilpatrick "Celluloid" 59). Hilger affirms that he is another view of the Noble Red Man because he accepts the fate of the white man and Indians in the West ("Native Americans" 27) and because he is the opposite to Geronimo, the Savage Indian featured in the movie, who refuses the peace between both civilizations.

However, the release of *The Searchers* in 1956 brought back the racism in the frontier personalized in the figure of a new cowboy within white community: the Indian hater and fighter (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 61; Rollins "Columbia" 105). The hero is lonely and obsessed with Indians, sometimes being more savage than them yet possessing Indian knowledge (Aleiss 101) and extremely racist (Hilger "Native Americans" 32; Simmon 72). The plot deals with the quest of Ethan Edwards's niece kidnapped by Comanches after murdering the whole family. Ethan's intention is not to save her from the Indians but actually killing her, as she became the Indian chief Scar's wife (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 60; Rollins "Columbia" 105). He is confronted with his version on Indian side, Scar, whose hate for whites equals Ethans' for Indians, and therefore categorizes him as the Savage Indian. However, both characters are described in a similar way in their initial meeting (Aleiss 102).

We are not introduced to any Noble Indian, in fact, the rest of Scar's tribe remains in the background and the quest is just an excuse for their massacre that takes place only after Debbie has been taken home. How Edwards acquired his Indian knowledge is never explained in the movie; his behavior towards Indians like killing a herd of buffalo and desecrating the Native dead body to avoid fulfilling his religious beliefs make him a difficult element to deal with within American society. Indeed, at the end of the movie Edwards leaves the community leaving a message that savagery still lies in society (Aleiss 104). It could also be read as a metaphor for the anxieties in mainstream society about American identity (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 63).

1960s

The new roles minorities were acquiring in post-war America continued during the 1960s as this decade was characterized by social activism. This activism redefined American society and identity by recognizing minorities' rights and culture, in other words, providing visibility to minorities as part of the American culture. This was reflected in film industry where more positive portrayals of Native Americans were included in pro-Indian movies (Hilger "Native Americans" 35).

One of them was *Cheyenne Autumn* (1964) directed by John Ford who tried to reverse the stereotypes and themes he helped to engrave in American society through his movies (Buscombe "Injuns" 156; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 67; Hilger "Native Americans" 37). The plot, based on actual events, deals with the story of the Cheyenne tribe confined in a reservation in Oklahoma who decided to return to their traditional land. The escape is regarded as a rebellion, so the Calvary is appointed to make them go back to the reservation (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 68; Hilger "Native Americans" 37). Indians are personalized in two chiefs, Dull Knife and Little Wolf, who against starvation, corruption and attempts to assimilate, become the central figures in the movie as intelligent and belligerent people (Hilger "Native Americans" 37). A key point is the use of Cheyenne language in the movie although the voice-over narration is Tom Archer, the friendly white soldier who acknowledges the greatness of the Cheyenne warriors (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians 69; Hilger "Native Americans" 37).

The second significant movie of the decade is *Tell Them Willie Boy is Here* (1969), directed by Abraham Polonsky. The plot deals with the story of young

Paiute and his lover, Willie and Lola, who run away after killing her father. As in the past, they are followed by a posse lead by Sheriff Cooper, and his companions, who range from an Indian fighter from the past avid of old justice against Indians, to a politician eager of relevance and one of Willie's friend (Aleiss 122-123; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 72; Hilger "Native Americans" 40).

During the film, Willy and Lola remark several times the invisibility of Indian problems within mainstream society; however, the media take advantage of the story turning it into a juicy story (Hilger "Native Americans" 40). Indeed, the story brings back racist attitudes towards Native Americans especially by law enforcers and politicians. Therefore, we could think that the point of using the Native American couple is to confirm that Indians are still prejudiced no matter what year we live in, although the real story took place in 1909. However, we may think that their Indianness is a metaphor for the youth at that time (Aleiss 123; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 75; Rollins "Columbia" 283), i.e., we do not have a story based on the conflict for land possession; we have a couple fleeing from the social structures they live in, who happened to be Indian.

Yet, there are several Indian marks in the story. First, Willie's way to claim Lola as a wife follows the Paiute system. Second, the posse takes the form of a chase in the desert reminding us of the posse tracking Indians in classic Westerns. Third, Willy wears his father's Ghost Dance because traditionally it would stop bullets (Hilger "Native Americans" 40). In addition, Cooper, also trapped within mainstream society, allows the Paiutes to burn Willie's body according to their beliefs in opposition to what the Indian haters pretended to do. However, although the film is considered a step further, a possible flaw is that Indians are still depicted *en masse*: there is no individual characterization and there is no Indian plea in the movie. The moment Willie dies, they vanish into invisibility

again following the trend of previous decades (Kilpatrick “Celluloid Indians” 73, 75)

1970s

Vietnam War and the social activism of minorities, including Native Americans shook white mainstream American society, which started to regard American Indians as current and real members (Kilpatrick “Celluloid Indians” 77) especially after the siege of Wounded Knee site in late 1969. As a response, Hollywood turned to Native Americans as metaphors for other tragedies like those taking place in Vietnam. In other words, Hollywood produced anti-Westerns and turned to full and front violence in the films (Aleiss 120-121; Hilger “Native Americans” 42) where the villains were not any more the Indians. Also, in this decade, we witness the construction of a new stereotype: Indians as the environmental guardians mainly inducted by the famous ‘Keep America Beautiful’ campaign, also known as the "Crying Indian ad", with Iron Eyes Cody.

One of the movies that used Native Americans as metaphor for what was taking place in Vietnam is *Soldier Blue* released in 1970 and directed by Ralph Nelson. Inspired by the 1864 Sand Creek massacre, the film tells the story of Honus, a young patriotic devoted soldier in the US army, and Cresta, a young woman abducted by the Cheyenne two years before (Kilpatrick “Celluloid Indians” 77). In their trip to the nearest fort, they get to know each other and confront their opposite views of America. Cresta’s pro-Indian point of view antagonizes with Honus’ pro-Cavalry view, which will be tumbling down after the attack of the cavalry to the Cheyenne village they get to (Aleiss 127; Buscombe “Injuns”133-134).

In this film, through Honus' eyes we can witness one of the bloodiest carnages shown on screen carried out by the cavalry: rapes, mutilation of sexual organs, scalps, target practice with children. Aleiss states that with these images "the Westerns' mythical heroes faded into the past as America's fertile frontier became a wasteland of mass Indian graves" (128). However, for the first time, moviegoers can see the Other reality. Yet, although the intention is good, the message of the massacre is diluted as Indians are used as an allegory of what is happening in another place in Vietnam (Hilger "Native Americans" 50; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 77). Thus, it disassociates the society in which the tragedy took place from its actual victims (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 79).

Another point to make, which has already been discussed, is the use of a sympathetic white character, Cresta, to speak out for Native Americans and the grievances toward them (Churchill "Fantasies" 189). Is it not possible to find a real Native American person who could speak for herself/himself to explain the history of Native Americans? If we want to talk about real situations, why does not the director choose current Native Americans to speak about the current problems they are suffering with the mess of governmental policies implemented throughout the years? Filmmakers just confront two different people -the good guys, the Cheyenne, against the bad guys, the Cavalry. The intention is not to talk about the problems of Native Americans but to make a statement on antimilitarism at that time, as the movie is a critique of US acts in Vietnam.

Ward Churchill in his book *Fantasies of the Master Race* goes a little bit further and criticizes how the filmmakers intend to present the tragedies personalized in the extravagant and unreasonable acts and behavior of single men, such as Col. Chivington in the Sand Creek Massacre depicted in *Soldier Blue*, and Gen. Custer in *Little Big Man* (188-189). Consequently, the guilt is not

shared by mainstream society who condemns the acts but who is unable to do associate American history to these acts (189-190).

In addition, in 1970 Arthur Penn directed *Little Big Man*, which addresses the massacre committed against Native Americans. The plot deals with the story of Jack Crabb, a 121-year-old white Cheyenne, who narrates the story of being the only survivor of Little Big Horn Custer's Last Stand. Adopted by the Cheyenne when he was a little boy and renamed 'Little Big Man', he learns from Old Lodge Skins, interpreted by Chief Dan George, the ways of the Cheyenne. However, his life is a constant coming and going from Native American life to the white world where he serves to a preacher, as a scout for 7th Cavalry under the egocentric Custer even raiding a Cheyenne camp and, once again after Washita Massacre with the goal of killing Custer before the battle of Little Big Horn (Aleiss 124; Buscombe "Injuns" 134; Hilger "Native Americans" 43-44; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 85-94).

Kilpatrick states that these changes of locations respond to Crabb's quest for identity, resembling what Native Americans, especially mixed-bloods, are going through the different policies the government has enacted to terminate, assimilate and dislocate Native Americans. Yet, the only place where his identity remains fixed is within Cheyenne culture ("Celluloid Indians" 85) as in the white world life and dignity are not valued at all, as we can see in the massacre where the Cavalry, once again, tries to exterminate life. Yet, Native scholar Ward Churchill affirms that these white characters exists in order to push the real Indians into the background making the white man the authoritative source of Native American culture ("Fantasies" 186).

The remarkable Native American character is Old Lodge Skins, played by actor Chief Dan George, what meant a change in the trend of using non-Indian actors as Native American characters. In the process of teaching Jack about Cheyenne spiritual convictions, the audience is also taught, which represented a breakthrough from the traditional role of a white character as the teacher. Due to this teaching and learning process, Michael Hilger affirms that this character is depicted as the Noble Red Doomed Man who knows his destiny in a world that it is not anymore his ("Native Americans" 44).

Although the narrator of the movie is Jack Crabb, Old Lodge Skins speaks for himself. The way he speaks is very different from the Tonto-like language, grunts or sounds Native American actors have been traditionally assigned to. Moreover, the Cheyenne are depicted as real people, entangled in their daily chores so we, as audience, suffer a greater impact on their slaughter (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 93). As audience, it is very easy to feel empathy for them as they show respect for their own life and others', dignity and appreciation for life, especially since they are characterized in contrast to corrupt members in white society where everybody lies and is disrespectful.

Indian culture is also praised in *A Man Called Horse* released in 1970 and directed by Elliot Silverstein. The plot is about an English man, John Morgan, captured by the Sioux that during his stay, he is dubbed as Horse as they make him work as a slave for the chief's mother. With the help of a half-breed, he learns the language of the Sioux, their rituals and way of life winning the favor of his captors especially by showing his bravery defending the Sioux against a Shoshone attack. In order to complete his acceptance into the tribe and to be able to marry the chief's daughter, he must go through a sacred ritual, the Sun Dance. During this ceremony, ropes are attached to his chest so he is uplifted. After the

ceremony, he marries the Indian woman, yet, happiness does not last long as the Shoshone attacked the camp again and killed his wife and Yellow Hand, the Sioux chief. Before returning to civilization, he is named the chief of the Sioux, completing his 'going Native' process (Aleiss 129-133; Buscombe "Injuns" 134 Hilger "Native Americans" 44-45; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 79-84).

The film was advertised as depicting realistic portrayals of Sioux culture and as such, Lakota language is used throughout the movie and a Sioux village is the setting. However, the real main character of the movie is not any member of the Lakota tribe but John Morgan, the 'going Native' hero, similar to *Little Big Man*. As we stated before, we know the Sioux culture through John Morgan, not the medicine elder or the chief. In fact, some Native Americans scholars and leaders have complaint largely about the image of Sioux culture constructed in the movie as false (Aleiss 131 – 133; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 79-80). For instance, the goal of the Sun Dance ritual is not the one intended in the movie and the way some elders are taken after in the movie does not have anything to do with reality (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 81).

If the Noble Indians, although cruel at the beginning, are the Sioux, we need a contraposition to those Indians, the Shoshones, who fulfill their role of Savage perfectly as the Pawnees were in previous movies. As savages, they are characterized differently, they appear out of nowhere *en masse,* and they are extremely violent (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 82-83).

Probably, the ending is the most confusing aspect of the movie, anticipating films like *Dances with Wolves*. Once the white man has proved himself to be the best Indian ever, he abandons his life as a Sioux for a life in the civilization he despised at the beginning of the movie, leaving the Sioux at their

own luck probably waiting for another Shoshone attack. In that way, the Sioux are depicted as Noble but Doom, as Michael Hilger says ("Native Americans" 45).

1980s

After the defeat of US in the Vietnam War, it was not very clear what role Native Americans would play in the film industry. Although there were some attempts to revive the Western genre, the release of *Heaven's Gate* (1980) and its disastrous failure in the box office almost made the Western genre to collapse. Maybe it was time for Native Americans to show up in other genres rather than in the Western, especially, as we have seen, their image was linked to the white man and to violence.

At the end of the decade, *War Party* (1988) is released showing real and current Native Americans. The story takes place in Montana, where the mayor of the city and the tribal leader agrees to reenact a battle between Blackfeet Indians and the US Cavalry (the actual event is shown in the first minutes of the movie). Just before the reenactment, two boys from the two races entangled in a bar fight which led to a promise of revenge. The day of the reenactment the white boy manages to change fake bullets for real ones with the fatal consequence of the death of the Indian boy. This unleashes past racial quarrels hidden in the community. Three Indian boys flee from the scene and what we witness is their trip for survival and for their death (Churchill "Fantasies" 202; Hilger "Native Americans" 54-55; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 106- 113).

The Indians shown in the movie are a metaphor for what many tribes were dealing at the time: whether choosing a traditional approach in dealing with Indian internal affairs or a more modern and whiter, i.e., assimilationist

approach. On the one hand, we have the tribal leader interpreted by former AIM leader, Dennis Banks. He seems much assimilated into white culture and his decision to carry out the staged battled is dictated by money. In fact, even though he is well aware that the reenactment will open old wounds, he decides to give his approval of the celebration. At the end of the film, he realizes history has not changed at all for Indians in the last century as they are still the victims within a vengeful American society. It is obvious that the director played with the audience in the choice of Dennis Banks, as former AIM leader, playing the role of an assimilated tribal chief (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 106).

On the other hand, his son, the new generation, is more inclined to a more traditional approach. In fact, he is more pro-fight for their rights and makes a stand on their positions. Although there are no horses this time but trucks, the trip that he and his friends embark on around the land is a rite of passage. They do not know anything about their culture and they tried to do everything according to their ideas of what traditionalist would do (a sweat and cutting thumb), curiously what originated the conflict. Indeed, once they are sieged by white law enforcers, eager to avenge old wounds, they require the presence of an elder medicine man to consult what they should do next (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 111). In a combination of traditional and modern features, he advises them to die as warriors or, on the contrary, they will get time in prison. Thus, they fight the traditional way: using arrows and bows to try to defend themselves from the bullets coming from their enemies, yet, ending up with their deaths like in the original battle.

It is particularly interesting the use of Native American circular time to tell the story: it starts and ends with the same image: the tomahawk taken from the Indians (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 113). On the one hand, this is an

improvement as Native American culture is taken into account. Yet, the use of the same image for the ending leaves a pessimistic tone as we see that History has not changed in the last years and there is no sign that indicates it will do (Hilger "Native Americans" 54).

As Native Americans are somehow depicted in a positive trait, whites get the worst portrayals in the movie, i.e., they are portrayed as savages and racists (Hilger "Native Americans" 54; Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 109). The method to associate white with savagery in this occasion is in the scene were Bubba, an Indian who leaves the town looking for a lawyer for the three kids, is surrounded by the white posse and brutally scalped. Thus, we have whites acting as savages, what relates them to the most traditional violent feature of Native Americans Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 110).

The film also makes a political point almost at the beginning when the mayor shows in the museum cultural objects and artifacts, as the tomahawk, symbol of the Indian defeat, as if they were for display when in some instances they are sacred and family objects used in ritual and ceremonies. As Kilpatrick affirms in Celluloid Indians "the tomahawk, like the bead dress and other artifacts of the Blackfeet culture housed in the museum, is a commodity to the mayor, just like the bloody history he uses to advertise the town" (109). As we know, Native Americans have long battled for the restoration of cultural objects to their original owners, something that was finally possible with the approval of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in 1990.

Current images of Native Americans also appear in *Powwow Highway* (1989), directed by Jonathan Wacks. Defined as a road-trip movie, *Powwow* tells the story of two friends, Buddy Red Bow and Philbert Bono. Buddy is a war veteran and activist who is against the plans of a mine company within the

reservation lands while Philbert can be described as the geeky and weird Indian who leads his life in the traditional Cheyenne way, looking forward to becoming a warrior, but with a twentieth century touch. When Buddy's sister is jailed, both friends set off to rescue her. During the trip, Philbert and Buddy's adventures challenge their different views on how to be an Indian nowadays and their identities as Indians, as many young Natives are going through in current native nations between modern Indians and traditionalists within Native nations (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 113-120)

The trip is a rite of passage for both, as they become a different person at the end of the trip. For instance, Philbert uses twentieth century tokens such as a Hershey bar at Black Hills as an offering for their ancestors. On the other hand, Buddy learns that fighting violently against the injustices his people have suffered does not mean anything if he is not able to participate in Native American culture, i.e., he must re-learn about his origins and about his own culture. Although both characters seem stereotyped at the beginning, Buddy as the angry and stoic young Indian, and Philbert as the spiritual Indian, both deconstruct those stereotypes during the trip so that Philbert becomes a warrior in the twentieth century, and Buddy recognizes the power of culture in his identity (Anderson 146-149). Indeed, both characters are recognizable for Native Americans and non-native Americans who, for the first time, can see diversity in characters, situations and other conflicts (Anderson 145).

As our dissertation is focused on the image of Native Americans in the film industry during the last twenty-five years, it is important to know the evolution of Native American image since the arrival of Columbus in the new continent. Thus, it was necessary to make a chronological journey in the evolution of their depiction in the arts, from written reports to the antecedent of film, i.e.,

photography. After summarizing that evolution and considering that the research is focused on the film industry, we considered that it was necessary to present the main films that have marked the visual history of Native Americans in film industry. Obviously, that visual history is influenced by the government policies and the main historical events up to the 1990s that have help establish, develop and change Native American views within American society. Therefore, those main policies and laws are presented as background information to understand how the film industry, as guards and promoter of trends and points of view, have registered those policies and have molded the depiction of Native Americans.

In the next chapter, we will provide a detailed description of the main policies enacted by the government in our frame of study, 1990-2015, as we think it is important to know the political and social background of the period, being 1992 the key date in our study. Moreover, in this chapter, we analyze the first group of films which deal especially with the Western genre. Thus, we will comment on the main features of the genre and how the setting and plot influence the relationship between the white man and the Indian.

Chapter 3:
The Frontier in the 20th Century

3.1 Native Americans in the United States (1990-2015): A Brief Historical Survey

In political terms, the year 1990, which marks the starting point for our research, was really prolific with the enactment of some legislation to improve and protect Native American social and cultural aspects. Among the first piece of legislation we have the *Native American Languages Act* of 1990 signed by George H. W. Bush, whose main goals were to protect and promote the use of Native American's own language (Sec. 102).

Also in 1990, the *Indian Arts and Crafts Act* was issued. This Public Law forbid the sale, distribution, marketing of American Indian or Alaskan Native products in United States without indicating the Indian heritage or tribal affiliation of the artist. Obviously, it created controversy as not all Indian artists may be recognized or may be affiliated to any specific tribe and not all tribes are federally recognized.

George H. W. Bush also signed the *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act* (NAGPRA) in 1990, whose main goal was the repatriation of Native American cultural items to tribes (Dunbar-Ortiz 206). The second goal of NAPGRA is to protect Native American burial sites and to provide control on excavations on archeological sites where Native American objects may be found. One of the most controversial issues and the main point of activism in current times is the restoration of sacred lands to Native Americans and access to those lands to perform their religious ceremonies (Dunbar-Ortiz 206-207). A first step was taken by Bill Clinton as his *Executive Order No. 13007 Indian Sacred Sites* in 1996 provided access to sacred objects and protection of Native American burial sites. The goal of this executive order was to

> (1) accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and (2) avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites. Where appropriate, agencies shall maintain the confidentiality of sacred sites (Sec. 1).

Although previous presidents have issued resolutions and designated a month, a day or a week to celebrate 'Native American heritage' in the United States, it was not until President George H. W. Bush when November was officially designated as the 'National American Indian Heritage Month.' Each subsequent president has issued a similar proclamation yearly. In addition, both President George W. Bush in 2008 and Obama in 2009 have signed legislation to designate the Friday after Thanksgiving Day of that year, 'Native American Heritage Day' (Bush in 2008 Sec. 3, 1; Obama in 2009 Sec. 3, 8-10).

Probably one of the most controversial events during the decades of our research is the opening of the National Museum of American Indian (NMAI) in New York in 1994 and its second facility in Washington in 2004, which depended on the Smithsonian Institution due to the *National Museum of the American Indian Act* of 1989. By this act, the Smithsonian was required to make an inventory of all the Indian objects it holds and to return them to the Indian tribes, especially those religious and funerary objects requested by the federally recognized tribe (Sec. 11). However, the fact that most of the objects and remains have not been identified and restored to the proper owners yet, and that the exhibitions and performances remarked the conquest of a culture preventing visitors from seeing the development of Native American culture throughout history and its current life, even though in its mission statement the opposite is stated, has risen some protests by Native Americans themselves (Buscombe 12-13; Huhndorf 199-202).

As we have seen so far, policies have been issued to reverse those termination and assimilation policies from the past towards policies that promote the integration within American society with a visible, lively and participatory Native American culture. In that proposal of visibility, an important aspect has been to honor and restore Native American memory to those military events like the so-called American-Indian Wars and to publicly acknowledge and recognize the Native American participation in the war effort, especially in World War I and II.

One of the events where it was necessary to honor Native Americans was in the monument of one of the most memorable and remembered battles in American military history, the Battle of Little Big Horn, also known as *Custer Last Stand*, where Custer and the 7th Cavalry were defeated by an Indian force of Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapaho in 1876. Named "National Cemetery of Custer's Battlefield Reservation" in 1886 and "Custer Battlefield National Monument" in 1946, it was finally renamed "Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument" in 1991 due to the bill signed by President George H. W. Bush, whose goal was to

> honor and recognize the Indians who fought to preserve their land and culture in the Battle of the Little Bighorn; to provide visitors with an improved understanding of the events leading up to and the consequences of the fateful battle, and to encourage peace among people of all races (Sec. 203).

Bill Clinton also honored Native Americans when in 1998 he signed the *Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site Preservation Act* of 1998 that proposed the site to go under the National Park system and as a place to honor Native Americans who lost their lives in the site (Sec. 2, 5). Later, in 2000, he designated the site of the Sand Creek Massacre as a national historic site to

recognize it as a symbol of Native American struggle in retaining their ways of life (Sec. 2, Purposes, 1B). The Historic Site was finally opened in 2007 during George W. Bush presidency.

As the twentieth century ended, it was also time to forget the traditional image of the Indian as the enemy of the US and acknowledging publicly the involvement of Native Americans and other minorities within the US army, especially in the two great wars of the twentieth century. Thus, in 1994 the National Museum of American Indian was requested by the *Native American Veterans' Memorial Establishment Act* to add a war memorial for Native American Veterans (Sec. 2, 6-7, Sec. 3 B). Curiously enough, in the act it was explicitly stated that the cost would be the responsibility of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) (Sec. 4, A). In 2013, during Barack Obama's presidency the act was amended to include the construction of the Memorial within the property of the Museum, to consult NCAI on the design and to make the NCAI and NMAI responsible of the cost (Sec, 3, C, Sec. 4, A).

Although Native Americans and their languages served during WWI and WWII to avoid the enemy's espionage of the Allies military strategies, their work was not recognized until the declassification of operations in late 1960s. The 'Code Talker', defined in the *Code Talkers Recognition Act* of 2008, is

> a Native American who served in the Armed Forces during a foreign conflict in which the United States was involved; and (B) transmitted (encoded and translated) secret coded messages for tactical military operations during World War I and World War II using their native tribal language (non-spontaneous communications) (Sec. 4).

In 1982, President Reagan certified the recognition of the US by designating August 14, 1982, as the 'National Navajo Code Talkers Day' (Proclamation 4594).

The recognition continued and the original twenty-nine Navajo Code Talkers were awarded the Congressional Gold Medals by President George W. Bush in 2001. The most well-known of those code talkers have been the Navajo Code Talkers although other thirteen Native Nations participated in the conflicts abroad. Thus, in 2008 by the *Code Talkers Recognition Act* of 2008 President George W. Bush recognized Native American code talkers who served in the United States military during WWI or WWII with a Congressional Gold Medal.

One of the features among the presidencies has been to extend tribal self-government and sovereignty, to improve education, and to settle land issues. For instance, in 1996 Bill Clinton signed the *Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act* (NAHASDA) that simplified the system by which Indians could apply for housing assistance. With this act, tribes were allocated a budget so they could manage themselves their funds according to their necessities, resulting in more autonomy and sovereignty over the use of funds.

Bill Clinton also signed the *Executive Order 13175 Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments* in 2000 by which tribal sovereignty was extended. This executive order required

> When undertaking to formulate and implement policies that have tribal implications, agencies shall: (1) encourage Indian tribes to develop their own policies to achieve program objectives; (2) where possible, defer to Indian tribes to establish standards; and (3) in determining whether to establish Federal standards, consult with tribal officials as to the need for Federal standards and any alternatives that would limit the scope of Federal standards or otherwise preserve the prerogatives and authority of Indian tribes (Section 3. Policymaking criteria)

If we have a look at the legislation passed throughout the last 25 years, most of it is related to land claims between the US government and the federally recognized tribes. Among the land claims, the most notorious is the claim over the Black Hills, *Pahá Sápa* in Lakota language. Although in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 the Black Hills were assigned to the Lakotas as part of the Sioux Reservation, the discovery of gold made the government of the time to take it back and relocate the Lakota to other territories to gain control of the Hills. A century after their dispossession, in the case *United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians* the United States Supreme Court ruled to award the Sioux nation $ 105 million in 1980 (Dunbar-Ortiz 208). Although the Lakota territory has been described as the poorest territory in US soil, the Sioux tribal council decided to reject collecting the money, which currently is $ 1.6b. This has been the origin of some disputes within the Lakotas as some members are against the decision of the Lakota council. In 2012, the UN through his advisor James Anaya[11] recommended the US government to return the land to the Lakotas, but the legal dispute is still on. Yet, the Blacks Hills and the Lakota tribe rejection of the money have become a symbol of resistance against white power (Dunbar-Ortiz 207-208).

The Obama administration enacted the *Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations*, especially after the *Cobell Settlement*[12] in 2009. The program has

> provided $1.9 billion to purchase fractional interests at fair market value within 10 years… More than $925 million has been paid to individual landowners and the equivalent of almost 1.7 million acres of land has been restored to Tribal governments. Returning fractionated lands to Tribes in

[11] http://unsr.jamesanaya.org/videos/un-probe-us-should-return-stolen-sacred-land-including-mt-rushmore-to-native-americans-interview-democracynow
[12] Cobell Settlement: https://goo.gl/ax2Xfa.

trust has enormous potential to improve Tribal community resources by increasing home site locations, improving transportation routes, spurring Tribal economic development, and preserving traditional cultural or ceremonial sites (2016 White House Tribal Nations Conference Progress Report 5).

In 2004, some amendments were done to the *Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act* of 1975, whereby the American Indian Education Foundation was renamed the 'National Fund for Excellence in American Indian Education.' In addition, President Bush signed *Executive Order 13336 American Indian and Alaska Native Education* in 2004. This executive order established a Working Group to know the conditions of Native American education and to work on the improvement of American Indian and Alaska Native students' abilities, in that way, they would meet the student academic standards of the *No Child Left Behind Act*[13] of 2001 while being compatible with their tribal traditions, languages and cultures. President Obama revoked this Executive Order and issued his own, *Executive Order 13592 Improving American Indian and Alaska Native Educational Opportunities and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities* in 2011 whose purpose was to encourage, increase, support and finance programs to guarantee native students educational opportunities and, at the same time, to secure their cultural, educational, and language needs (Sec. 3).

One of the main problems within Indian Federal Land has been jurisdiction and the enforcement of law between federal and tribal officers. To enhance tribal autonomy when prosecuting crime and criminals, Barack Obama signed the *Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010*, by which more authority is given to tribes to

[13] United States, Congress, House. *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, 107th Congress, 2001 https://goo.gl/cpUhwy. Accessed 19 July 2018.

prosecute and punish crime within Indian Country and to guarantee the collaboration and coordination between tribal officers, the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Sec. 2 Purposes, 1-6).

In terms of Native Americans – US relations, a step further was taken in April 1994 when President Bill Clinton invited tribal leaders to the White House for the first time since 1882. The main topics discussed during the meeting as announced by Clinton's speech[14] were government-to-government relationships, tribal sovereignty and religious practice. Indeed, two memorandums were published on the same day of the meeting where Clinton focused the use of eagle feathers in Native American ceremonies (Clinton "Eagles" a) and the government-to-government relationship as the basis for collaboration (Clinton "Government-to-Government" a – f).

During Obama's presidency eight conferences with Native Americans were held with a great variety of topics. This interest of President Obama was decisive in delivering his *Executive Order 13647 White House Council on Native Americans* (WHCNAA) in 2013, whose goals are

> (a) promoting sustainable economic development, particularly energy, transportation, housing, other infrastructure, entrepreneurial, and workforce development; (b) supporting greater access to, and control over, nutrition and healthcare; (c) supporting efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of tribal justice systems and protect tribal communities; (d) expanding and improving lifelong educational opportunities for American Indians and Alaska Natives, while respecting demands for greater tribal

[14] The complete speech can be read at https://goo.gl/K3osjP.

control over tribal education, (e) protecting tribal lands, environments, and natural resources, and promoting respect for tribal cultures (Section 1. Policy).

3.2. The Western and Frontier Mythology

As we have seen in chapter two in the development of the image of Native Americans throughout the history of cinema, a more sympathetic approach to Native American issues and images were being developed. In the last part of the twentieth century, multiculturalism took its toll in the movie industry apparently reflecting those changes in American society, which meant that movies needed to reflect those changes in terms of topics, icons and formats.

As we have already commented, the celebration of the arrival of Columbus brought back the attention to the past and how the US was formed. That was reflected in the cinema with an increasing number of movies dealing the past and the first (or last) encounters between the newcomers and the people already inhabiting the land. This genre, the Western, is not as popular as it was in the late 1940s – 1950s, every now and then, some Hollywood Western productions are released with a considerable amount of success at the box office and among the critics. For instance, at the beginning of the 1990s two of the most successful film were Westerns: *Dancing with Wolves* (1990), directed by Kevin Costner; and *Unforgiven* (1992), directed by the Western veteran Clint Eastwood. Focusing on the topic of this dissertation, the starting point of our research is the release of three movies, specifically dealing with Native Americans in the frontier: *Dances with Wolves* released in 1990, *The Last of the Mohicans* in 1992 and *Geronimo: An American Legend* in 1993.

Since in this part of the paper we are going to discuss mainly Westerns, it is necessary to provide a definition of what we understand by Western genre and analyze its formal elements. Then, we will have a frame from which we can draw our conclusions. Our basic elements to analyze and to define the Western will be the characters, the setting and topic. This triangle is vital as the different actions the characters carry out within a specific setting will affect the development of the topics in the plot of the films.

Robert Berkhofer Jr., in his classic book *The White Man's Indian* , not only completes a historiography of the development of the images of the Native American throughout History, but he also tracks the origin of the Western genre in literature, that he later applied to the development of the Wild West Shows of Bill Cody, and which later would become applicable to other artistic forms such as painting or photography before being adapted to the film industry especially in the first Western film shown on cinema, *The Great Train Robbery* in 1903. To Berkhofer, the main features of the Western are the setting and the costumes. Yet, he does not make any comment regarding the costumes part and just focuses on the setting, characters and actions within the genre. Thus, the setting is

> temporary isolation from the main part of White civilization by placing the story in a town, fort, or ranch removed from the rest of society on the frontier, with only a thin, easily broken link in the form of a trail, telegraph line, or railroad connecting the advance agents with the great body of White population that is to follow them (97).

That place "on the frontier of White expansion" (97), as Berkhofer describes it, is the clash of two opposing views, civilization and savagery, and that clash produces the conflict, which is the main topic in this genre (97). Thus, this clash

requires people who can fight out of social norms although those social institutions "are not far behind in space or time" (97).

Related to characters, Berkhofer divides the characters into three types. Firstly, those whose main feature is to represent civilization like the settlers or school teacher. Secondly, we have the Indians and the outlaws. The last type is the hero who is a mixture of the previous two types and who is usually divided between both (97). Besides, he is the mechanism of resolution of the conflict between those representing civilization and those representing savagery. The figure of the hero had also its own development from the first scout from Cooper's tales to the gunfighter hero. Two attributes are important in this figure: the horse, which implied movement; and the gun, which represents violence and fight not only with the villains but also with the landscape (97-98).

The enemies of the hero are either the white villains or the Indians. The white villains have no sense of justice or civilization who flew to the West in search of their own justice. On the contrary, the Indians may have two different conceptions. On the one hand, the bloody-thirsty Savage who just represents an obstacle for civilization and whose acts can be identified as revenge or madness against white. On the other hand, they can be the Noble Indian who is a friend of the hero and helps him fight against the 'bad' guys in the plot. As Berkhofer comments, no matter which side of the Indian is represented "he was the master of the wilderness and possessor of physical prowess and/or crafty wisdom" (98). Either way, the plot does not center on the figure of the Indian, whose culture and ways of life are hidden, but around the hero's values and culture. Then, the Indian is just a background element who either vanished at the end or is a threat, transforming into a vehicle by which the hero shows his superiority. Indeed, due

to this form of representation, the Indian does not symbolize any critique against American society and culture and the way the nation was formed (Berkhofer 98).

The first sentence in Jim Kitses' article "Authorship and Genre: Notes on the Western" included in the 1998 version of his *The Western Reader* is "The Western is American history" (Kitses 57). In this article, he mentions Henry Nash Smith and his work *Virgin Land* where Smith comments on how the West has been become a synonym for American history (Kitses 58), especially because it represents an ambiguous set of binary contradictions between wilderness and civilization such Individual vs. Community; Nature vs. Culture; West vs. East (Kitses 59). These conflicts together with the isolation within an immense territory, the slow development of society or the religious meaning of good and evil and the open opportunities for people made the Western, first in literature and later in film, the best "expressive canvas" (60). As he explains, the main focus of Westerns is the idea of the West and the life of the frontier between 1865 and 1890 although "within just its span we can count a number of frontiers in the sudden rash of mining camps, the building of the railways, the Indian Wars, the cattle drives, the coming of the farmer" (57).

Kitses argues that the Western is the result of the relationship among four different aspects (67). The first one is *History*, as the genre is basically about America's past. The second aspect is *Themes*, which derives from the depiction of the past and the contradictions from which specific situations and characters emerged. The third aspect is *Archetype*, by which the Western incorporates elements from other genres. The last aspect Kitses mentions is *Icons* a special iconography of the genre in terms of characters or topics will be created. To Kitses, the filmmaker's skills and proficiency of these aspects in giving them a

specific form must match the audience's expectation in terms of characters, actions and landscape (68).

However, it is John Cawelti in his book *The Six-Gun Mystique Sequel* who provides us with a more formal study of the Western and its main features. In fact, in his analysis of the Western genre he divides the definition of the Western genre into three patterns: the setting, the characters and the actions.

To Cawelti, the most important aspect is the setting. In this case, the Western is defined by its geographical and time reference. Thus, the Western is the story taking place around the frontier in the past (20). This frontier is related to the concept of the frontier that Frederick Jackson Turner explained in his speech *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* during the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. According to him, the history of America is the colonization of the West,

> the frontier is the outer edge of the wave –the meeting point between savagery and civilization… The most significant thing about the American frontier is, that it lies at the hither edge of free land… The frontier is the line of most rapid and effective Americanization. The wilderness masters the colonist… He must accept the conditions which it furnishes, or perish, and so he fits himself into the Indian clearings and follows the Indian trails. Little by little he transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe, not simply the development of Germanic germs, any more than the first phenomenon was a case of reversion to the Germanic mark. The fact is, that here is a new product that is American. At first, the frontier was the Atlantic coast. It was the frontier of Europe in a very real sense. Moving westward, the frontier became more and more American. (Chapter 1).

In a similar way, Richard Slotkin in *The Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in the Twentieth-Century American* (1998) where he carries out a thorough study of the evolution of the myth of the frontier in American history, recalls the use of the Frontier Myth as the "achievement of national identity, a democratic polity, and ever-expanding economy, and a dynamic and progressive civilization" (10). Obviously, that expansion in the name of progress meant that conflict and violence, with the Indians and with the European mother countries are also significant features. However,

> the myth represented the redemption of American spirit or fortune as something to be achieved by playing through a scenario of separation, temporary regression to a more primitive or "natural" state and *regeneration through violence* (12).

Yet, Richard Slotkin recognizes that the Myth of the Frontier has already been out of fashion as ideology as new cultural and racial movements and younger generations do not find any fascination in that historical moment and tend to seek more significant symbols to them (642).

In films, this frontier and the movement westward had a significant importance as it is the place where the most conflicts are set. In this meeting of savagery and civilization, the Native Americans seem to play a crucial role however, as Cawelti argues, the presence of Native Americans did not represent a threat or a choice as their presence was already diminished instead they are "occasions for actions rather than as symbols of opposing values" (21), that is, they are the cause for violent conflicts. These conflicts took place at a relatively brief period of time, yet this phase in history has been forged as the crucial stage of American History. To explain why, Cawelti claims that the West is the last resort of some traditional values personalized in the hero (23). In addition,

geographically, the landscape of the West as an open, arid and isolated area fits visually into the clash between savagery and civilization and the development and regeneration of the different characters and their conflicts (23-24). Therefore, there is no question that the visual aspects of the landscape could be adapted into cinema (26).

Although Berkhofer also mentioned costume as an integral part of Westerns, he did not develop it apart from mentioning the gun and the horse. By contrast, Cawelti points out some features in the costumes that identify the characters, especially the hero, as a way of reflecting the difference between the characters and their relationship with the setting. Thus, the costumes of the characters who represent the civilization force must be accurate with their function: suits for men and dress for women, whose main feature is the "non-utilitarian artificiality" of these costumes (28). However, the hero and the villain (either Indian or outlaw) go hand-in-hand with the environment where they move. Their main features are utility with a mixture of elegance but combining "naturalness and artifice" (28). However, the hero's costume must reflect his intermediary role between the savage forces and the civilizing forces but it must be functional and practical as he is in constant move around the landscape, yet, the costume must resemble at some point a more civilized tone to differentiate him from the savage forces (27-29).

In terms of characters, Cawelti differentiates three types of characters: the civilized forces usually represented by the townspeople; the savages or outlaws, who pose a threat to the first group; and the heroes, who are basically an amalgamation of the first two groups of characters (29-31). The different relationships in which these characters entangle will define the plot of the Western. The first group, the townspeople, can as well be divided into three

subgroups. Firstly, the pioneers, including women, who represent the traditional American values of honor and virtue but are unable to fight on their own against savagery, and whose main goal is to tame savagery and impose a new society (30-31). Secondly, those outside society who escape from the East to start all over again (32) and, lastly, those representing the bad features of civilization who are driven by money, financial interest and greed -bankers, ranchers or railroad agents (33).

The other side of the triangle of characters within the Western is the Savage. This character, as Cawelti affirms, shows some ambiguity as, on the one hand, they represent violence and the origin of conflicts with the settlers (34). Yet, they also represent some positive traits that will be destroyed with civilization. Either way, the Indian is disappearing, and this is the reason why some twentieth century Westerns especially with the revisionist trend take a nostalgic look at their way of life (34). In addition, depending on the closeness to the hero, the savage will be reflected in a more positive light as he shares some qualities with the hero.

The person who is in the middle of the two previous types of characters is the hero, by far the most complex character, as he is an amalgamation of the two. According to Cawelti, he struggles between the values and code of the wilderness and the civilization is his main feature (36). His fight between his individuality against the code and rules of society he needs to protect from the forces of the uncivilized, outlaws or greedy settlers, make him an outsider from both settings. Thus, he does not completely belong to the wilderness neither he wants to be restrained by the rigid norms of civilization, what makes him remain apart from it (36-38).

His costume features consist of the horse, which gives him freedom of movement, and the gun (38). In some Westerns, he is also associated with cattle, which symbolizes traditional values of society and provides a nostalgic look since that traditional way of life is about to disappear with the advancement of civilization (38). On the other hand, the gun symbolizes violence and struggle with the forces of wilderness and masculinity. Indeed, the final act that symbolizes that struggle is the duel with the villains, either Indians or outlaws. Yet, his acts of violence with the gun are not voluntary acts in the sense that he is an unwilling killer and only acts when he is obliged to (Cawelti 41). This represents one of the main differences between savages and the hero. In the stories, the savages seem to enjoy blood and they commit acts of slaughter as lustful events in their ways of life. On the contrary, the hero offers "a sense of moral significance and order to violence" (Cawelti 41), thus, his violent acts seem to be justified as a response to an attack on him and the people he is likely to defend. However, that violence is not shown as vivid and disturbing as the one enacted by the savage (Cawelti 41).

Slotkin also affirms that the hero is the embodiment of all contradictions of society and he is the simple and personal representation of the frontier and its conflicts (13-14). As the frontier is divided into dualities, or borders, as Slotkin calls them, the hero "must cross the border into 'Indian country' and experience a 'regression' to a more primitive and natural condition of life" (14) to create a new social order. Although the hero and the Indian are constructed as enemies or opposites, the hero must absorb the knowledge of the wilderness that is the Indian to be able to fight with him. Thus, the "man who knows Indians" (14) became the most effective weapon to destroy savagery, which creates inner

conflicts within the hero, as he is going to help destroy what gave him space and freedom out of social order.

Although Berkhofer, Kitses and Cawelti recognized in their writings the centrality of the myth of the West in national mind and identity, Kitses, Cawelti or even Slotkin, also recognized how the Western has changed throughout history to adapt to a more pluralistic society, especially since the New Western History approach and the revisionism. For instance, Kitses in his article "Post-modernism and the Western" in 1998 acknowledges how the Western does not longer "occupy a central place" (16) as the world it symbolizes, masculine, white and individual, does not match current society. Yet, he claims that Western is still alive but now it is defined in racial and gender terms. Indeed, some of the icons of the genre have been transferred to other genres (17). Thus, revisionism and its obsession to dismantle the genre and to make it adapt to new social and historical stages still need the Western code and its elements and icons in order to produce new types of Western that respond to a new society: elegiac Western, gothic Western (18).

This idea was also researched by Armando Jose Prats in his book *Invisible Natives: Myth & Identity in the American Western* (2002), where he widely explains and dismantles the revisionist trend explaining the failure of the revisionist movement from a racial and cultural point of view. He defines revisionism as

> a near-doctrinal system of iconography and ideology, of narrative tropes and generic types, that articulates the *reaction against* the Myth of Conquest ...Revisionism requires the Myth of Conquest... Revisionism does not so much break with the Indian Western as it engages it dialectically. Revisionism, then, is the Indian Western's supplementary ideology, and the solitary consciousness (and conscience) that labors for a figure of the true

> Indian is but one of its abidingly seductive illusions. Revisionism's implied motives and unanticipated consequences often obscure its stated claims and supersede, perhaps even subvert, both its apologia for the Indian and its polemic against the conqueror (127).

Therefore, we can assume that revisionism will produce new images that are more in agreement with the new social reality and, consequently, it will require a new language and new view of the myth of the frontier and the conquest i.e., viewers will have a new set of images, a new ideology and new archetypes will be created out of this mixed act of nostalgia, guilt, and a longing to present a historical truth.

Richard Slotkin claims the Myth of Conquest and the Frontier do not have meaning anymore within current society especially since the 1890s frontier is no longer viewed as a monolithic ideology and the origin of national identity and history:

> We are in a 'liminal' moment of our cultural history. We are in the process of giving up a myth/ideology that no longer helps us see our way through the modern world, but lack of comparably authoritative system of beliefs to replace what we have lost… We require a myth that can help us make sense of the history we have lived and the place we are living in… The traditional Myth of the Frontier was exclusionist in its premises, idealizing the white male adventurer as the hero of national history. … Historical memory will have to be revised, not to invent an imaginary role for supposedly marginal minorities, but to register the fact that our history in the West and in the East, was shaped from the beginning by the meeting, conversation, and mutual adaptation of different cultures (654-655).

This final multicultural approach Slotkin mentions is also developed by the New Western Historians with Patricia Limerick, among others, in its lead role with her work *The Legacy of Conquest* (1987). In this book, Limerick challenges Turner's idea of the frontier as the unique element in the process of Americanness as the process of conquest was not unique in the region of the West; on the contrary, it took place in other areas of the nation and other parts of the world. Indeed, she claims the boundaries of the Western frontier are somehow unclear (26). For her, the most important feature is that the West "was an important meeting ground" between different cultures and that "the conquest tied diverse groups into the same story" where both "minorities and majorities occupied a common ground" and, yet, where "the pursuit of legitimacy in property overlapped with the pursuit of legitimacy in way of life and point of view" (27).

This new approach to Western History in the 1980s, together with the countercultural movements in the 1960s-1970s, the appearance of Native American political movements and literary works, and new scholarly research on Westerns made this myth of the frontier to be re-considered. Thus, the myth has gone through "a process of transformation, deconstruction and re-mythologizing" into a parody of Western or the creation of a Post-Western era (Cawelti 101-102).

Although Cawelti mentions how Phillip French designated Post-Westerns as westerns set in current America, Cawelti argues that the term acquired a new meaning and new forms in the 1990s (102). One of the changes he reflects on is the foreign projection of the Western as a "mythic terrain or territory" (103) and the acquisition of new contexts. Yet, the most significant changes have taken place in the plots. For instance, in this new Western we encounter stories that deal with the last moments of the Wild West or the hero's final moments in the West. We

also have stories that treat Native Americans from a more positive and complex point of view or stories in which the hero reviews critically some of the myths associated with the Western. Finally, we find stories that are set in current locations or current society that use Western symbols and topics (103).

3.3. Setting and Plot

As we have seen, the formal aspects and the development of the Western genre depend on the relation between three distinctive elements: setting, the characters and the plots. The setting influences the way the characters move and behave around that setting and the way they relate to other characters, to themselves and to the own setting. In addition, different characters relate to each other in different ways around that setting and that creates different conflicts, relationships or plots.

Although we talked and discussed the Myth of the Frontier and its features when we were defining the formal aspects of the Western, it is also necessary to add another interpretation of the frontier or the space in which the characters move. In his book *Invisible Natives*, Armando José Prats establishes three ways in which the Indian is presented in Westerns: the first one is through fragments or portions of Indian culture, i.e., the Indians are a literary synecdoche; the second one is through the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other'; and, lastly, through the voice-over narration of a white character ("Invisible" 10-12).

Our focus is the space where the characters move around, especially the Indian in relation to other characters in the film. Traditionally, the Myth of Conquest has placed the Indian "at the periphery of the contested terrain [...], where he is least visible", thus converting the land in the defining element of

identity (74). Thus, the presence of the Indian helps identify the space in which the white settlers move. The 'Spaces of the Same' are characterized by the ideas of possession and dominion of the land and the inhabitants. Then, the Indian must be removed so the whites are able to fulfill their Manifest Destiny, i.e., by taming and possessing the land and by driving Indians out of their space, settlers can fulfill their role in social order and progress. Indeed, not only are they defining the space they inhabit, but also the boundary where the Indian is going to be located. Thus, the 'Spaces of the Same' are culturally defined spaces where identity is provided (78-81). As we know, the whites defined themselves in terms of what they were not in comparison with the Indians.

However, to remain the 'Spaces of the Same', it is necessary to define where 'the Other' is going to be located (82-85). To Prats, the 'Spaces of the Other' are located at the margins of the space owned by white settlers. Indeed, it is "the space of savage spectacle" (84); it represents the justification of the violence that belongs to the Myth of Conquest. Therefore, this location is a requirement of the 'Spaces of the Same'; without it, the Myth of Conquest cannot be built or justified, i.e., it requires the savage border (84). Yet, once the Indian is vanished, as it is usually the topic in the Western, the 'Spaces of the Same' cease to have boundaries (88).

If we have a look at the movies we are going to analyze in this part, we can divide the movies in three groups. The first group is composed by those films that are set at the time of early contacts between settlers and Native Americans in the establishment of the first colonies during 1600s, in which the clash of civilizations was deeper as the first contacts are those of observation, misunderstandings, learning and conflicts. These are not purely Westerns; yet, we have included them

as their features, storyline and the location are very similar to the characteristics of Western.

The second group is composed of the movies that are set in the traditional time of the Myth of the Frontier, 1850s-1890s (Churchill "Fantasies" 168; Kitses "Authorship" 57), when the clash of two civilization was in decline as the last wars with Indians were about to end and the advancement of white civilization was a fact. As we said in our introduction, we chose three key movies as the starting point of our research especially because they are produced right before and after the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival to the new continent. The exception in this group is obviously *The Last of the Mohicans,* which is set around 1760s; yet, we decided to include it in this group as it is one of the three key films of our research. Finally, the third group is composed by films that are outside the 'official' years we mentioned at the beginning and that are marked as a transition period between the frontier years and the depiction of Native Americans in current America. We decided to include these movies in this chapter being conscious that the year-span is out of the frontier years (early 1900s to the 1930s). However, we consider that the plots, the iconography and the setting outside society are very close to those formal aspects and format from traditional Western.

To help with the distribution of the movies and their time references, we strongly believe that a chart including the time of production and release and the year of the action in the plot[15] is necessary to understand the progression of the genre and the progression of the characters' depiction.

[15] The year of action has been as accurate as possible taking into account the information included within the plot or the reviews of the films.

YEAR PRODUCTION	ORIGINAL TITLE	YEAR ACTION
1990	*Dances with Wolves*	1863
1991	*White Fang 1*	Late 1800s
1992	*The Last of the Mohicans*	1757
1993	*Where the Rivers Flow North*	1927
1993	*Silent Tongue*	1873
1993	*Geronimo: An American Legend*	1886
1994	*Maverick*	Old West
1994	*Squanto: A Warrior's Tale*	1620
1994	*Wagon's East*	1860
1994	*White Fang 2: Myth of the White Wolf*	Late 1800s
1994	*Legends of the Fall*	Early 1900s
1995	*The Scarlet Letter*	1666
1995	*Pocahontas*	1620s
1995	*Dead Man*	1850
1997	*The Education of Little Tree*	1930s
2000	*The Patriot*	1776
2002	*Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron*	Late 1800's
2003	*The Missing*	1885
2003	*The Last Samurai*	1870
2004	*Hidalgo*	1890
2005	*Miracle at Sage Creek*	1888
2005	*The New World*	1607
2006	*Seraphim Falls*	1860
2007	*Pathfinder*	Tenth century
2007	*3:10 to Yuma*	Late 1800s
2007	*September Dawn*	1857
2008	*The Burrowers*	1879
2010	*Meek's Cutoff*	1845
2011	*Cowboys and Aliens*	1873
2011	*The Legend of Hell's Gate: An American Conspiracy*	1870
2011	*Yellow Rock*	1880
2013	*Alone Yet not Alone*	1755
2013	*The Lone Ranger*	1850s
2014	*A Million Ways to Die in the West*	1882
2015	*Bone Tomahawk*	1890s
2015	*The Revenant*	1823

3. 3. 1. Early Years of Contact

In recent years, there have been more attempts to explore Native American presence out of the 1850s-1890s frontier years, and filmmakers focused more on the first contacts between settlers and Indians. Yet, the focus has been on some stories that are so engraved in American folklore and society that it is impossible for the filmmaker to escape from preconceived ideas. Two of them are Disney's movies *Pocahontas* (1995) and *Squanto: A Warrior's Tale* (1994). The topic of Pocahontas is dealt with once again in Terrence Malick's *The New World* (2005). Around this time, we also find Roland Joffe's version of Hawthorne's classic *The Scarlet Letter* (1995), and finally, we have *Pathfinder* (2007), which is probably the earliest depiction of Native Americans in the recent history of filmmaking in the US as it is set four centuries before Christopher Columbus' arrival. Similar to *The Last of the Mohicans*, we find *Alone not Yet Alone* (2013). The most recent production is *The Revenant* (2015), which marks the end of our dates of research. The common feature of these films is that they all break with the archetype of the frontier life in the Plains or in the West. All of them are set in the East following James Fenimore Cooper's setting of the woods.

According to the film, *Pathfinder* is set 400 years before the arrival of Columbus to the American continent when a torn Viking ship is discovered by a native woman. Next to the ship, she finds a child as the only survivor. Naming him Ghost, the child goes to live with the tribe although he is never fully accepted within the tribe, even being expelled from the tribal warrior instruction. However, when his fellow Vikings come back years later destroying his tribal village and the people he loves, he sets off on his personal journey to be a native warrior by fighting the Vikings, saving other natives and conquering the love of the daughter

of the real Pathfinder, who becomes the Pathfinder after his father's death. Ghost's journey through the territory overcomes his personal frontier as he is accepted as a warrior after his victory.

The real first encounters between civilizations are tackled with the stories of Pocahontas and Squanto. Who has not heard about the story of the rescue of John Smith by the princess Pocahontas or the story of the celebration of the first Thanksgiving with Squanto? These tales are so engraved in the American mind that there is no wonder Disney ventured to transform it into tools of mass consumption, especially with Pocahontas, whose marketing campaign with songs and several products coped the market the year the movie was released.

Pocahontas tells the peaceful encounter between Pocahontas and John Smith, which turns into a conflict when the groups they belong to interfere in the story. Challenging her father's orders to stay away from the English, Pocahontas meets John Smith, who, at the same time, disobeys Gov. Ratcliff in their search for gold. An unfortunate event which resulted in the death of Pocahontas' native fiancée leaves John Smith as a captive of the Powhatan and his people. Pocahontas saves John Smith but she cannot avoid Ratcliffe's attempt to murder her father. John Smith gets injured while saving Powhatan and needs to go back to England to heal his wounds. Both characters live in their own personal frontier, as they need to struggle within their own civilization and the frontier between both civilizations, which is marked by their different approach to issues such as nature, property, respect for the other and honor. Although we may think that the 'Spaces of the Same' or the 'Spaces of the Other' are not clearly constructed, as the action takes place at the very beginning of the encounter, we see how these clear and differentiated spaces are constructed with two key actions: the building

of the fort by whites ripping out Nature, and Powhatan's prohibition to his tribe of coming closer to the English people.

Squanto's story is "a highly imaginary version of the first contacts between Native Americans and early settlers from England" (Ebert "Squanto"). Set around the foundation of Plymouth, Squanto sees how after an initial collaboration with the English settlers, he and some of his fellow men are taken captive and sent to England where they are treated brutally and considered a spectacle for the English to enjoy. Squanto escapes but ends up in a monastery where one of the monks teaches him English in exchange of his views of his native world. As the English nobleman who brought him to England keeps on hunting him, Squanto manages to escape violently again and ships on a boat bound for America. Arriving at his own land, he discovers how his world has been destroyed and his people have been wiped out by illnesses brought by the English. Although the battle between both civilizations is about to hit off, Squanto manages to settle down the issues and helps the Puritans to establish and celebrate their first Thanksgiving together.

In relation to the definition of the spaces, on the one hand, land has no clear division between spaces at the very beginning. On the other hand, especially in the second part of the film, both the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' are clearly differentiated. Obviously, this clear difference is a consequence of the transformation that was taking place in the country, which meant the change in the view of the Indian, from ally or helper in the first part of film, to the enemy in the second part.

The truth is that these encounters of Pocahontas and Squanto are historically inaccurate; not only in the characters but also in the stories that the clash of civilizations, which resulted in the extermination of millions of Native

Americans, the stealing of land and the advancement of white civilization have left a whitened-out version of the Conquest. History and its real consequences have been 'Disneyfied' to offer another cultural commodity and leaving the history as history, i.e., in the past. Steven Mintz, when analyzing *Pocahontas*, establishes five psychological mechanisms by which we can avoid the real meaning and consequences of our collective past (367). The first mechanism is the use of screen memories. These screen memories are childhood memories, usually false and exaggerated, that masked other more significant memories (367). For instance, the rescue of John Smith by Pocahontas. Historians do not agree on the event as Smith was known for the exaggeration of his stories. The second mechanism is splitting. What this mechanism does is to split reality into opposites, such as the dual image of Native Americans either as Bloody-Thirsty or as Noble (369). The third one is displacement or projection, by which current issues or topics are projected into a figure from the past creating a distance between the audience and the historical past, such as the topics of environmental damages or racial relationships in *Pocahontas* or *Dances with Wolves* (369). The fourth mechanism is called transference, by which "certain emotions and desires are inappropriately shifted elsewhere" (369), such as the conquered authorizing the conquest. The last mechanism is depersonalization, by which some events and issues are described as unavoidable, so issues such as guilt, or blame are not thoroughly researched or even discussed. Yet, Mintz argues that "Native Americans were active agents [...]through negotiation, physical resistance, and cultural adaptation" (369-370).

The story of Pocahontas was filmed again in 2005 with Terrence Malick's *The New World*. Malick, contrary to the Disney versions (including the direct-to-video cartoons sequel), does not disguise the characters and their actions.

Pocahontas and his people are estranged; indeed, she is obliged to live with the English where she is supposedly being instructed as a woman and where she meets John Rolfe, her future husband, before going to England to meet the King. Meanwhile, John Smith is a prisoner at their arrival to the new world. Afterwards, he lies to Pocahontas on his death and never completely understands the Native ways of life.

The movie focuses on the difference between the two civilizations standing shocked for their mutual encounter: the English for the magnificent Nature and its inhabitants; and the Natives for the curiosity of meeting people coming from the sea. As David Sterrit mentions, the way Nature is depicted by Malick emphasizes their cultural differences. The main feature of Nature is "timeless harmony", whose main representative is Native Americans. On the contrary, in white civilization, Nature is depicted as a "taming and harnessing" element whose goal is to "accomplish humanly determined goals" (b12-b13).

The encounter between two civilizations is filmed as we supposed any encounter would be: surprise, observation, misunderstanding, and finally conflict. Language is another frontier the characters need to fight against to mutual comprehension. As Rogert Ebert says, "there are two new worlds in this film, the one the English discover, and the one Pocahontas discovers. Both discoveries center on the word 'new'" (Ebert "New World"). The clash between the two new worlds are shown specially in two different events, each of them taking place at each side of the Atlantic and reflecting quite clearly the difference between the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other'. The first involves Smith's captivity in Pocahontas' town, where he witnesses an incomprehensible ritual of death. The other event is Pocahontas' walk, dressed in the English manner, around King James' court. Although both characters seem to praise the

other culture at some point, their experience in these events make them aware of a culture that is not their own (Tobin 44-45).

The last film belonging to these primary encounters between the two civilizations is Roland Joffe's *The Scarlet Letter*. Hester Prynne, a Puritan woman, arrives at Massachusetts Bay Colony to establish herself and her husband. Astonished and bewildered by her independence and intelligence, Hester is quicktly targeted by the community because of her acquaintance with other outside members of society. Indeed, the development of her hidden romance with Rev. Dimmesdale and her pregnancy isolates her even more. Her husband arrives in the moment she is sentenced to wear a scarlet "A" for adultery and ostracized by her community. In her husband's mind there is only revenge to amend his public disgrace, which leads him to accuse her and other women of witchcraft. To accentuate more the conflict within society, Roger Prynne scalps and kills a man thinking it was Hester's lover to accuse the Algonquian of the murder, what causes the settlers to break the truce with the Indians. In the middle of these chaotic events, Hester and other women in the scaffolding are about to be hanged when Dimmesdale confesses publicly his sins. At the same time, the Indian attack starts, providing Hester, Dimmesdale and their daughter, Pearl, the perfect opportunity to flee for Carolina, as the final voice-over narration informs us.

The 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' are clearly defined in the movie. The beginning of the movie starts in the 'Spaces of the Other', in the funeral of chief Massasoit[16] and the threats of his son to the peace. Rev.

[16] During the movie, he asserts his dream of building "a bridge between English and Indians". Yet, he adopts a colonialist attitude when he claims that Johnny, the assimilated Indian living in the town, that "he will never betray us".

Dimmesdale is present to calm the Indians and to negotiate a truce. This threat of war provides us with historical information as it represents a phase in the so-called King Phillip's War, which took place historically in the 1670s, the time depicted in the movie, although Hawthorne's book was set in the 1640s (Lepore 1167). We also see conflict and violence, features of the Western and frontier experience, in the Indian attack to an English ship where Hester's husband is travelling. He is taken captive and adopted momentarily by the tribe until he becomes too Indian for the Indians and he is sent back to civilization. If at the beginning of the movie we see Dimmesdale in the 'Spaces of the Other', we also see assimilated Indians like Johnny, who even teaches English, in the 'Spaces of the Same'. As he is living in the 'Spaces of the Same', his attire and manners resemble those of the white community, marking him as the Noble Indian type. Yet, the only act of savagery in the 'Spaces of the Same' is committed by Hester's husband, once he is back from his captivity. He scalps and kills a man during the Indian attack thinking it was Hester's lover. For the townspeople this is a sign for the imminent attack by the Indians, which, in fact, coincides with Dimmesdale's confession of his love for Hester.

Alone not Yet Alone (2013) shares with *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992) not only part of the imagery and plot, but also the setting in the woods of upstate New York reflecting James Fenimore Cooper's atmosphere. The film deals with the abduction of the sisters Barbara and Regina Leininger by Indians and their adoption and adaptation to the Indian ways and life.

In terms of setting, the forest is at times a refuge to hide from the enemy at times and family life and progress (the 'Spaces of the Same'); and some other times, it reflects the wicked nature of the wilderness which hides the perils and the Others, the Indians (the 'Spaces of the Other') their natural habitat. Yet, the

magnificent beauty of the environment of the frontier is always emphasized as no matter how harsh it is, it needs to have a positive tone since it is the most significant and defining element in the film. In this sense, both the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' seem to be intertwined as both presents danger and refuge for the characters.

Similarly, *The Revenant* (2015) is away from the traditional image of the desert and the Mythical Frontier. Hugh Glass, the main protagonist, is a fur trapper in the woods who is attacked by a bear and witnesses how his half-breed son, Hawk, is killed by Fitzgerald, one of the members of the trapper crew. Thinking he is about to die, Glass is left behind by his companions. Glass' only mission and reason to live is to revenge his son's murder, thus, he uses all the resources available such as Nature and Indians to get to Fort Kiowa. Most of the film takes place in what Prats call the 'Spaces of the Other'. These are open-spaces such as the forest, the river, the mountains and the woods, i.e., Nature in general. These places are the symbol of violence and death, in fact in the film, the recurrent images of death, rape, violence and corrupted individuals emphasize this image. Yet, these spaces also reflect survival for Glass. Due to the encounter with 'natural inhabitants' of open spaces like the Indians, animals and forest, he can survive with his only mission of revenging Hawk's death. Thus, the 'Spaces of the Other' although outside society and social order brings justice to the hero as he is governed by the Law of Nature. Furthermore, it would be unnatural that the action and resolution of the plot is resolved by the Law of Humans.

We could say that the 'Spaces of the Same' are represented by Fort Kiowa where law and civilization lies. Yet, Fort Kiowa is not an ordered place as Henry, the chief of the expedition is lied and disobeyed. Civilization is scarce as the only inhabitants seem to be soldiers. Indeed, we see more people, Indians, living just

outside the fort who may seem to look for protection. Furthermore, Fort Kiowa is just a step in the journey back to the 'Spaces of the Other' for Glass and Henry, who set up on a trip to track Fitzgerald down once again.

3. 3. 2. The Frontier Years 1850s-1890s

Our starting point of this section is our first key film *Dances with Wolves* (1990), directed by Kevin Costner. The film, also starred by Costner, tells us the story of Lt. Dunbar. After a suicidal attempt in the battlefield around 1863, he is stationed, at his own request, in the frontier "before it is gone" as he claims. With the solely companion of a wolf, he discovers his neighbors, a Lakota tribe, with whom he entangles in a friendly relationship, learning the culture and language. He is assisted by Stand-with-A-Fist, a white woman raised by the tribe, whom he finally marries. Soon after their wedding, the army gets back to his post where Dunbar is retained and accused of sedition. Released by his Lakota friends, he and Stand-with-A-Fist decide to leave to save their native friends so they could talk "to those who would listen".

Although the movie starts in the battlefield, the action soon moves to the frontier, in the ultimate post of civilization. However, the sentence Dunbar pronounces "before it's gone" ("Dances with Wolves" 00:15:09) already marks the setting where the action takes place: the open prairies of the Plains where the vast landscape seems to be a character on its own. Yet, the clash of civilizations Turner explained in his speech does not take place as Dunbar is the only white man in the area. Timmons, the person who takes him to the military post, was killed on his way back to civilization and the white hunters who massacred the buffalo herd

were supposedly scalped[17] by the Lakota. Yet, the encounter between both civilizations, although the only white representing the civilization is Dunbar, transforms Dunbar into a new man due to the knowledge and teachings of the Lakota and, somehow, agrees with Turner's thesis of the result of a "new product that is American" (Chapter 1). However, that setting is already vanishing like the Indian characters. The sudden appearance of the soldiers at the fort makes Dunbar and his Lakota friends realize that their time is coming to an end. Besides, Dunbar does not remain in the frontier once his identity has been confirmed but he goes back to civilization. Taking Prats notions of the 'Spaces of the Same' and 'Spaces of the Other', Dunbar continuously switches from one to the other depending on his personal issues, although his final trip to civilization marks his belonging to the 'Spaces of the Same'.

The setting of *Geronimo: An American Legend* (1993) is the dry desert where we witness Geronimo's chase and final surrender to Lt. Gatewood in 1886. The plots centers on the relationship between the different people involved in the capture of Geronimo and their opposite views and behavior toward Geronimo, the tensions around its capture and the final trip of Geronimo outside the frontier (the 'Spaces of the Other'). The line that joins the plot, the characters and the actions is the voice-over narration of Britton Davis, the young soldier whose views are offered throughout the whole movie. The setting, the dry, harsh and inhospitable desert, reflects the character of the chase of Geronimo: long, difficult and only apt for high-skilled people. Although the whole action takes place within the desert area (Geronimo's space or the 'Spaces of the Other'), we also witness

[17] In the extended version, there is a scene where the Lakota tribe are feasting and Dunbar clearly sees the scalps of White people and states his difference with the Lakota, in fact, he decides to stay away from the festivities. In the theatrical release, this part of the scalps was deleted although part of the festivities are shown.

briefly Geronimo's life in a second environment: the reservation. Yet, this 'garden' for Apaches to embrace white civilization although apparently regarded as positive to white standards, it is quite the opposite for Geronimo, who finds himself enclosed and disappointed by the conditions within the reservation (from 'Spaces of the Other' to an intermediary 'Spaces of the Same'), and thus, he finally flees with some of his warriors to an environment where he can move freely and act accordingly ('Spaces of the Other').

In these two films, the Native Americans are fighting their last battles knowing that the time has come for them to leave. Thus, Kicking Bird in *Dances* asks repeatedly about the white's coming to Dunbar while Geronimo has a vision of an iron horse, which he misinterprets as their victory over white civilization. However, that vision is his final destination, he and the remnant Apaches are taken in an iron horse, the train symbol of their defeat at the hands of white civilization, to his final destination.

In *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), the action and setting are set in 1757 with the background of the conflict between the British Empire and France for the control of the Northern regions of current upstate New York. In this case, the setting and the action takes place almost a hundred years before our established years; yet, it is the struggle between civilizations what is at stake in this film. If in Costner's production the setting was the Great Plains, in this movie the action takes place in the forest. Based on James Fenimore Cooper's novel but with some changes in the plot, the setting reflects Cooper's landscape with its clearings and dark spaces, reflecting Native Americans characters in the story. The Noble and Good Native Americans move around the clearings while the Savage ones will move around darkness. The protagonists of the film, Hawkeye, Uncas and Chingachgook, the last members of the Mohican nation, are caught in the middle

of the military conflict between foreign nations when they rescue some British officers ambushed by Hurons. The Hurons are allies of France and are led by Magua, whose only purpose in the plot is to kill British Gen. Monroe to avenge his own family loss. Yet, the conflicts and the different events take place outside any civilization post where different civilizations fight for their survival (Native Americans) and for the possession of land (British and French armies). However, Hawkeye's love for Cora, Gen. Monroe's daughter, makes Indians move constantly around the 'Spaces of the Same' and 'Spaces of the Other' in order to cope with their identities. The final scene at the top of the mountain has been analyzed in terms of the new colonial identities substituting the 'Spaces of the Other' for the 'Spaces of the Same' (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 13; Marubbio "Celebrating" 147; Rinne 19).

These three key productions released at the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century will spark the production of films with a similar setting and/or plots, the frontier and the adventures and dramas of the characters within the frontier in the following years. Yet, this spark was not only initiated on films released in theaters across the country, but also in TV movies or series, where we can find examples such as *Lonesome Dove* (1989), *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman* (1993); or more recent productions, such as HBO's *Deadwood* (2004) or *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (2007), TNT's *Into the West* (2005) or CBS' *Comanche Moon* (2008).

The frontier or the landscape have a dual quality of hardness and beauty, which reflects the venture of the hero or the characters in the frontier. The landscape is the canvas on which it is depicted the difficult and harsh conditions the hero must endure to become a genuine American product, a product in the sense of blending the qualities of the new landscape and the knowledge he acquire

from Native Americans and the wilderness taming the wilderness and the inhabitants of the area (Cawelti 26; Slotkin 14). The beautiful landscape and even the steep, dry and rocky views of the desert are represented by the filmmaker with an exceptional beauty to emphasize the exceptional adventure of the frontier life and the conquest. Thus, visually, the frontier must be unique. For instance, in *Dances with Wolves*, Dunbar seems to be mesmerized by the sublime landscape ahead of him in comparison to the polluted and devastated state of the fort he is sent to. *The Last of the Mohicans* is set in the woods of upstate New York reflecting James Fenimore Cooper's atmosphere. The forest is at times a refuge to hide from the enemy and, at times, it reflects the wicked nature of the wilderness which hides the perils and the Others, the Indians. Yet, the magnificent beauty of the environment of the frontier is always emphasized as no matter how harsh it is, it needs to have a positive tone since it is the most significant and defining element in the film.

An exception to that emphasis on the beauty of the landscape by filmmakers can be seen in *Dead Man* (1995). Set in the second half of the 19th century, it deals with the story of William Blake, an accountant from the East who travels by train to Machine, "an industrial nightmare" (Jones 45). The frontier has been considered a place of rebirth; a rite of passage for the hero to become a better man or start a new life all over again, like the characters of *Stagecoach* (1939) who travel West in order to establish a new social order in the frontier but also to begin a new life. However, as Jacob Levich has pointed out in *Dead Man* there is "no line between Civilization and Wilderness" (41), as even within the supposedly high culture civilization we find signs of genocide, death, what we can see through the window of the train when Blake is travelling to Machine (Levich 41). In other words, "the Western movement brings not redemption and

opportunity, but for revenge and death" (Nieland 177). In these cases, the 'Spaces of the Same' are not so different from the 'Spaces of the Other': violence and destruction are spread all over the place making no distinction between civilizations or spaces.

If we are not able to distinguish these two spaces, Ryan H. Blum in his article "Anxious Latitudes: Heterotopias, Subduction Zones and the Historico-Spatial Configurations within *Dead Man*" offers an interesting approach defining the film into three spaces. Firstly, what he calls 'Nobody's space' in which we find diversity and heterogeneity, and what Blum understands as a "counter narrative to the traditional western genre" (60-61). Secondly, we find 'machinic space', which can be described as "need for regulated order, predictability, future benefit and normalization" (61). Finally a 'Thirdspace' or Blake's space is the area where the two previous spaces clash leaving Black to "react rather than to act" (63).

Indeed, William Blake breaks that archetype of rebirth of society in the frontier line. We witness the change of the innocent and naïve Blake into a killer and outlaw in his journey around the frontier, emphasizing the idea of violence, yet, in *Dead Man*, the violence does not regenerate the society like Slotkin claimed but, quite the opposite, violence is innate in society turning the positive and enlightened idea of rebirth in that space into a violent nightmare (Bromley 56). However, that violence is "unheroic and awkward" (Cummings 69; Rosembaum 20). Nobody, the character who confuses William Blake with the English poet, accentuates that degeneration by violence when he claims that "the weapon will replace your tongue… your poetry will now be written with blood" ("Dead Man" 00:47:01-13).

Another example of harsh environment could be *Meek's Cutoff* (2010), where a group of settlers seem to be lost in the middle of the desert although they

are guided by an expert in the area, Stephen Meek. Their encounter and capture of a mysterious Indian accentuates the dangerous and harsh environment, the 'Spaces of the Other', they are travelling in. The settlers do not know where they are going to or where they are, they do not know how far the next water supply is and, because of their desperation, they link their fate to that of the Indian, a character who embodies the mysterious and unknown place they are heading for and who, traditionally, has been their cultural enemy (Young "Hollywood Reporter" 2011). Therefore, their guide around the 'Spaces of the Other' is going to be a member of 'the Other', an Indian, who does not speak their language and who is an alien to group at the same level they are aliens to him (Ebert "Meek's Cutoff"). The anxiety, anguish and fears of the travelers are the same as the audience feel, as we are not even provided with a translation of his words.

Curiously enough, this indie movie reflects what it was supposed to be the real encounter in the frontier of two different civilizations with different social and cultural rules and speaking two different languages with no help from any mediator and trusting or mistrusting each other. The only cultural mediator who possibly could help as the expert in the desert and his wide knowledge of the area is just a clown directly taken form the worst version of a Wild West show from William Cody. He seems out of context. His racist views and comments and his uptight attitude emphasize his inadaptability to the 'Spaces of the Other' as he does not know his way around, but he is also unwelcomed in the 'Space of the Same' represented by the wagon train, even being discharged from his 'power position'.

Similar to the bleakness and emptiness of *Dead Man*, we find *Silent Tongue* (1993), considered an anti-western by Sandra Wynands (301). Although the setting is the dessert, it is as desolated and depressed as the characters who

move around it (Wynands 303). In fact, the film starts with Talbot Roe guarding his wife's corpse making the audience believe the plot goes around the fatal love of the two of them and how he copes with her death. However, along the film we witness how this supposed love was just a mere monetary transaction and how his wife, Awbonnie, considered herself a prisoner and how her ghostly appearance tortures Talbot to make him suffer part of her pain during their marriage. Parallel to this story we find Awbonnie's mother, Silent Tongue, and her revengeful and hateful relationship with Eamon, Awbonnie's and Velada's father whose only interest in his own daughters is the money or horses he can gain with their sale.

Usually the Western frontier and the movement around 'the Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' is used as a way of proving the hero's masculinity and his superior moral behavior. However, in *Silent Tongue*, the setting and the violence and harshness attached to it is unheroic and corrupted (Wynands 308). Characters do not adapt or grow with the environment, contrary to what Slotkin and Turner predicated, "at no point is there a merging of hero and landscape, let alone mastery over the wilderness" (Wynands 303). In fact, they are just the products of the environment: awkward, distorted and maladjusted. Indeed, the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' seem to be one at some point, as their boundaries are blurry due to the characters, especially Eamon, who seems to be unadapted to the environment and who, according to Wynands, represents a clownesque character due to his inability to "uphold the impression of civilization in the wilderness" (303).

Taking again the topic of moving around the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' we find *Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron* (2002), *The Missing* (2003), *3:10 to Yuma* (2007), *Yellow Rock* (2011), and *The Legend of Hell's Gate*

(2011). In the Dreamworks production, *Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron (*2002), the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' are clearly distinguished between the representation of the civilization and the wilderness. Spirit suffers the cruelty of civilization in the 'Spaces of the Same' at the hands of the Colonel while in the 'Spaces of the Other', the supposed uncivilized world, Spirit receives the affection and care of the Indian Little Creek. In fact, in this space it is where Spirit finds peace, love and harmony. Therefore, the traditional features attached to both spaces, civilization and untamed wilderness, are twisted favoring Nature and law of Nature.

The desert is the main setting for *The Missing* (2003). Samuel Jones deserted his family 20 years ago to 'go Indian'. His return to visit Maggie, his daughter, occurs at the same time of his granddaughter's abduction by Indians and the cavalry's unwillingness to assist Maggie. Both Samuel and Maggie embark on a journey to track the Indians around the 'Spaces of the Other', i.e., the desert, to take back Lily and other Indian girls also taken hostage by The Sorcerer, the Indian enemy. The journey around the 'Spaces of the Other' serves Samuel and Maggie to face their differences and their family ties, as both learn they need each other, especially since it is Samuel's knowledge of the 'Spaces of the Other' and the Indian ways what makes the party find the Indians and the abducted girls. Thus, the 'Spaces of the Other' becomes a symbol of knowledge and reconciliation even when those spaces are harsh and violent. Therefore, violence is not only justified but heroic as it serves to solve the situation although it means Samuel's death may be punished for going too Indian.

In *3:10 to Yuma*, Dan Evans volunteers to take criminal Ben Wade to justice. The mission is to get the 3:10 train avoiding Wade's band who wants to free him. During the journey, a somehow friendly and respectful relationship

originates between Dan and Wade, with fatal consequences for Dan. In this film, the 'Spaces of the Same' are represented by the law, the court, the train they need to take to get Wade in front of a court and the town. Those civilizing powers and its violent surroundings are contrasted by the 'Spaces of the Other' represented by Indian Territory. The townspeople must go through Indian land to avoid Wade's men. As it is supposed to be, this space is represented by violence by Indians and, curiously enough, to Indians. It is the appearance of Indians and their fight in Indian land what provokes Wade's escape after killing some Apache. Yet, this space also shows the violence of civilization as during their crossing of Indian territory we get to know how the townspeople took revenge on Indians and killed 32 Indians, including innocent Indian women and children. Therefore, although representing civilization, they attain features of the 'Spaces of the Other', i.e., the civilized figures adopt uncivilized features, violence, within Indian land.

Both *Yellow Rock* (2011) and *The Legend of Hell's Gate* (2011) share the same feature: greedy whites travel to the 'Spaces of the Other'. In *Yellow Rock*, the posse is supposedly searching for a kidnapped relative so they need to cross Black Paw Tribe territory in order to continue with their search. However, once they cross the territory, their real motif is discovered: they just want to find the gold mine. Yet, what they do not know is that the mine and its gold is cursed making fight and kill each other. The innovation in this film is that the entrance to the 'Spaces of the Other' is limited and it is not an empty space and Native Americans are the ones authorizing whites to cross into their lands. Usually we have seen how Native Americans have gone unannounced into the 'Spaces of the Same' violently following the tradition 'imposed' by films like *The Searchers* and

later *The Last of the Mohicans*. Yet, in this film the violence is brought to Indian territory by the inhabitants of the 'Spaces of the Same'.

In the *Legend of Hell's Gate* we barely see the 'Spaces of the Same'. The three outlaw protagonists of the story, James, Kelly and Will enter the wilderness, somehow blurry 'Spaces of the Same' to meet some Indians. This blurry space seems to the place for cohabitation, yet, it turns to be the 'Spaces of the Other' with the features of violence and darkness when the three outlaws decide to rob the Indians and these completely change their attitude from naïve and affectionate to wild and violent. Then, the film turns into hunt-and-kill story with Indians trying to revenge the robbery and the outlaws trying to escape from the Indians.

It is natural that the key big three releases in the early 1990s are related to the frontier years and the interaction with Native Americans and the formation of the country, as the landmark of 1992 was the celebration of the origins of the American nation and the related controversies. Indeed, the screen time of Native Americans is going to be important, carrying an important weight in the plot of the story, even being the supposed protagonist of the action as in the case of *Geronimo* and *The Last of the Mohicans* or *Pocahontas* (1995), *Squanto* (1994), or *Pathfinder* (2007).

However, as soon as the echo of the 1992 anniversary celebrations fades away, the size of the productions will change and, consequently, the impact of the films, not only at the box office but also in critics, will affect the development of plots and the screen time Native American characters are given. We will find Westerns being produced but at a lower level in terms of production and advertising. In addition, the plots of the movies will also be changed and will not be centered about the struggle and/or relationship between the savages and the

white man. In fact, Native Americans will not share the prominence of the stories but they will be mere elements who appear symbolically to mark the 'Spaces of the Other' and who are just a vehicle for the protagonists to achieve their goals as in *Seraphim Falls* (2006). The story of hunting down a man and the survival among harsh settings, like the desert, reflects the endurance of the characters. The character played by Wes Studi, Charon, is just a necessary but brief stop in the middle of the hunt-and-escape plot of Gideon and Col. Carver, the main protagonists of the story. The Indian marks the 'Spaces of the Other', the desert, where the protagonists are going to fight their final battle.

In addition, the setting of the Plains is also abandoned at times to explore more adventures in other frontiers. For instance, the setting of the *White Fang* movies in 1991 and 1993 is Alaska and its gold mines. Another example is *September Dawn* (2007) that takes place in Utah and tells us the unfortunate events of the Mountain Meadows Massacre where Mormons murdered a group of settlers. In these movies, the Native Americans are just a symbolic presence in the plot or background; characters who, at some point, are necessary tools for white in their tasks, as we will see in the discussion of characters. Yet, the characters move around both spaces 'Spaces of the Same' and 'Spaces of the Other', the former marked by the civilizing forces, the city and indoor spaces while the latter is marked by the presence of the Indians and for outdoor action.

It is important to mention here that within this frontier year's group, we encounter less canonical Westerns. As Cawelti mentioned, during the 1970s less formal Westerns were produced as a counter-reaction against the Western and the meaning it carries in American society and history. One of the possibilities of reversing the Western genre is through the 'parody Westerns' that take the Western plot, icons and format to reverse the myth (100-101). Matthew R. Turner

comments on some elements of these parody Westerns (228-234). Firstly, from the title the audience can infer some information about the nature of the movie as it plays with the pre-knowledge audience have in relation to the Western. In some instances, the parody Western turn to film stars associated with the Western, or the stories are related to a previous Western version. The comedy effect is usually implemented since the very first minutes of the film. Another feature may be the appearance of elements that do not belong to the historical time depicted in the movie. The parody Western is so self-conscious of the conventions that at times they are acknowledged in the dialogues of the characters. Lastly, as violence is a central to the Western genre, in the parody Western the final duel is also present; yet, in a less threatening manner and usually resolved in an unheroic way.

For instance, in *Wagon's East* (1994) the settlers take an unprecedented decision: to go East, contrary to the idea of the Myth of Conquest (Go West) playing with the audience's pre-knowledge of the Western, which exaggerates the comic side of the movie. In the wagon community, we find the main elements of the Western: a white gunslinger who is more worried about his appearance than about showing his bravery; free women ready for some pleasure; stagecoaches; Indians who are willing to lead and protect them across their 'Spaces of the Other' journey into the 'Spaces of the Same'; the Cavalry, traditionally a protector of the settlers in the 'Spaces of the Other' and of 'the Same', threatens the wagon train of possible consequences if they do not go back West; and finally, a disoriented wagon master, Harlow. Harlow is a brave and skilled man who apparently knows his way around the 'Spaces of the Other', but who got lost during the trip ending up in the Indian camp they were trying to avoid. After being expelled by his fellow

settlers, he comes back to help his wagon train as he overhears a conversation about the attack of the Cavalry on the travelling settlers.

Although *Maverick* (1994) can be considered a blockbuster with its big actors as headliners, it is a parody in its resolution and the actions of the characters. Bret Maverick, a poker gambler, does not struggle at all for his survival in the West against the setting or the evil Indian. In fact, he seems very much comfortable switching between the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' with his witty and wicked Indian friend Joseph. His only concern and his struggle around the different Spaces is to collect enough money so he can participate in a poker competition on a riverboat. As we see in the film the "Spaces of the Other" does not mean the place for savage spectacle, in Prat's owrds as there is no violence. Neither Maverick nor Joseph fit into the stereotypes of the hero of Westerns or the Indians, as both use their skills not with the gun but with their wit and a cunning knowledge to avoid violence. Moreover, during the funny exchanges of conversations between Joseph and Maverick and between other characters all the stereotypes about Native Americans are brought up and the person who brings up those comments is Joseph.

In 2013, the highly anticipated *The Lone Ranger* with Johnny Depp as Tonto, the Comanche Indian who leads John Reid in his journey throughout the desert to capture Butch Cavendish, is released. Copying the style of *Little Big Man* (1970) and its flashbacks, the 'Spaces of the Same' and of the 'Spaces of the Other' are double-sided. On the one hand, the limits of both, the 'Spaces of the Other' and the 'Spaces of the Same', are defined by the internal frontier around a river. The protector of those limits is Dan Reid, the Texas Rangers chief, who has established a peace agreement with the Comanches by which both civilizations stay at their side of the river.

At the same time, the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' are entangled in a more traditional confrontation between savagery, represented by Indians and their possession of land, and civilization, represented by the coming of the railroad and its greedy businessmen, whose only worry is to get rid of Indians to acquire land by all possible means and tricks. In the successful attempts, the boundaries of savagery are trespassed as we witness more acts of savagery and madness in the civilization representatives than in the Native Americans, curiously within the "Spaces of the Other". For instance, the posse of Texas Rangers are all killed by Cavendish who is a hired killer of the businessmen. We know from the very beginning that the fate of Native Americans is doomed but this is accentuated with the oblivion of their cause and screen absence at the end of the movie. Obviously, once again the film is not about Native Americans, but about the Ranger and Tonto's adventures in the West. In fact, the title is quite misleading as it refers to the Ranger. Yet, the real protagonist of the film is Tonto.

A year later, Seth MacFarlane starred and directed the parody Western *A Million Ways to Die in the West* (2014). Set in 1882 in a small town of Arizona, the movie deals with the story of the anti-hero, Albert Stark, who is unable to show up at a duel and, consequently, he is laughed at. At the frontier, he is no one until he meets a beautiful woman and skilled gunfighter, Anna, who teaches him how to shoot and how to face a final duel with his rival, Foy. This comedy has all the elements of Western, the landscape of the magnificent Monument Valley, the hero, duels, Indians but the way they are reflected in the film shapes the parody. For instance, the title already refers to a parody. Apart from a duel or a shoot-out, there are not a million ways to die in the West. Indians are barred from the main action taking place in town. They literally live out of the border of the wilderness with no contact with civilization. In fact, we only see the Apaches when the main

protagonist enters their 'Spaces of the Other': when he gets lost in the desert and is captured by the Apache leader, Cochise. After getting strength with a peyote beverage and having a vision, Albert goes back to the 'Spaces of the Same', his town, with renewed energies and as a new man. Therefore, the wilderness, the 'Spaces of the Other' fulfills its role as regenerating space who provides a new self for the hero.

Another subgroup we can establish in these frontier years is the so-called 'Weird Western', which is a hybrid subgenre resulted from the mixture of the Western format and ideology and the addition of supernatural elements or elements from other genres, especially science-fiction (Hewitson 167). As the Western was born out of the life on the border with the establishment of white communities that resulted in conflicts between the original settlers and the newcomers and, also, the struggle for survival in the wilderness, this mixture of extreme and contradictory themes and imagery provide a new interpretation of the Western ideology where "the danger to the idealized vision of the nation is exaggerated, the competition between value systems is made more absolute, and the resulting violence is amplified" (167). We agree with his interpretation of the addition of external elements in Western as a way of distancing ourselves from the past and the responsibility and consequences it had for Native Americans the conquest of the West (179). Therefore, the external elements in the Western is another part of the revisionism[18].

In a similar way, Robert A. Saunders deals with the inclusion of external elements to the Western in his article "Hungry Lands: Conquest, the Wendigo Spirit and Cannibalism". The Wendigo or Windigo Spirit was originally an

[18] In his article, he focuses on the inclusion of zombies in some Westerns, which stands for a symbol of the hideous history of the American nation.

Algonkian monster or spirit in the northern parts of the US soil that resulted from the combination of hunger, isolation and spiritual issues (182). Thus, this Wendigo may appear physically as a human but his spirit is that of a monster and his most significant feature is his cannibalism. For Saunders, this cannibal is "the embodiment of America's insatiable appetite for consumption" (183) and "imperialism" (191).

From these two trends, we find *The Burrowers* (2008), *Cowboys & Aliens* (2011), and *Bone Tomahawk* (2015). *The Burrowers* starts with a familiar format in the Western: an abduction, specifically the abduction of the Stewart family. Mary Anne, one of the daughters, is apparently abducted. Her love interest, Coffey, is an Irish immigrant who immediately forms an intercultural and intergenerational posse composed by two expert Indian fighters, a former black slave and a teenager. Thinking the abductors are Native Americans, they set off on a journey across the land ('Spaces of the Other') where they meet Henry Victor, a stereotypical Cavalry Lit. and Indian hater whose only goal is to kill as many Indians as possible by torturing them. During the rescue adventure, they find a Ute woman, who explains how a rare kind of species, and not Native Americans, are the ones responsible for the abduction. These creatures eat human flesh after the white man exterminated the buffalo. Yet, the Ute tribe are the only ones who have the key to end with the creatures momentarily and they managed to do it, only to end up being murdered by Henry Victor and his men who still think that the abductions are carried out by Indians. Once again, the 'Spaces of the Other' as the area of savage spectacle is reversed as the violence is not committed by Indians but by the Cavalry.

This collaboration between Native Americans and white settlers and the captivity story as the background for that union is also reflected in *Cowboys &*

Aliens (2011). Jake, an outlaw suffering from amnesia shows up carrying a mysterious bracelet in his wrist in the town of Absolution where he is imprisoned. After the attack of an alien spaceship, which abducts several members of the town, a posse is formed to follow the track of one of the injured aliens into the 'Spaces of the Other'. The posse is captured by the Chiricahua, who blamed them for the presence of the aliens and the abduction of some of their people too. After the mediation of Nat, an assimilated Native American, leading forces of each civilization join in the fight against the common enemy, the aliens. Therefore, the 'Spaces of the Other' and the 'Spaces of the Same' merge into only one with both civilizations fighting for the same goal.

In order to find the aliens, Indians prepare a beverage so Jake can have a vision of their location. The joint attack on the spaceship is performed, resulting in the successful rescue of both, the townspeople and the Indian captives. As we said, although the fight against the aliens merges the spaces into one, after the rescue both spaces remain separate from each other. Indeed, the town goes back to normal and Indians are literally left aside in the desert. The final moments in the film are focused on the town and its people.

In this frontier, a new frontier or a space frontier, as we may call it, there is also a clash of civilizations, yet, not in the traditional manner. Aliens or supernatural forces who attack both Indians and white settlers represent the savages while both Indians and white settlers are obliged by the circumstances to join in their venture of saving human civilization in general. However, all the creatures are associated with Native Americans traditional features: savage, wild, cannibal and wicked people. Although Native Americans join the white settlers, Indians are pushed back to the background and apart from civilization as soon as the struggle with external forces have finished. In *The Burrowers* (2008) they

were punished even after they help murder the creatures and in *Cowboys & Aliens* they are tools in order to outnumber the aliens because the white symbols for power, gun and binoculars, come from the white civilization and the leading power is Harrison Ford's character.

Following Hewitson and Saunders' ideas of the 'Weird Western' and 'Wendigo Spirit', we could reconsider the Western ideology and take the external creatures as metaphors of what white civilization did to Native Americans. However, the tragic end of the Utes and the oblivion of the Chiricahua in favor of the life of the white settlers made the message dilute as filmmakers and we, the audience, distance ourselves from the story. As we said before, even though civilizations fight together making possible a momentarily reconciliation of the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other', the myth of the Conquest is not refuted or contested but confirmed with the final resolutions in the films: the final moments of stardom are from the representatives of the 'Spaces of the Same', the representatives of the 'Spaces of the Other' are forgotten.

In *Bone Tomahawk* (2015), we also see the association of Native Americans with the sudden appearance of evil forces or creatures and the abduction of townspeople. When some inhabitants of the town of Bright Hope are abducted apparently by Native Americans (they find an arrow in the sheriff's cell), a posse is immediately called on by the sheriff. Although warned by the Native American inhabitant in the town that those people are "a spoiled bloodline of inbred animals who rape and eat their own mothers (...) you wouldn't distinguish them from Indians, even though they are something else entirely" ("Bone Tomahawk" 00:36:02-20), troglodytes, the posse composed by the sheriff, his elder assistant, an Indian hater, and the husband of one of the captives set off into the 'Spaces of the Other'. When they arrive to the Valley of the Starving Men,

where these creatures live, the members of the posse are attacked, captured and held captive in the cave where they meet the rest of the captives. After witnessing how a young apprentice is scalped and dissected, the remnant members of the posse are able to escape using opium to poison the creatures.

It seems that in the twentieth century, Native Americans can be regarded as more than just icons of the Western or just the enemy in the Conquest. For the first time they can collaborate with the white civilization in fighting for survival against an external threat to the whole humanity. However, as we said before, the consequences and problems derived from the Conquest for Native Americans are not explored; indeed, they are ignored as we have seen in the ending of the films. In the past, violence helped wipe Indians out for the advancement of white civilization, and now they participate in violent acts to save the world but they are pushed to the background as soon as the fight for survival have finished.

As we have seen, filmmakers turn from time to time to the frontier and the conquest to reaffirm, refute and contest the most mythical moment in American history. Together with the comedy Western and the Weird Western, we find transnational contexts (Cawelti 103) like in *Hidalgo* (2004) where the action takes place not in the West of the US but in the Middle East. As Susan Kollin states, the film enters into the debate over American identity and role in the world, especially after the 9/11 attacks (7). The movie is about Frank T. Hopkins, an alcoholic member of the Wild West Shows haunted by the Wounded Knee Massacre, who is invited to the "Ocean of Fire", a race of horses across the desert. In fact, the race serves as a metaphor "for a contest between nations with global consequences" (Kollin 21). Then, the new frontier is not anymore within the US but a global frontier where the iconography, ideology and archetypes from the Western are transferred to other cultures. This transnational Western stands for

the fights between colonial powers in other parts of the world and as such, the characters represent not only the archetypes for the Western but the role of nations in the Arab world. Indeed, we find the same archetypes: a reluctant half-Native American hero who seems to be ashamed of it, then carrying a "personal and national trauma" (Kollin 13); an enemy from the new "Other", Sheikh Riyadh, admirer of the Western motifs such as horses and guns, that Hopkins represent; and the civilizing or taming social order represented by Lady Anne Davenport and Jazira, Riyadh's daughter. After some attempts to cut off Hopkins' chances to win the race, he is finally able to cross the end line in the first place and restore his Native identity symbolized in the flag rising with a Native symbol.

Hopkins must fight in two battles in two different frontiers: his personal frontier with his non-pronouncement over his Native American heritage, and the ghosts of the Wounded Knee Massacre, where his relatives died. Yet, the race in the other frontier will help heal the wounds and acknowledge his heritage and his role as the hero. For us, it is remarkable how he must live in another frontier and fight against his enemies and against himself to acknowledge his Native American heritage. Thus, we encounter a Native American, a member of an oppressed and conquered civilization to stand for the Western values. However, this has a negative side: Native American plights or topics are left aside. Once again, the audience is distanced from the consequences of the Conquest for Native Americans. Indeed, the Wounded Knee story in the film functions as the vehicle through which we empathize with Hopkins. Thus, when he returns to the US, he uses the money earned from the race in purchasing horses to live freely in the land of his people.

It also helps that the other frontier Hopkins is fighting with is the external one, the race that symbolizes the clash between two worlds in a foreign frontier

that ends up with the victory of the white, i.e., western civilization over the Arab/Middle East culture even though the territory is hostile to foreigners. This is possible as we said before, because the race and the movie are a metaphor for US role in the world, especially in the Middle East after 9/11.

Ward Churchill in his book "Fantasies of the Master Race" has been very critical with filmmakers and film industry in general as he considers that "Cinematic Indians" are the creatures of specific time and specific geographical era, so they are frozen in time (168). This freezing aspect of their life makes them appear as historical artifacts since, for most of the audience, Indians just live within the 1850s-1890s, mainly in the Plains and isolated from the rest of society. He continues explaining how Native Americans seem to have no history prior or after the Conquest.

3. 3. 3. After the Frontier Years

As we said at the beginning of this section, we decided to include films whose plots were set not on the traditional frontier time-span we mentioned at the beginning; on the contrary, they are set in the first quarter of the twentieth century. However, we decided to include them in this section as the archetypes and icons resemble that of the Western genre. We consider these movies as a kind of preliminary step towards our next chapter. These movies are *Legends of the Fall* (1994), *Where the Rivers Flow North* (1993), and *The Education of Little Tree* (1997) which are located in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The beginning of the story related in *Legends of the Fall* is set in 1913, a time in which the United States were trying to be the empire that is today, while in Europe the First World War was about to break. The movie follows the story of

the Ludlow family told by the voice-over narration of One-Stab, one of the Native Americans living within the family household in Montana where Col. Ludlow, the patriarch of the family, went to live after resigning the Army due to the mistreatment of Native Americans by the federal government.

The ranch is the symbol of the Western iconography. Although all the characters leave at some point the ranch to live in the civilization, all of them come back to that space where civilization and open-air nature do not clash. The West may be changing with the development of the city and its vices but the ranch, in its isolated location, and the value of hard work, family and respect are kept. Indeed, the isolated 'Spaces of the Other' become the refuge from civilization. The frontier that divided the civilizations in the past links savagery and civilization in their traditional role as Native Americans play a significant part in the development of the characters. However, as the West is changing, the symbols also change. Now, the savagery is represented by the city with its vices, its corruption and its violence. In other words, the 'Spaces of the Same' are the representation of violence and conflict. For instance, Isabel Two's death is provoked by the gun a police officer trying to arrest Tristan because he has been interfering in the gangsters' business. The new savages are symbolized by gangsters and corrupted politicians and law enforcers, whose purpose is to destroy the order represented by the ranch and the Ludlow family, as the last scene shows, where almost all the family members still alive stay before Tristan's flee to save his family. It is true that in this scene the ranch is the symbol of conflict and violence but as the violence's goal is to protect the family, we empathize and justify rationally that violence.

The Education of Little Tree takes place in 1935, when Little Tree goes to live with his Indian grandparents in the Great Smoky Mountains after his parents'

death. Although he seems to be learning everything he needs to survive in the wilderness (and civilization) from his Cherokee grandma and their friend Willow John, his grandfather's bootleg business sends him to the Notched Gap Indian School, a boarding school whose mission is to kill the Indian inside of Native Americans boys (appearance and language) in order to assimilate them into white society, even though Little Tree does not speak Indian and does not have long hair or wear braids.

Although set well into the twentieth century, the film maintains the frontier and Western topic of the clash between civilizations. As in the previous film, we think the traditional roles of the space have been exchanged. The traditional 'Spaces of the Other' are not dark and wild spaces with negative meaning, quite the opposite, harmony, love and respect are represented by the grandparents and Willow John in this space. Their role is to protect Little Tree and to teach him about his Indian heritage, about love, nature, and life and death. On the contrary, the traditional 'Spaces of the Same', with social order and justice as main features, come in the form of the Indian School and his white aunt. Both are depicted in opposition to Little Tree's life in the woods. Civilization is the enemy; it is the unloving and corrupted society that comes to break and destroy not only the harmony and social and family order of Little Tree but also to destroy him as Native American.

The last film in this group is *Where the Rivers Flow North* (1993). Set in 1927 in Vermont, the couple formed by Noel Lord and his Indian partner, Bangor, resists and/or challenges the offer of a power company to leave his land to build a dam. Noel is set between two worlds: the world he is living in the twentieth century and the world in which he conducts his life, the past. In fact, it seems that the 'Spaces of the Other' are going to collapse in favor of the 'Spaces of the Same'

or the 'Space of the Same' are going to take the last piece of the 'Spaces of the Other'. In fact, that collapse or 'conquest' almost takes place as he is offered to stay in the park as a ranger, something he thought for a while leaving aside his dream of buying a mill. However, due to his erratic and confusing behavior, he is unable to fulfill his dreams. He represents the last hero in the frontier line. He is like the last member of an Indian tribe resisting the advancement of civilization and progress, in this case, not a group of settlers, but their twentieth century representatives, enterprises. As romantic and nostalgic as it could be, he does not transcend the screen for empathy as his stubbornness, his wicked tricks to the power company agents and his violent acts during the movie, such as stabbing his hook into a citizen's hand in a restaurant, and his rude manners towards Bangor create a total lack of empathy from the viewers' point of view. The only time in the movie where the audience can empathize with him is when he visits his wife's grave, what we considered the real reason why he resists leaving the land, but he never admits it. He does not represent a nostalgic hero but a violent man obsessed with irritating the company's executives.

3. 4. Native Americans and Their Relation to White Characters

Once we have analyzed the setting in which the characters move around and the action takes place, it is important to see the relationship between the characters, especially Native Americans, who are the focus of our research, with the rest of the characters in the movies. Although our emphasis will be on Indian characters, we cannot step aside the concepts of 'Going Native' or 'Going Indian' researched by scholars like Shari M. Huhndorf or Robert Baird and/or the

concept of 'Playing Indian', researched by Phillip J. Deloria. As white characters play with their identity and with Native American identity, it is important to reflect how it influences the depiction of actual Native Americans or the views we have of Native Americans. In addition, we need to consider how white characters are going to refer to Indians or how Native Americans are going to be treated and depicted in the story by white people. This is important, as one of the tenets of the revisionism is to revise the history of the Myth of the Frontier and the Conquest process including the voices of those who have been silenced or have been portrayed as the enemy of progress. Therefore, we assume that those movies are going to show a more sympathetic portrayal of Native Americans and they will be given more screen time. Thus, we will examine if more screen time equals to a more real and factual depiction of Indians.

3. 4. 1. *Dances with Wolves, The Last of the Mohicans* and *Geronimo, An American Legend*

The film that meant the revival of the Western genre and the head of the revisionist movement, *Dances with Wolves,* deals with the geographical, moral and psychological journey Lit. John Dunbar does to the frontier before it disappears to attain his own identity. The journey is considered a rite of passage or rebirth as the protagonist transforms himself to maintain his status as the hero. As Randall Lake affirms, Dunbar's story can be explained according to three parameters (71-73): (a) it is a geographical rebirth as he moves from the East to the West; (b) it is also a moral rebirth, as those elements of the East (cavalry and battlefield) have a violent and savage aura while the elements of the West are impregnated with a peaceful and quasi-mystic scent; and, (c) his rebirth has

psychological roots, as he goes from death exemplified in this Jesus Christ's pose in the battlefield at the beginning of the film to life expressed in his journal where he recalls his personal reflections about his life and about the Lakota.

One of the first things we notice is that the title of the film has a Native name; yet, the title refers to the white protagonist not the Native Americans characters in the movie. Therefore, the revisionist implication seems not to be fulfilled. Throughout the film, we get to know that name refers exclusively to Dunbar, the white protagonist of the story. This native name of the protagonist provides us with another key feature of the movie as Dunbar has been adopted and assimilated into the Native American culture.

When we explained the formal characteristics of the Western genre, we stated that apart from the location and the Indian as the enemy, another essential element of the story is the hero. The hero is a person with no special bonds to family or community who seems to be searching for his true identity and finds his way into the new world, almost without realizing that he is adopting and learning Indian ways only to destroy them later (Owens 109). This hero, according to Turner, must go back to wilderness and savagery, in other words, to 'go Native' in order to overcome them so he can expand progress (Chapter One). Then, his theory interpreted by Huhndorf claimed that (a) the colonist became the heir of Native Americans; (b) he regarded the Indian as a previous step of the quintessential American, the pioneer; and (c) Indian belongs to the past, with no place for them in the present (Huhndorf 58). Thus, the Indian himself is no longer regarded as a threat so it is time to honor them (Owens 109-110).

This act of becoming Indian, as Dunbar does in the film[19], is known as the 'Going Native' or 'Going Indian' which Robert Baird describes as "the white discovery of, and the renaming and adoption into, the tribal society of the American Indian" (195-196). The adoption of the name, usually provided by the Native American tribe where the hero is embedded, is related to the natural world (Baird 203) or with an activity for which the person is known. For instance, Dunbar is called 'Dances with Wolves' by his Native American friends when they watch him playing in the fields with the only companion of Two-Socks, his wolf pet. Thus, this act of naming "is the quintessential American myth –the self-made man rediscovering both American, and most important, his own true self in the process" (Baird 103). However, Dunbar is not the only character in the film who has gone Indian, Stands-With-a-Fist, the white woman adopted the Lakota as well. Although she seems to represent the threatening part of the Indians, the horrible and terrifying perspective of captivity narratives from in the past, that sentiment is eroded by her role as the necessary cultural intermediary between Dunbar and the members of the Lakota people (Aleiss 145).

Jose Armando Prats calls this amalgamation of the hero the Double Other ("Invisible" 186). He defines this Double Other as "alien to the Indians as to the civilization for whose sake he destroys them, the beau ideal of the American, yet ever denied participation in the new order of the ages ("Invisible" 195). Therefore, he resembles the contradictions of the Myth of Conquest and the Frontier itself: (a) he is the agent of the destruction of the Indian and (b) he is going to be the authority on Indian culture in the white world, he speaks "with those who would listen" ("Dances" 03:41:43-47) as Dunbar himself announces at the end of the

[19] "For the first time I knew who I was", ("Dances with Wolves 02:54:49-52)

film justifying his departure. As Prats affirms this double Other is authentic "neither as Indian nor as white" yet "his Americanness … always seems tragically linked to the power of the Myth of Conquest to enforce the disappearance of the Indian" (193)

How does the hero achieve this status when we know the disastrous consequences of the conquest? Prats continues explaining it with two processes. On the one hand, by the *mystique of cultural appropriation,* by which the hero is able to transform himself into Indian, as Dunbar does throughout the movie learning the language to understand better their culture, yet he is able to retain traits of his whiteness through a code of cultural verisimilitude (Prats "Invisible" 196, 201, 206-207). For example, Dunbar transforms himself into an Indian but he is unable to participate in the Lakota celebration of the murder and scalp of whites,[20] so he decides to stay away from them. This act of savagery cannot be shared by his cultural whiteness, as the audience would not be able to empathize with him or regard him as the hero (Prats "Image" 12; Lake 84).

The second process is the *illusion of cultural divestment,* according to which "the hero and nation alike could cast off the Indianness that had been necessary for triumph" (229). The way to disassociate Dunbar from Indianness takes place almost at the end of film when he rejects scalping a dead soldier from the Army (Prats "Image"15). The Indian ways must vanish because their time has passed and we have a new identity which links the best of two worlds into one, 'giving birth' to a new America. In this way, the hero would maintain his status as hero in the white civilization because he has able to retain the mysticism and the exoticism of the Indian culture but not his savage and violent acts.

[20] In the theatrical release, the view of the stagecoach and the scalp is not shown. In fact, Dunbar states "that the gap between us was greater than I could ever have imagined ("Dances" 01:55:31-35)".

To Randall A. Lake, Dunbar does not go native but "goes to the Natives" (83), because as the "military aristocrat" (Castillo 16) that he is, he shows the skills and abilities he showed in the battlefield and because he never renounces to his white identity. Lake claims that his white identity is clearly recalled by (a) his marriage to another white woman within the Lakota people; (b) the diary represents a written culture opposite to the oral-based culture of Native Americans. Indeed, he must go back to the military post to retrieve his journal, what triggers his final departure from the Lakota people (82-84). We partially agree with Lake in his statements. It is true that what makes Dunbar exceptional is that his skills as a soldier make him capable of getting through and succeeding in the wilderness (Castillo 16). However, we do think that Dunbar does go native. He claims that with his Indian name he knows what he is for the first time in his life. He identifies and defines himself with that name, therefore, he renounces to his white self-identification and he has external identification as a Sioux warrior by the natives themselves. In fact, his final and definite step towards a total Indian assimilation goes through going back to Fort Sedgewick and recovering his journal so nobody could identify him and the Lakota. Although the diary confirms once again his belonging to white society (Lake 85).

That transformation from a white soldier into an Indian can be seen through Dunbar's clothing adaptation. He progressively changes the style of his clothes as he becomes Indian (Castillo 19). Nevertheless, he never takes off his army pants. For instance, the first sign can be seen when he decides to ride his horse without saddle. The first time he visits the Lakota camp he dresses himself with his army clothes, all neat and clean, yet, when he is about to enter a new place, a new culture, he is forced to divest himself of those marks of white civilization (Grenier 47). He encounters Stands-With-A-Fist bleeding and he

covers the wounds with his clothes. Every time there is an advancement in his relationship with the Indians, he divests himself of white clothes and gains an Indian mark. He is given an Indian blanket after three meetings, each of them dressed more casually. After the hunting scene with the buffalo, he and Wind-in-His-Hair swapped each other's vests until he finally goes to live with them, falls in love with Stands-With-A-Fist and marries her dressed with a mixture of white and Indian clothes.

In the same way, Stands-With-A-Fist stands out from the other Native women present in the movie because of her hair. Those physical and costume patters mark the exceptionality of both characters, which at the end do not share the tragic end of the Lakota people. In addition, their exceptionality is marked by their marriage avoiding the controversial topic of miscegenation. Their marriage "makes sense, they are both white" ("Dances" 02:58:58-02) claims Black Shawl, Kicking Bird's wife, when asked about what the opinion of other members of the Lakota tribe of their possible marriage. Yet, we think the film and Costner missed a great opportunity to exile the fear of an interracial union in American culture. If the 1990s is characterized by the celebration of multiculturalism, filmmaking should open the possibility in cinema. In addition, we have already commented on how the hero is an isolated member of the community, so the natural step of him if he is integrated in another culture is to find his love-interest partner within the community he lives in, such as Jeffords in *Broken Arrows* (1950) but with a different ending. However, the topic is avoided by matching two white characters who end up abandoning their Lakota family to start all over again in the white world, their natural world. In fact, there is a subtle hint of a pregnancy in the movie. Thus, since Native Americans are vanished, a new American is growing.

Of course, to be acknowledged as the hero, Dunbar must be authorized as such by the Native community he has been introduced in. Indeed, the superior skills he showed throughout the movie make him a better Indian than the Indians themselves. He is the one who alerts the Lakota tribe of the buffalo presence in the prairie, and uses white tools to follow the trail, as if Indians were ignorant of their own ways[21]. During the hunt, Dunbar saves heroically a boy from being run over by a buffalo, and, consequently, he is invited to stay at the camp where he starts his initiation rites in Indian ways: storytelling and his acceptance by Wind-in-His-Hair with their mutual trade on clothes. Other examples of his status as hero above the Indians is the use of white weapons and food he hid at the beginning of his stay in the fort to defend the Lakota women and children from the cruel Pawnees.

One of the most moving scenes in the film, and the final approval of his status as future spokesperson for the Indian cause, is Dunbar and Kicking Bird's final scene together, which also marks his status as the chosen person to defend Lakota way of life. Both Dunbar and Kicking Bird have built a pipe for each other. Dunbar has made himself one, a basic one with no ornaments at all. On the contrary, Kicking Bird gives Dunbar a proper Indian pipe as a symbol of the tribe. Previously, when Dunbar has already decided and informed the council of his departure "to talk with those who will listen", Kicking Bird sanctions Dunbar as an authentic Lakota in a trip to the Sacred Land, Paha Sapa, "you are the only white man I have ever known (...) the one who lived there no longer exists, you are a Sioux warrior" ("Dances" 03:42:30-52). This scene is also a key scene as Dunbar is also exempted from the guilt of destroying a culture. It also implies that

[21] Kicking Bird's use of Dunbar's spyglass to watch the buffalo closer is a clear indication of the acceptance of the white ways and hints to the disappearance of a traditional Lakota way of life.

only individuals can achieve mutual recognition. However, once major white social orders are involved it is impossible, as the only result is the destruction of the supposedly inferior race. The last images of the cavalry finding the Lakota tribe and tracking them emphasize this idea.

Furthermore, the journal is also a key element in his exceptional role as it marks his personal journey from a white army soldier to a white Indian; yet, it is also the element that provokes his departure. Indeed, the journal represents the way the Lakota people will be remembered, therefore, the journal confirms the vanishment of a culture although there will be a representative in the white world. In fact, as Prats mentions, he will be the only connection between the present and the past and between the Indians and us as he does not share the Lakota's tragic fate announced in the final written epilogue in the movie ("Invisible" 132).

The title of the movie and the relevance of the white Indian in the development of the story, his status as hero and authorized spokesperson for the Indians, plus the recovery of the journal accentuate the failure of the revisionist movement. The story is told from a white point of view and what we see in the film are his impressions of the Indians (Keller 245; Prats "Image" 5). Yes, they do speak, they have a voice even in their language and we see their inner life as a community (Bowden 395). Yet, the character who directs our views and opinions on the Lakota is Dunbar through his voice-over narration. As we said, he does not share their fate as he tells the story of the Lakota tribe when he is not within them. Thus, he is a privileged man who distanced himself not only from a place point of view but also from a time point of view, like the audience, because his experiences are complete and finished (Prats "Invisible" 155). With this strategy, he also exempts himself not only from the fate of the Lakota but also from the cruelties and crimes against the Indians (Prats "Image" 6).

His voice-over narration has three functions (Prats "Invisible" 152-170). As Indians are vanished in the past and absent from the present, they need a white advocate to speak for them. Yet, the features that characterize Indians who are represented by the white voice need to resemble the hero's ideals (Prats "Invisible" 153). At the same time, as we said, as it is the white man's voice what we hear, the Indian is categorized as absent (Prats "Invisible" 161); indeed, he does not have the place and time "to declare himself vanished" (Prats "Invisible" 163). Lastly, the white man's voice exalts him as the hero and heir of the new America (Prats "Invisible" 164).

Then, Dunbar fills the role in a genre that Matthew W. Hughey in his book *The White Savior Film: Contents, Critics and Consumption* explores and defines as the White Savior Film. In this type of film, a white character rescues a member of a lower class or racially inferior class from a tragic fate (8). However, this generalization has two meanings. On the one hand, it presupposes a white paternalistic attitude towards the Other, being racially or culturally different. On the other hand, it presupposes the Other culture or race does not have enough resources, skills or attitude to do it by itself (18).

Hughey establishes seven denominators of the white savior film (28-71): Crossing the Color and Culture Line; His Saving Grace; White Suffering; The Savior, the Bad White and the Natives; The Color of Meritocracy; White Civility, Black Savagery; and, "Based on a True Story": Racialized Historiography. In the case of Dunbar, he does not share the Lakota's tragic fate but it fulfills some of these denominators. As we already know, Dunbar crosses borders to enter in an unfamiliar terrain and becomes to admire the Other, denigrating his own white race (Crossing the Color and Culture Line). He uses white tools to protect the Natives from other Native, even using violence when he is not personally involved

in the tribal struggles or he warns the Lakota tribe of the buffalo's herd in the Prairies. Then, Dunbar is considered the "great white hope" (39) as he is identified as the only pure and noble white man in their lives and teaches them using white ways (His saving Grace). Of course, his quasi-suicide at the beginning of the movie and his going West has a healing power for him (White suffering). In addition, he is going to be entangled in a relationship with other characters to accentuate his status as hero. His acts and behavior are completely opposite to other whites, the bad whites (the Cavalry), whose role is to show the racism, bigotry and corruption of the race. On the other side, we have the Natives whose harmony and peace attracts the hero to become one of them (The Savior, the Bad White and the Natives). Yet, Dunbar's sacrifice among them is dealt with his departure from the Lakota way of life to protect them and to speak out for them in white society (The Color of Meritocracy). Of course, if he is going to protect them and speak out for them, the natives must be shown in a positive and noble light in order to be worth fighting for in white society and against other savage Indians (White Civility, Black Savagery). Although it is not based on a true story, the point of view chosen (white) and the historical moment in which the story is set emphasize the relevance of the story, validating what has been fictionalized in the film ("Based on a True Story": Racialized Historiography).

As we have seen, the hero is an isolated representative of the white civilization who needs to have a relationship with the other inhabitants in the frontier line to learn their ways so he can destroy them later. The Indians we see in *Dances* corresponds to the traditional double image of Noble and Savage Indian Hilger proposes in his book *Native Americans in the Movies* (2015). The brutal and violent Pawnees represent the Savage Indians. Their only role throughout the film is to instigate fear through their actions. The first time we see

any sign of Indians in the film is through an arrow in a skeleton on Dunbar's way to Fort Sedgewick. Quite traditionally, the arrow has been used in Westerns as a synecdoche for the Indians and what they represent: death and violence. To emphasize even more this violent behavior, we finally see them physically more than forty minutes into the film and, again, their image is associated with brutality. Four red-painted and Mohawk-haired Indians are shown in close-up while they speak in their language about Timmons who is on his way back to the East. Without any reason, they just kill him but the film processes in a way that the audience does not see the final scalp. Their second appearance is again related to violence, as they attack the Noble Indians while most of the Lakota warriors are away hunting in the camp. Throughout the whole movie, we do not have any prior or background information about the conflict with the Pawnees but their presence there is to show just another side of Indianness and to accentuate the Noble Indians who are Dunbar's teachers in his process of becoming Indian. Indeed, we just see isolated Pawnees, all mean, fearless and ready to combat. We do not have any insight into their communities as if they were another race apart from the Lakota people.

The image of the Noble Indian and his association with the white hero is constructed from a visual point of view and from the voice-over narration point of view. Thus, both Costner-director and Costner-actor influence the audience in their perceptions of the Other. Costner-director connects Dunbar and Kicking Bird visually in one specific moment: the first time John Dunbar realizes that he is at the edge of civilization, as it was his wish, he runs his hand through the wheat. The camera focuses on his hand and on nature. Later, almost fifty minutes into the movie, when Kicking Bird makes his first appearance and just before his meeting with Dunbar in the fort, he runs his hand through the wheat. In both

cases, the director focuses visually on their similar way of touching or getting into contact with Nature and in both cases the shot is focused on the hands.

This same technical device of presenting two distinct characters is accentuated also as both characters are somehow intruders in each other's world. Dunbar is in the West, in the frontier as he wished; it is the particular universe for the Lakota. Dunbar's hand on the wheat is not menacing. In a similar way, when Kicking Bird enters the microcosm of the fort, he does not have a menacing attitude; in fact, he is just checking its conditions. In addition, their first meeting is completely different from the way the Pawnees were shown the first time. Kicking Bird seems as scared and frightened as Dunbar when they see each other. Even the physical appearance is opposite to the Pawnees. Although Kicking Bird is wearing the complete 'Instant Indian Kit' (Friar and Friar 93) such as moccasins, feathers, clothes, arrows, the impression he gives is warming and not threatening. Indeed, the fact that Dunbar is completely naked adds a humorous tone to the scene.

As the popular expression says, "the first impression is the one that counts," so we judge, assess and compare Kicking Bird's behavior to Dunbar's similar attitude. As the Indian duplicates Dunbar's actions, we conclude Kicking Bird is representing the Noble Indian. In addition, Costner-actor also influences us with his comments on Kicking Bird and the rest of the Lakota tribe. The first comment on Kicking Bird is "a magnificent good-looking fellow" ("Dances" 01:00:43-45), which foresees the close relationship and the respect they are going to have for each other. His journal and his voice-over narration also guide us through his views on Indians as we see the life of the Lakota people through his participation in some rituals (hunting, storytelling, trade) and through his eyes.

In this way, he deconstructs the traditional image of the Indians as the fierce enemy, on the contrary, as Dunbar says,

> nothing I was told is correct (...) they are "so eager to laugh, so devoted to their families, so dedicated to each other. The only word I can think of is harmony. I found myself drawn to them much stronger that to my obligation to the army ("Dances" 01:34:23-35).

Although we see a new depiction of the Indian, it is true that we only see two well-developed and round Indian characters: Kicking Bird and Wind-In-His-Hair. Both have different roles in Dunbar's assimilation to Native life but both represent what has been commonly called 'the sidekick'. As we said in the first chapter, although Fenimore Cooper has been considered one of the precursors of the Western genre, his real legacy to the Western genre was the introduction of the topic of the friendship or bond between two characters from different races. The Indian side-kick, as Kicking Bird is, becomes the teacher of the white man. A white man who dwells between places (frontier and fort) and between races (white and Indian) in his assimilation process. Simmon sees this relationship more in the sense of Indian as parent, who adopts an orphaned child of white settlers (28). Thus, the white man gone Indian is a primitive version of the product of mixing both races: the new American man.

Wind-In-His-Hair also depicted as sidekick although in a minor level, represents the Indian as the fearless courageous and young warrior, i.e., he is the representation of the masculinity and relative fierceness. As Peter Van Lent points out this type of Native American is "less passive, less blissful, and less benign" (212). Visually, he is wearing his Indian kit symbols (Friar and Friar 93) like a knife or tomahawk, a kind of feathered bonnet and he is bare chest to show his bravery and to denote a kind of physical appeal. If Kicking Bird is regarded

more as a counsellor, Wind-In-His-Hair equals the role of a fellow soldier, Sergeant or Colonel in the Army. He is the one Dunbar must impress most in the hunting scene or in the fight with the Pawnees for a final acceptance within the Lakota as a warrior, in other words, Dunbar must prove its masculinity. It is him with whom Dunbar first trade his military vest, he is the one who helps Dunbar get dressed for his Indian wedding to Stands-With-A-Fist, somehow taking the role of a best man. In fact, it is Wind-In-His-Hair's final heart-breaking and passionate farewell from the top of a mountain to Dunbar that reminds how far two distinctive cultures may come when mutual recognition is achieved ("Do you see that I am your friend? Can you see that you will always be my friend?" "Dances" 03:48:55-49-11).

Other characters may stand out from the Lakota crowd like Ten Bears, the tribal chief, Black Shawl, Kicking Bird's wife or Smiles-A-Lot, who finally retrieves the journal to Dunbar but they are just characters that provide background information or actions to the main characters. Ten Bears could fulfill the role of the wise old chief in S. Elizabeth Bird's definition. He is the one in the tribal council who advises talking to the strange white man. The rest of the Lakota are depicted *en masse*. Pat Dowell claims that the Lakota people in *Dances* became the 'forefathers' of Native Americans in subsequent Westerns: they are the new conservatives as they are supportive of the role of the family within society; they show an ecological point of view and solidarity between races; they are spiritual people and they are fundamentally nonviolent yet their representation as endangered species (11). These positive traits are completely different from previous typical images of Native Americans in the Western. However, the fact that their story is told from the point of view of a white man, as we have commented before, rests credibility to the portrayals. It is the white man

who transforms himself in a Native and through his transformation we are partially immersed in their culture. Yet, most of the characters are "essentially decoration" (Hoffman 48) who are used "as a flattering and picturesque supporting cast" (Bowden 119) at the service of the morally superior white man. The portrayal has improved if we compare them to older Westerns; however, their mystic and spiritual status is highly regarded because they are portrayed as vanished and because Dunbar tells us their story.

The Native American female portrayal in films, the 'Celluloid Maiden', as M. Elise Marubbio calls her in her 2006 book *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film* has always been more problematic as their portrayal mixes the problem of the race of his male counterparts, sexuality and gender. Either depicted as a princess or as a fetish femme fatale, Marubbio establishes a classification of three types of celluloid Native American women (14-21): (a) the Celluloid Princess, whose main presence is during the silent era and in the 1950s; (b) the Sexualized Maiden in the 1940s, 1950s and 1990s; and, finally, (c) the Hybrid Maiden, mixing traits of the previous two types, in the 1970s and 1990s. Either way, this Celluloid Maiden is a convention, a social stereotyped archetype created in order to fulfill the patriarchal order. The Celluloid Princess is (a) a noble savage who represents a softer version of Native Americans and the possibility of assimilation peacefully like her Noble Indian male fellow; (b) she is connected to the natural world and she represents exoticism and beauty; and (c) she represents a cultural bridge or mediator between both civilizations and she is the tool by which the white man comprehends Indian culture (Marubbio "Killing" 12-13). She may die due to suicide or a tragic infortune so her union with the white hero cannot be

completed. She is the metaphor for the vast land on the continent to be tamed by civilization (220).

The other side of the coin of this Celluloid Maiden is the Sexualized Maiden, a similar figure to the Savage Indian male. She is exotic and beautiful as the Princess and her relationship with the white hero "symbolizes the danger of crossing racial taboos" (Marubbio "Killing" 7) and the dangers of assimilation (Marubbio "Killing" 221). She is usually mixed-blood which may explain her immorality, savagery, her sexual active figure and harm to the white males in the movies (Marubbio "Killing" 7). As the princess, her death is justified in terms of freeing the community of her dangerous threat (Marubbio "Killing" 8).

In *Dances*, we have two female representatives: Stands-With-A-Fist and Black Shawl. Stands-With-A-Fist is Dunbar's female process of the white women gone Indian because of her adoption in the Lakota tribe as a child when her family died in a Pawnee attack. Stands-with-a-Fist is not only the Indianized woman who becomes the romantic engagement of the hero in the movie, following Marubbio's Princess features we mentioned before, but she also introduces the language, the customs, and culture of the Lakota people to Dunbar. Thus, this typical role of female natives is usurped by a white woman. However, both Dunbar and Stands-With-A-Fist are marked with white traits. If Dunbar never left his army pants, Stands-With-a-Fist's hair is completely different from the rest of the Sioux women. Therefore, she is portrayed as a Celluloid Princess although she is not native, and she may represent the Sexualized Maiden as the danger of mixing races. However, the fact that she is white avoids the still problematic issue of miscegenation.

The other female characters in the movie are Kicking Bird's wife and the women of the tribe. Kicking Bird's wife role is just to speak out on the acceptance

of the tribe of Dunbar and Stands-With-a-Fist union. The rest of the Lakota women are just background characters to show family and community life, emphasized by the fact they are the main donors to Dunbar's dowry for his marriage. However, their lack of voice within the story condemns them to oblivion.

When we explained the formal aspects of the Western, we saw how the Myth of Frontier and Conquest are characterized by conflict due to the clash of different worldviews, and how violence rose because of the forced displacement of Native Americans and the destruction of their culture in the name of progress, (Slotkin 11). As Slotkin claimed, violence and conflict are not genuine 'American' but a global reaction when two civilizations oppose. What is significant about America is how those forms of violence, savagery vs. civilization, have been given a mythic meaning in the history of America. In addition to this, Cawelti pointed out how madness has been a sign of savagery and how this madness feature has been attached to different figures in the Western, not only the Indians, but also the Indian haters or outlaws (35). In that way, the attributes of the hero using violence in a moral and controlled way differentiates him from the others. Furthermore, Phillip French cited in C. P. Lee affirms that the clash between wilderness and civilization equals the clash between reason and unreason, madness and sanity (4).

Since the very first moments, some of the word used when referring to Indians has been 'heathens', 'barbarians', 'pagans', or 'savages' (Berkhofer 24). All these terms do not only imply a religious connotation, especially with the establishment of Puritan settlers in the first colonies, but also a lesser level of intelligence considering Indians as a species of degraded, vicious, cannibalistic

and degenerated members, when compared with whites. Those images intend to establish the Indian as a symbol of terror in white consciousness.

Wes Studi performs the role of a Pawnee leader in *Dances*. His presentation and that of his fellow Pawnees are just through unjustified violence and death, so, his Savage Indian type is presented from the very beginning. The first time they appear is through the flashback of Stands-With-A-Fist recalling how the Lakota tribe adopted her after the murder of her whole family at the hands of the Pawnees. The second time is in the attack on the peaceful and Noble Lakota people. Thus, their madness and savagery are not only accentuated through their threatening physical appearance but also through their attack on key people in the film. If they had killed Stands-With-A-Fist and/or if they had killed the main members of the Lakota, Dunbar's blending with the Lakota tribe would have been impossible and we would not have had any story to enjoy. Wes Studi's character is not a developed character in the story; in fact, he pictures what the wilderness represents: the unknown. His only function in the film is to have the feeling of threat and violence present in the frontier, like announcing something is going to take place at some point but we do not know when or how.

The Last of the Mohicans (1992) follows most of the tenets proposed by *Dances,* although the setting of the story, the woods of Upstate New York, is quite different from the Prairies of *Dances,* yet it is equally remote from any civilization. Its title, as in *Dances,* is quite misleading once the audience sees the film. Freely based on Fenimore Cooper's novel, Michael Mann films the life of Nathaniel Hawkeye and his two Native relatives, Chingachgook and Uncas, during the French and Indian War for the control of the country between France and the UK.

As in *Dances*, the real protagonists of the story are not the Native Americans characters that seem to indicate the title, but the white man turned Indian, Nathaniel Poe, 'Hawkeye'. His adoption of Indian ways has been more complete than that of Dunbar's, as he was adopted and raised as a Mohican by Chingachgook since an early age. Yet Chingachgook, as he was quite conscious of the white progress into the continent, sent both of his children to a white school so they could know both worlds. As Lt. Dunbar, Nathaniel adopts a Native name, Hawkeye, also related to the natural world, making the association between Native Americans and the Mother Earth more visible. In fact, he is more than "the man who knows Indians", as Slotkin claimed, in the frontier.

Hawkeye represents the bridge between two worlds, the progressive and war-like white civilization and the quasi-vanished Native civilization. He is the future of America based on Native American culture but through white blood lines (Marubbio "Celebrating" 147; Rinne 14) "while remaining separate from nationalistic allegiances" (Smith 77) as the movie switches from telling the story of Indians to the survival of a love story in the middle of war (Rinne 14). Since he represents both worlds, he is marked distinctively as a superior in both worlds. He retains the old values of honor and honesty of Native Americans and values of progress of the Frontier, giving him an aura of a new American (Rinne 19; Smith 77). Visually, he is always depicted in the middle, between Uncas and Chingachgook (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 9); he is leading the action of Native Americans, such as in the opening scene of the film, but also with the militia and even with the British Army representatives (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 13);. The militia's trust in Nathaniel, as exposed in front of Col. Munro, has always been intact. Even in Cora, Alice and Duncan's rescue, he is the one leading the action or the dialogue among Hurons to save them. As such, Uncas and Chingachgook

are his Indian sidekicks. Even in costumes, he is depicted differently. He is usually half-chest naked while the noble Native Americans are always fully clothed. In that way, his figure is given the sexual appeal necessary (Brantlinger 25; Egerton "Breed Apart" 14; Rinne 12)) for the white female protagonist to be enthralled.

Contrary to Nathaniel's future ahead, his Indian family represents the vanished and Noble Native Americans. The title refers to them, so their inclusion in the story is to provide some personal background support for Hawkeye. As it happened in *Dances*, the Indians know their doomed fate from the very beginning. Therefore, the tone of the film is rather nostalgic in their depiction of Native Americans (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 13; Smith 72) They are Noble Indians as they are linked to the hero and because they are not a threat to the nation. Indeed, Chingachgook prepared them for the new America as Uncas and Hawkeye were both sent to a white school, a representation of white civilization and culture. Visually they lack screen time and they always appear in the fringe of the white hero (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 9-13; Hilger 20). For instance, Chingachgook does not even appear once alone throughout the whole movie or he does not even talk at all in English until the last scene in the movie (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 11). To emphasize the ostracism of the Indian characters, Marubbio claims that, for instance, Cora never speaks to Uncas or Chingachgook as her only interest is Hawkeye's as the exotic association of whiteness and Nativeness ("Celebrating", 146).

Traditionally, American Indian males have been depicted as sexual threats to white women especially in captivity narratives during the Indian Wars. However, their primitivism and closeness to Nature gave them also an aura of free, wild and passionate men with some erotic appeal even to males especially

engraved in the Going Indian myth (Bird 65; Van Lent 217). In the 1990s, as Indians are in a safe dead past, they are depicted as a mixture of beauty and masculinity and virility, but as tender and loving males. Either in the past or currently, they have become the object of desire as if they were commodities to use whenever they are required. Indeed, they are sexualized or desexualized depending on the relationship with whites. Bird states how the hero who has Indian traits, but white blood has to be "wild enough to be exciting but still civilized enough to be acceptable" (70). In that sense, Hawkeye fulfills the role of 'sex-symbol' as he is converted from an aging man in Cooper's novel to a young attractive male Other (Brantlinger 25). Cora becomes attracted to him almost immediately making her reject his UK Army suitor and confront her own father. Even Uncas, the "fetishized erotic Other" (Marubbio "Celebrating" 142) fulfills this feature although the attraction between him and Alice is only hinted briefly in the film. In fact, Alice's falling off the cliff is rather confusing as it takes place after Uncas' death at the hands of Magua. Therefore, we could assume she follows her lover's destiny making their love story incomplete but safely avoiding an interracial romance. In fact, her death avoids "a fate worse than death" (Telotte 120), i.e., the disgrace of becoming the Indian wife of Magua, although there are not any indication of sexual advance or threat by Magua to white women in the film. Indeed, his only goal is to take revenge on Gen. Munro, as he claims that his desire is to wipe Gen. Munro's heirs out[22].

Bird also comments on another image created in the 1990s, the wise elder Indian, a Noble and desexualized Indian figure who is based on the idea of the

[22] Magua: When the Grey Hair is dead, Magua will eat his heart. Before he dies, Magua will put his children under the knife, so the Grey Hair will know his seed is wiped out forever. ("Mohicans" 00:42:15-29)

Indian culture as mystical and whom the New Age movement has taken as a role model for its tenets. Although we could presuppose it is a positive depiction, it is negative as he is powerless because he is usually the last representative of a doomed civilization. Chingachgook represent this desexualized figure. His Noble attitude offering advice to Nathaniel and Uncas and his inability to interact with other characters in the film makes him a doomed figure with no voice. He is so powerless in his depiction that even in one of the most horrible moments a father can have in life, watching his child die, he is denied the right to speak out (Rinne 17-18). Consequently, this death that means the death of his nation also represents the imposed silence of the tragic history of Native American Nations in American history. The only scream and voice we hear is the one of Hawkeye, who once again becomes the focus on the movie. Like Dunbar in *Dances*, Hawkeye represents the new American and the authoritative voice to speak for Native Americans.

The authorization of the white gone Indian and, consequently, the new world order in America is visually depicted at the end of the movie. The survivors of the story, Chingachgook, Hawkeye and Cora stay at the top of the mountain offering a prayer to the Great Spirit and emphasizing Chingachgook's uniqueness at the last representative of his people, thus, subtly pushing and liberating Hawkeye of his Indian way of life (Marubbio "Celebrating" 147). In this spiritual part, the character who is closer to the audience is Chingachgook as he is leading the scene. However, after the prayer has finished, the point of view of the camera changes making Cora and Hawkeye the main focus, as Edgerton explains in his article (11). This change of point of view is the new social order in the New America. The Indians are the previous necessary step but their time is over and they need to step aside in order for the white hero to achieve an American identity

(Deloria "Mohicans" 168; Edgerton "Breed Apart" 11; Marubbio "Celebrating" 147; Rinne 19). This symbolic scene is also marked by a bizarre moment. Although the use of native language in recent films has been accounted as an achievement of the inclusion of Native American culture in their depictions (with translations provided for the audience), the fact that at the end of the movie Chingachgook suddenly speaks to Nathaniel in English help to disempower him even more (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 11). The same happened in *Dances with Wolves* with Kicking Bird who, with broken English, expresses his love and respect for the white leaving hero. This sudden change to English diminishes the Indian character and the film, as Dunbar is the only white man Kicking Bird has been friend with, as he states, and we do not see any hint in the movie that the learning of languages has been both ways. Thus, his English is unexpected and unwelcome. In a similar way, Chingachgook speaks in English after the prayer, which coincides with the camera's point of view change (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 11). However, this speech in English seems more authentic than the one in *Dances,* as in the film we saw Chingachgook interacting with the Cameron family and even in the militia discussion with Gen. Munro at Fort Henry. This switch from native to English language is another way to emphasize the birth of a new world However, it is out of context in the film and diminishes the Indian characters.

Together with the Noble Indians, Uncas and Chingachgook and the white man gone Indian, the other Indian protagonist in the film is Magua. He is the traditional Savage Indian by his looks and by his behavior. The association between madness and savagery is done through this character. Depicted physically as threatening, his actions categorize him as the bloody-thirsty Indian whose intentions are not the recovery of Indian land or Indian rights, but a personal revenge for the loss of his family. He betrays everyone; he is an ally of

the French infiltrated in the UK army as a scout in order to take revenge but he is never respected among Indians or among whites. He has been defined as the symbol of the racial conflict between two opposite worldviews (Rinne 15) and "unassimilative savage and militant" (Marubbio "Celebrating" 143). However, his savagery and villainy make him a disposable character. Although some scholars claim that in the 1992 version he is depicted with a more positive light as the symbol of Indian displacement and survival (Aleiss "Making" 147; Marubbio "Celebrating" 143) and somehow justifying his reasons to act the way he does (Hilger 61), the audience is unable to empathize with him or to feel pity about him. He rebels against everybody: against his French allies when the French do not kill Munro; against the UK army as he infiltrated just to be closer to his target and, even, against his own people in the Huron village. Furthermore, Magua represents a threat to Cora, Alice and their Noble Indian rescuers and to the whole colonial order. Then, he must be punished by Chingachgook, who not only avenges his own son's death at the edge of a cliff but also proclaims himself as the savior of the new colonial order reinforcing his role as the Noble but doomed Indian. Thus, Magua's death also marks the new colonial order where the traits of savagery and madness cannot be tolerated; consequently, as it cannot be the germ of the new American society, he must die.

Although Magua represents the Savage Indian, he is more developed than his Noble antagonists. Indeed, he has more screen time and more dialogue than Uncas and Chingachgook (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 11), and he is fluent in English. We could think that more screen time would mean more developed or round Noble or Savage Indian characters but, on the contrary, the screen time they are allowed to have helps to reinforce their stereotyped image. Among all the Indian characters portrayed in the movie, Magua is the most developed. We can see his

intelligence, patience, determination and his abilities and skills, which we could somehow define as positive traits if we were talking about a positive character (Rinne 7, 15). However, his final goal cannot be justified as he does not fight for land possession or for his rights as Indian, but a personal fight. Therefore, this makes him a faulty Indian.

The fact that both Magua, the evil Indian, and Uncas and Chingachgook, the noble Indians, do not have family ties emphasizes the stereotyping of them as savage and doomed. As we have seen, Magua justifies his desire for revenge against Gen. Munro because Munro was the one to blame for Magua's family loss. Therefore, his continuance as Indian is limited by the absence of the main force of reproduction, the woman. On the other hand, Uncas and Chingachgook, are the last of their tribe, as the title of the movie suggests, and both of them do not have ties with any woman (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 9). As we said, Chingachgook is the prototype of noble Indian because he is intelligent enough to see the progress of white civilization, which means his tragic fate. Moreover, there is no reference to Uncas' mother throughout the whole movie, and since there are no more American Indian women available, Uncas, who may represent the only hope for the Mohicans to survive, is subtly romantically involved with Alice, which causes his death and later, Alice's suicide. Therefore, miscegenation is once again not allowed because both lovers are punished: Uncas for fixing his eye on a white woman, and Alice for loving an Indian man. The problem of miscegenation is also avoided as the love story between Hawkeye and Cora is the romance between two representatives of white civilization (Rinne 16). One of them, Hawkeye, being the merger of Indian and white civilization, whose erotic and sex-appeal makes him the target of the white woman gaze. Thus, the involvement of Cora with Nathaniel is appropriate as both come from the same race.

This absence of continuation of the nation through bloodlines is emphasized by the lack of an insight of tribal or community life where women are present except for the Huron village where Cora has been taken as captive (Edgerton "Breed Apart" 7). However, these brief scenes do not help the audience to relate to them. Indeed, after the exchange of prisoners, Magua is given Alice and he announces a kind of self-exile, with the only companion of some fellow warriors and Alice. This moment represents the only hint of a possible sexual threat to Alice; however, Mohicans' intervention makes the racial convergence impossible, using Rinne's ideas (14-15). In addition, this absence of community and tribal life, that is, native culture, helps reinforce the idea of an extinct civilization.

After being depicted as the Savage Indian in, probably, the biggest blockbusters of the decade having Indian characters as quasi-protagonist, Wes Studi starred as the Chiricahua leader in *Geronimo: An American Legend* (1993). As in previous films, the title is very significant. On the one hand, we have Geronimo, the Chiricahua who has been traditionally featured as the fiercest enemy of the Cavalry. Yet, on the other hand, we can also infer that the film is not going to deal with his ferocious campaigns against the Cavalry because he has been catalogued as American, as part of the American history and culture. Whereas in *Dances* and in *Mohicans* we needed a white man to be the germ for the new American society, the director has conveyed the meaning adopting Geronimo into American folklore to retell Geronimo's last stand and the story of the people who collaborated in his final capture, or , as Kilpatrick argues in her book Celluloid Indians "this is a film about the white man's experience of Geronimo, not about the man or his people" (144).

However, as usual, the story is not told by Geronimo himself but through the voice-over narration of Britton Davis, who introduces not only the people involved in the venture but he also offers his points of view on the story and informs us about the events that takes place in the film. It is curious how he provides an insight about Geronimo and the meetings he had with Lit. Gatewood, the real hero of the Geronimo's capture, when according to the film, he is the one who has an almost non-existent contact with the Indian leader. That is why we think he seems not to be a reliable narrator although Gatewood does authorize him because "someone has to tell the truth" ("Geronimo" 01:31:04) after Geronimo's surrender and later ship to Florida. However, Davis' comments are biased by his deep admiration for Lt. Gatewood and Geronimo, even though the former was left to ostracism after the successful venture. As in *Dances*, the voice over-narration displaces the Indian from the present and confirms his vanishment and it authorizes Davis as the narrator (Prats "Master" 24), especially as Davis narrates the broken promise to Geronimo. Tunney claims that the "confessional voice-over narration" reduces the figure of Geronimo to "supporting player in his own movie" (47). We agree with this statement partially as the movie is not about Geronimo but about the Geronimo Campaign until his final surrender in 1886. Also, the fact that the narrator is a white man once again makes the narrator dissociate "himself from the shame of conquest" (Prats "Master" 23).

The US Cavalry is represented by (a) Davis, who resigned the army after informing the audience that none of the promises to Geronimo were kept; (b) Lit. Gatewood, who can be described as 'the man who knows Indians' as during the film he establishes almost an equal relationship with Geronimo earning his respect by speaking Apache and even protecting him from a posse; and, lastly, (c)

Gen. George Crook, who truly respects Indians but is obliged to resign after Geronimo's escape from San Carlos Reservation. These men are the light and positive side of the Army as they show respect for Indian traditions. However, to understand the final disgrace of these men, we need to have an antagonist counterpart, Gen. Nelson Miles. He replaces Crook and his only goal is to chase Geronimo and send him to Florida with some vague promises. Miles calls in Gatewood Davis, Al Sieber, an old West Scout, and Chato, a Chiricahua Indian, and orders them to find Geronimo. With the rendition of Geronimo, an old way of life disappears, and American History is legitimized despite the broken promises and broken treaties with Native Americans.

Gatewood's final ostracism and the focus on the evil nature of Gen. Miles, plus the confinement of the Indian Scouts of the army, give the impression that, as other films, have shown the mistreatment of Native Americans have been caused by just one evil white man (Churchill 189-190). In that way, the director does not make the audience leave their 'comfort zone' as they are not going to reevaluate the army's role. Indeed, we are going to feel nostalgic and pity for the great warrior Geronimo, but also for those white men who helped Indians and who were betrayed by the army. Thus, the film is not only about Geronimo and his conflict with the US government but also about Lit. Gatewood.

In terms of Indian characters, we find different possibilities. On the one hand, the film offers a savage depiction of Indians. At the beginning of the movie, Gatewood instructs Davis on the Apaches and on how to find them: "The Apache go where the best fight is. It is a moral value once you understand it" ("Geronimo" 00:11:48-54). In another scene, Davis is recommended to "save the last bullet for yourself when fighting Apache" ("Geronimo" 00:57:16-20). Geronimo himself claims his war-like behavior and heralds his next actions while talking to

Gatewood in the reservation after the first surrender: "Some Apaches are good farmers. Others miss the old way. I am not good farmer, Gatewood" ("Geronimo 00:30:2639).

However, that war-like attitude is clearly diminished throughout the film during the conversations he has with Gatewood, Gen. Crook and Davis' voice-over narration. Indeed, what we see and what we are informed about is that they are brave, honest, respect others although at times they are brutal (Pinkterton "Film Comment"), but not very different from whites as Geronimo points out to Gen. Crook when they measure each civilization's attitude towards the other (Gen. Crook: "You killed women and children"; Geronimo: "So did you" 01:02:33-56). Although his war-like attitude seems to be justified as a way to recover his family, as he states, he is also featured as a doomed Indian in two ways. On the one hand, his misinterpretation of the dream of an iron horse as a victory against white civilization, which marks his tragic end, impregnates him with the aura of the pitiful Indian who is unable to understand what is coming. On the other hand, although the whole movie we hear Davis' interpretation of the events, Geronimo is able to give his final eulogy marking the end of his life as a warrior but also the end of a way of life. Thus, his words endorse the victory of white civilization with its technology and farming over the Native warrior ways (Budd 178), represented by their removal of his people by the train, the most significant feature of the white progress (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 148). Then, as the title states, Geronimo becomes an American legend as his time has finally passed.

Another Apache who is a witness of Geronimo's surrender is Chato, the Indian Scout of the Cavalry. He represents the assimilated Noble Indian who has understood that the advance of white civilization is unstoppable. Yet, his somehow silence and broken English throughout the film foresees his final fate.

After Geronimo's surrender, the Indian scouts are discharged of their army obligations and forced to embark as well in the train with Geronimo, so Chato has also been used by the Army as a commodity (Kilpatrick "Celluloid Indians" 145). Therefore, even when he fights for American ideals, his ethnicity as Indian makes him unable to live in the new social order: his identity marks his fate, i.e., isolation from society in a reservation with other Indians. In other words, he has been punished for being too white and abandon his people.

Indeed, we see the internal struggle within the same Native nation on their way to approach white civilization or, on the contrary, to reject it in favor of a more traditional Indian way of life. This is related to the 1990s real struggle within tribes between those who believe collaboration and/or assimilation towards mainstream white society would help them against the traditionalists who support a more Indian way of life in terms of religion, traditions and culture. That is why in the film we also find the character of Mangas, one of Geronimo's warriors, who is contrary to serve the cavalry and who explicitly states his dislike for what Chato represents (Kilpatrick 146).

As in *The Last of the Mohicans*, we do not have any insight into tribal life and community. The only time where the community is reflected is in San Carlos Reservation, where the conditions are deplorable and the conflict rises again between officers and Indians when the soldiers misinterpret the Ghost Dance. Even during the reservation scene, the Indian chief is shown as homeless with no family. There are some references to his dead wife and children where he states that he is fighting to recover his family. As it happened with Chingachgook, this absence of family emphasizes his depiction as a nostalgic and pitiful character. In addition, the absence of family indicates the non-continuity of the race, once

again emphasizing the image of the American Indian as vanished from American society.

3. 4. 2. *Pathfinder, White Fang, Pocahontas,* and *The New World*

The three key films discussed before share some features that are going to be transferred to later movies, such as plots, techniques as the voice-over narration and the Going Indian myth. One of the examples that was intended to show the pre-Columbus Indians era is *Pathfinder* (2007), a film set 400 years before the arrival of Columbus to the American continent. The film, considered "one of the funniest films of the year" (Ordona, "LA Times") or "a cinematic abortion" (Telsh "Cinemablend"), and a box office failure, is a horrendous amalgamation of *The Last of the Mohicans* and *Dances with Wolves*. From the former, it shares some of the actions and the character of Russell Means, as the doomed chief, and the idea of a white man raised as Indian; from the latter, it shares the conventions of the White Savior Film, acting as His Saving Grace.

Ghost does not know who he is; he was adopted by the Indian tribe as he was found abandoned in a ship. He is tormented by his dreams and his people's lack of acceptance. After Vikings return and destroy his village, he sets off on a journey to find himself and to save Native people. In his journey across the land, he encounters two unexpected helpers: Starfire, the daughter of Pathfinder and Pathfinder himself, who needs to choose a new guide for the tribe.

Ghost needs to become a better Indian than the Indians themselves showing how to fight the Vikings by warning Indians that their primitive tools will not be enough. Armed with a Viking sword and a shield that he has never used before, speaking again a language he has never spoken, following the White

Savior features, Ghost uses the enemy's techniques plus Native's techniques to fight the enemy. He proves himself to be the best Native warrior in war despite his previous rejection in the council. His attributes as a Native warrior are certified by Pathfinder before dying at the hands of the Vikings. In fact, Pathfinder gives Ghost the attributes of the Pathfinder so Ghost can give it to the next pathfinder. As in *Dances*, we encounter the triangle of the Natives, the Hero/Savior and the bad Whites, another feature of the White Savior genre.

Hughey claimed that sentimental language is part of the white savior genre (29). In this case, it is used to authorize Ghost to become a native warrior and a protector of the Natives[23]. Although we have not seen any conflict before the arrival of the Vikings, it is his warrior-like behavior what Pathfinder sanctions as a warrior. Language is also part of the identity of a person. In this case, when people referred to Ghost, the language was used to isolate him, to marginalize in order to make him different. As different as he is, he becomes the savior of the natives. The journey, as in *Dances*, marks his identity. At the beginning he does not know who he is, and after Pathfinder's acceptance and Ghost's defense of Starfire, he becomes one of the Natives at the end of the movie ("I know who I am" 01:34:03). Therefore, the journey is a search of his own identity, in order to become a warrior within the tribe. Once again, we are told the story of a white man finding himself not the story of the Pathfinder and the tribe.

Pathfinder, the Guide of the Tribe, is the prototype of the wise old chief whose only role is to authorize the white hero. Although at the beginning he rejects Ghost because of his troublesome identity, he recognizes him as his Saving Grace, using Hughey's words, so Ghost becomes worthy enough to be a warrior

[23] Pathfinder (to Ghost): "Occupy my place and I will occupy yours" ("Pathfinder" 01:11:21-24)

to protect Native People. Pathfinder's character is not very well developed if we compare him with other wise old chiefs in previous films. In fact, his initial animosity against Ghost is not very well understood in the plot. His death is clearly a copy of Uncas' death in *The Last of the Mohicans*.

The other Native character who is not depicted *en masse* is Starfire, Pathfinder's daughter. As her father, her character is not very well developed. At the beginning of the movie, there are some hints of attraction between her and Ghost in a Pocahontas' style she decides to help the white against her own father's desires. Marubbio divided the Celluloid Princess into two figures: the lover, or the helper (29). The lover is the innocent noble woman who is usually a full-blood Indian, the chief's daughter, and who may die so that the Conquest can follow its trail. On the contrary, the helper is described as an innocent child who may follow the assimilation trail impregnating a romantic nostalgia on the culture.

Starfire's princess status is marked by her position as the daughter of the Pathfinder, but also with clothes. She stands out from the crowd so she is objectified from the very first scenes in the film. She is the narrator of the film, but we only know that at the end of the film. Her words just relate to Ghost's story, nothing about her people and how they managed to survive. As her father, her role is to authorize the white hero and to elevate him to the position of the leader, which features her as a helper and not as a lover. She also uses some form of sentimental language when she claims that Ghost "found his way. He didn't belong to any of them but he belonged to both. He changed my life and the destiny of our people" ("Pathfinder" 01:42:03-25). Therefore, we could assume a romantic relationship between both but that is unclear.

The *White Fang* franchise of 1994 is also an example of the doomed Indians type and the Princess type. The doomed Indian is Moses, the chief of an

Alaskan tribe who is fighting against starvation and lack of water and natural resources. Indeed, the film starts with a priest recommending and warning the chief to leave their sacred lands before it is too late. The clash of civilizations is shown with the religious connotations of the dialogue between them as both diminished each other's religious faith as 'stories'. Moses, as the wise old chief type, has a vision of a wolf with Lilly, his niece, and he believes it means his people will be saved if the wolf is brought back to lead them to the Caribou. Then, Lilly sets off on a journey to seek the wolf which she sees when Henry and White Fang almost drowned in the river. Thinking Henry is the reincarnation of the Wolf, she takes him to the Indian camp where we see that he has the same vision Moses had and decides to help the Indians. Once back in the Indian camp, he is given a sacred arrow to go hunting to find the Caribou. This fact is quite misleading as we wonder why Peter, as the son of the chief, is not given these traits as he is the Indian and heir of the tribe. Indeed, the protagonist in the tribal ritual in the sacred house is Henry, who promotes him as the hero and Peter as the doomed Indian.

The idea of miscegenation is played in the movie as Henry and Lilly seem to be romantically linked. However, Lilly is the one who rejects the idea, emphasizing the idea of not mixing racial taboos, especially as she represents the Princess type. In fact, she teaches him about hunting and about some traditions of the tribe. In a hunting trip, Peter is confirmed as the doomed Indian, as he dies helping Henry find the Caribou; this confirms Henry's hero status within the community, as Moses did in the Indian ceremony. Yet, they found the real reason why the priest wanted them to leave: a gold mine. With the help of Lilly, Henry becomes the white savior of the film when he dynamites the mine so water can run again around the land so the Indians can fish again. Although he is not

familiar with the terrain, he does not know how to hunt or track people in the forest, he is the one who is able to find the mine and restore life in the tribal community. At the end of the film, Henry is the white man gone Indian living in the Indian community with White Fang and its family.

The Celluloid Princess we have been reviewing in previous films had the maximum exposure in 1995 with Disney's *Pocahontas*. The film tells us the historically inaccurate story of the encounter between the Princess Pocahontas and John Smith, whose marketed story flooded the world with thousands of products months before and after the official release of the film (d'Entremont "Pocahontas" 1302; Edgerton and Jackson 94; Kilpatrick "Pocahontas, 37, Mintz 370). With this overexposure of the story, the audience might forget that Pocahontas was a real woman, one of the children of chief Powhatan; or that she was 12, and not the "Native American Barbie" (Edgerton and Jackson 95[24]) woman she was transformed into in spite of the Native American consultants working in the development of the film (Kilpatrick "Pocahontas" 37). The problem is that we have this story and the rescue of John Smith so embedded as screen memory that the film becomes history. Thus, the filmmakers mixed fact and fiction transforming the important issues it raises such as racism, colonialism or environmental mindfulness into a love story (Edgerton and Jackson 94).

The racism can be seen not only in Gov. Radcliffe's favorite words 'savages', 'stupid' or 'hideous' when talking about Native Americans, but also even in the songs so popularized at the time. If the song 'Colors of the Wind' called for respect and tolerance from a Native American point of view, the song 'Savages' describes the ideology of the Conquest, the clash of civilizations and, what is

[24] Edgerton and Jackson mentioned that term from Laura Shapiro in her view of the film for Newsweek.

worse, it dehumanizes Native Americans (Edgerton and Jackson 93, 96). Yet, the song is later retaken by Native Americans to add their point of view but the fact the images of the colonists and Gov. Radcliffe screaming "Savages!" while they rip off the land to build a fort to protect them from Native Americans say more about the white civilization's worldview rather than about that of the Indians. However, as Pauline Turner claims, the use of the song by Native Americans too does not justify the racist and degrading effect for Native Americans (418). Indeed, she compares this term with the word 'nigger', which it would be unthinkable to find in an Academy awarded song or any song in general. To add another element to this racist discourse in the film, Edgerton and Jackson claim that race is only used as a stylistic device, however, the consequences "are never allowed to invade audience's comfort zone" (95). The fact that the traditional image of the Indians is always related to the past does not provoke any kind of reaction in the public. We distance ourselves from the action and the consequences because we do not identify those people in our current society. In other words, we do not identify with the white colonists and their behavior as they are depicted as degraded characters, completely opposite to us; yet we do not identify either with Native Americans or think about the effect of white behavior on Native Americans because we do not see them in current society. Therefore, important issues are left unresolved because the focus of the story is Pocahontas and John Smith's relationship (Edgerton and Jackson 94).

In fact, colonialism can be seen from the very first moment in the film. Gov. Radcliff's motifs to be in the new continent are less to explore the area and more than to build a colony to get gold or other resources to get power back in England. Without meeting Native Americans, he talks about them in colonial terms, as properties subject to the British Crown. He does not adapt himself to

the circumstances and land; this is why he needs to build a fort to accentuate his power and to emphasize the image of Native Americans as the enemy. In fact, the only one adapting to the new land is his dog that becomes the 'dog gone Indian' due to his friendship with Pocahontas' raccoon Meeko at the end of the movie. This colonial attitude influences the way both civilizations see Nature and the land itself. While Native Americans regarded Nature as a living entity where all is connected to a superior Spiritn as Pocahontas teaches John Smith, the white settlers regard Nature as a possession, as another commodity for them (Edwards 159). The first thing Radcliffe does upon his first step on the new continent is to proclaim the land to be English and to initiate the destruction of Nature.

In terms of characters, Pocahontas fulfills the traits Marubbio established for the Celluloid Princess ("Killing" 220). She is a noble savage who is both the lover and helper of the first white man she sees (Edgerton and Jackson 94; Kilpatrick "Pocahontas" 37), who represents the possibility of assimilation peacefully like her Noble Indian male fellow. She is connected with the natural world represented by her two mascots and her conversations with Grandmother Willow. Furthermore, Pocahontas represents exoticism and beauty as the Sexualized Maiden. She is changed into a supermodel following twentieth century tastes but being the eroticized 'Other' woman (Lacroix 222). Opposite to other white Disney heroines, the sexuality of 'Other' heroines, like Pocahontas, is exploited in the costume to benefit physical attributes like the bare-shoulder dress Pocahontas wears in the movie, which emphasizes her twentieth century voluptuous traits (Lacroix 221). She also represents a cultural bridge or mediator between both civilizations or, at least, this is the goal of the film. Nonetheless scholars like Pauline Turner Strong claim that she "is not a cultural interpreter but a child of nature" (412) who needs to be tamed like the vast continent ahead

for the white settlers. Pocahontas also shows a strong will and independence when she disobeys her father's orders not to approach the white newcomers but also when she sacrifices and stays with her people instead of following what is beyond the river bend. Lacroix insists that her behavior and her personality are related to her ethnicity in contrast to Smith's whiteness (225).

As Pocahontas, John Smith is also stereotyped and he becomes the prototype of the American hero: tall, blond, brave, and someone who does not follow social conventions and law easily. He is also transformed according to the twentieth century tastes while his real persona is very far from this "hunk" description, as d'Entremont points out in his article ("Pocahontas" 1302). In fact, the story around his rescue has been widely argued, as Smith loved to exaggerate his adventures.

The story of Pocahontas and Smith will always be linked to the famous Pocahontas' rescue at the time Smith was about to be punished by her father. This event, which represents the possible interracial union of both civilizations, is, at the same time, the cause of their separation. John Smith saves Powhatan from Thomas' rifle and gets wounded, what provokes his departure from the island. As Edwards points out, the interracial union that could be a device for peaceful racial relationships actually "displaces actual miscegenation from the narrative frame" (Edwards 151).

The other Indian characters in the movie present familiar archetypes. Kocoum is the stoic, harsh and impenetrable warrior. He is depicted as completely opposite to Pocahontas and Smith. He is the fearless warrior with physical appeal Van Lent describes in his article. Indeed, at times, he reminds us of Wind-In-His-Hair; yet, Kocoum's character is not as developed as the former and his only function in the film is to remind Pocahontas of her Native heritage.

He is the candidate to marry Pocahontas but her stubborn behavior disobeying her father's orders has the terrible consequence of Kocoum's murder. On the other hand, Powhatan, whose voice is former AIM leader Russell Means, the unforgettable Chingachgook in *The Last of the Mohicans*, represents a mixture of the wise old chief and Noble Indian rather than a warrior. He is respected by everybody in the tribe although his daughter seems to be the only transgressing the rules. He offers advice to Pocahontas and he is the reminder of the patriarchal power personalized by giving Pocahontas her mother's necklace as a sign for marriage (Edwards 155).

A flesh-and-blood Pocahontas is shown in *The New World* (2005) where we find again the figure of Pocahontas as the Celluloid Princess and her innocence and purity although this time the story is told with real actors. She is presented with a child-like behavior; she is a child of Nature as it is shown the first time we actually see her when she is praying to Nature, or Mother, as she repeats several times throughout the film. She is both a helper and a lover for John Smith as she seems to behave as the cultural mediator to avoid conflicts and, at the end, she is assimilated into white culture, especially after her marriage to John Rolfe. During her stay at Jamestown, people bow at her and even in the old continent she is called the "Princess New World" at the royal reception. Curiously enough, throughout the film we never hear the word 'Pocahontas', so the film makes the audience participate in the story inferring prior knowledge.

The contrast between the two civilizations is expressed with Nature. The Indians are the representation of Nature where they are shown living in harmony, beauty and peace. On the contrary, the white civilization is represented by constant movement, arguments, rules in an indoor atmosphere and a desire to tame Nature (Buscombe "The New World" 37; d'Entremont "The New World"

1025). It is a new world for both civilizations personalized in Pocahontas and John Smith (Ebert "New World"). During Smith's captivity and through his eyes we see Native American civilization, and during Pocahontas' life in Jamestown and her trip to England we are able to compare both worlds. This contrast between the two worlds is emphasized by the two main character's voice-over narration. Both expose their worldviews and tell us the story from their individual point of view (Ebert "New World"). As it happened in *Mohicans* and in *Dances,* the fact that Pocahontas suddenly speaks in English (Taubin 44-45)diminishes the idea of the learning process of both cultures as it emphasizes the idea of the superiority of the white civilization over the Natives. In fact, apart from simple words Pocahontas teaches Smith, we do not listen to him speaking in her Native language. Thus, the lack of language proficiency marks the mutual incomprehension (Buscombe "The New World" 39).

Apart from Pocahontas, the rest of the Indians are mere background prompts to indicate that they are the children of Nature and that they represent another civilization (Buscombe "The New World" 37). As d'Entremont comments, they are just reduced to stereotypes and to another element to conquer (1025). Buscombe also claims that the fact they are not translated into the movie reinforces the idea of the impossibility of knowing Indian culture, the idea they belong to Nature and the idea that they belong to an opaque culture ("The New World" 39). In fact, Buscombe emphasizes that the only cultural transfer is done by Pocahontas who penetrates English life and ways (39).

3. 4. 3. *Dead Man, Legends of the Fall, The Education of Little Tree,* and *The Scarlett Letter*

An exception to the emphasis on the beauty of Nature can be seen in *Dead Man* (1995). The movie focuses on William Blake, an accountant from the East who travels by train to a town called Machine, and his encounter with Nobody, a Native American who confuses him with the great British poet William Blake. As we said in the analysis of the setting, the frontier has been considered a place of rebirth, a rite of passage for the hero in order to become a better man or start a new life all over again. However, in this movie violence and destruction are spread all over the place making no distinction between civilizations or spaces. In fact, the main feature of the setting is death. William Blake's actions lead to the death of several characters and even his trip with Nobody causes his own death.

The Native protagonist of the story is Nobody, a weird Blackfoot Indian who could the "archetypal frontier narrative from savagery to civilization" (Bromley 54; Cummings 67) but who has come back again to the West. By his dialogue, we know that the trip was not voluntary, as the Army put him in a cage and sent him to England for exhibition. As he was mimicking white behavior that proved his intelligence, they sent him to a white man's school where he learnt about William Blake and his poetry. He is an atypical hero and atypical Indian sidekick, if we can call him sidekick because he "steals the show" (Cummings 69) and because he has more knowledge about life, society and culture than Blake but he retains some of the traditional elements as we can consider him Blake's spiritual guide (Levich 41). In any case, paraphrasing Slotkin, Nobody becomes "the man who knows white men" (Cummings 67-69). He is not the Noble Indian type nor the Savage Indian but a "complicated human being" (Rosenbaum 23).

However, he is a rejected not only within white society where he suffers discrimination and racism, but also in his own culture where with his function of story-teller he represents the 'Indian gone white' and "brings with him the sad record of Western expansion and the environmental devastation" (Ahmadi and Ross 188; Blum 61; Nieland 187).

As we have explained before, the trip to West and the association to Native American characters are the guides of the transformation of the white man gone Indian with a positive meaning. Both tools involve a rebirth for the white hero who rejects partially his white cultural heritage to adopt one more in communion with the natural and spiritual world, acquiring a natural name and adopting Indian ways. Yet, in *Dead Man*, this is also reversed. Firstly, Nobody gives 'William Blake' a completely new meaning. It is the poet's name but the William Blake we are going to see is a poet who will write with blood (Levich 41); and, secondly, because of this change of identity, Blake is going to be considered a dangerous killer as we see in the 'Wanted' poster they come across in their trip (Nieland187-188). However, as some scholars have pointed, Blake's acts of violence are "unheroic and awkward" (Cummings 69: Rosembaum 20).

In a different tone, *Legends of the Fall* (1994) has a native aura throughout the whole movie, especially in the character of Tristan, one of the main protagonists of the story, and One Stab, the omnipresent Indian in the story. Indeed, the first voice we hear is One Stab's. His voice-over narration is considered a break in white movies (Budd 189) as he is the narrator of the lives and events of all the members in the Ludlow family. Although he metaphorically also provided the personal correspondence of the family, One Stab is the one guiding our views and our perceptions of the Ludlows. This is significant since, at the beginning of the movie, Alfred Ludlow emphasizes the fact that One Stab does

not speak English although he can understand it. Indeed, his words in his native language are not translated whenever he addresses to any of the characters, although we could infer the information from the others.

One Stab's choice as the narrator of the story is due not only because he outlives everybody but also because he is fulfilling one of the key functions in Indian culture: story teller. Through storytelling Indians teach future generations and keep the tribe's knowledge and culture. However, as important as this narrator role seems, we think that the fact that is telling and judging a white family does not raise him as a breakthrough role model as David Budd affirms (189). It is a missed opportunity for Indians to talk about his people or himself as an Indian. His presence in the Ludlow household connects us with the characters with the past, as the head of the family was an advocate for the Indians when the government could not keep its promises regarding them so, disappointed with Indian mistreatment, he decided to live away from civilization. Therefore, an Indian character is used for white purposes and depicted as vanished. We are not saying that his character is not important, in fact, it really is, as he is the unifying thread of the family and Tristan's mentor.

Apart from being the narrator, One Stab fulfills another important role in the story of the Ludlow family. Scott Simmon, in his book *The Invention of the Western Film,* comments on how Cooper invented the Indian as a sidekick for the white hero so he could learn from the Indian the necessary skills to survive in the wilderness in order to overcome it. Simmon thinks this relationship resembles more the idea of "the Indian as a parent" (28), as he is a teacher and a counselor. Moreover, One Stab also fulfills the role of the new mystical American Indian of the 1990s. This figure is a consequence of the resurgence of New Agers in the 1990s, who took Native American traditions and transformed them into

commodities for purchase. This mystical Indian must be a middle-aged and isolated character with no Indian context or tribe nearby, who communicates with the spirits and transfer his knowledge to a white hero; and who is the clear embodiment of how native wisdom can be added to current society (Bird "Gendered" 71). Thus, One Stab fulfills that role of counselor, teacher and parent with Tristan. One Stab is the one who informs us of the story of the bear, which is the beginning and the end of Tristan's grown-up life; he is the one who senses Samuel's death and Tristan's revenge and who senses Tristan's comeback with a herd of horses after some years away from the ranch. In fact, we see that One Stab is going to continue teaching Tristan's children.

Tristan's going Indian process is progressive: he does not wear any mark of the 'Indian kit' (Friar and Friar 93) like feathers or moccasins maybe because at the time of the story, Indian Wars have already finished and Indians had vanished. Even the Indians living in his ranch have no Indian tribe context. However, he can show the trait of Indian savagery not only in American soil but in another country. After the three Ludlow brothers enlist in the army to fight in World War I, Tristan behaves as a kind of Samuel's guardian, yet he cannot avoid Samuel's death at the hands of the Germans in battlefield. In the same battlefield, Tristan cut Samuel's heart out as One Stab probably taught him (we infer this as One Stab feels something has happened) and becomes the only thing he sends from Samuel. Because of Samuel's death, Tristan becomes momentarily mentally insane, so, as revenge, he attacks the German soldiers at night returning the next day with his body full of German scalps, which produces horror in his fellow soldiers. This event is significant of his Indianness mark but also because it links once again savagery, madness and Native Americans as we saw in C.J.P. Lee's and Cawelti's works. The second event where Tristan shows insanity is during Isabel

Two's death. Once again, his insane acts, out of grief and anger, puts him into jail with a promise of revenge, what he eventually does with the help of the family. However, his attributes as hero using violence in a moral and controlled way differentiate him from degraded Indians. In addition, scalping comes justified and there is no censorship towards his behavior, rather the opposite. Indeed, he exhibits and wears the scalps in war as if they were military Medals of Honor, Contrary to Dunbar in *Dances,* where he is unable to scalp a fellow soldier, in *Legends* Tristan scalps the enemy; yet, as horrendous as it is, the audience considers it a natural stage in his life.

In terms of Native females, Isabel Two is the representation of the Hybrid Maiden figure Marubbio talked about as she is a mixture of both, the Princess and the Sexualized Maiden in two stages of her life. Isabel Two, the daughter of an Indian female and a white outlaw, represents the Princess in her childhood. She is innocent, beautiful and shows that her world seems to be centered on the white hero when she states that she will marry Tristan when she grows old. She is partially assimilated as she is taught at a young age, but totally assimilated as an adult. In fact, apart from the information that she is a half-breed, there is not a native ritual, ceremony or tradition she is involved in. Indeed, her wedding is classical white confirming his total assimilation into the white culture. However, she also shows Sexualized Maiden traits like her racial exoticism that Tristan is immediately attracted to, emphasizing her sexuality so she becomes a fetishized figure. Yet, her tragic death seems to punish both Tristan and herself for their interracial union. In this sense, her death follows both the Sexualized Maiden and the Princess with just one difference: her death does not liberate the hero of anything to follow white civilization. On the contrary, her death liberates Tristan

of the social structures. Once again, racial taboos are imposed in Hollywood avoiding a successful interracial relationship.

Another female presence in the movie is Isabel Two's mother, who is speechless in English. Neither her words, nor One Stab's are translated into English, what makes them invisible and insignificant to the story, although One Stab, as we have seen, is the narrator. She inhabits in the background of the ranch and of the family. Contrary to her daughter, her marriage to a white man, an outlaw, is successful. As in *The Education of Little Tree* with the marriage between Grandma and Grandpa, it is acceptable as they do not belong to the social order in current America and they are living outside social boundaries. However, her daughter, with her assimilated manners, is punished.

If in *Legends of the Fall* we saw Tristan as the white man gone Indian from childhood to adult life*, The Education of Little Tree* (1997) is another example of a white man gone Indian from an eight-year-old little boy's perspective. Little Tree goes to live with his grandparents after his parent's death. In the film, we see three journeys to help him acquire his Cherokee identity. Firstly, Little Tree must leave white society when his parents die. Therefore, he goes to the frontier line to live the life of his half-mixed Indian grandparents, as they are awarded his custody (imitating Go West movement from civilization to savagery). The second trip is a round-trip ticket, coming to the boarding school and going away from the school where he finds punishment, racism and ostracism (he is forced to cut his hair although he does not wear traditional braids or he is not allowed to speak Indian language) . Fortunately, Grandpa comes to take him back home. The last trip he undergoes is after his grandparents' death with Willow John, where he will learn more about the Cherokee way of life, although we are not going to be able to witness it.

The narrator of the story is Little Tree, so all the knowledge of the Cherokees is going to be told from this point of view. However, we do not learn anything of the way of the Cherokee; the teachings and the knowledge are too broad for being specifically Cherokee. For instance, respect and love for the family and compassion for others are general concepts that Little Tree mentions as "the way of the Cherokee" but they are not distinctive marks. Cherokee's way of life is erased and substituted for living in harmony with Nature and living outside a community by one's own rules, as if they were part of the New Age movement (Huhndorf 160-161). It seems that everybody can become Cherokee by playing Indian for a small period of time (Heath 132). Grandma tells the story of the family, Cherokee's history because "if you don't know a past, you won't know a future" ("Little Tree" 00:20:38-42). However, the problem is that there is no reference to land appropriation nor to Cherokee's fight for survival against assimilation, i.e., past events in the history of the Cherokee that have molded their present and their future. For instance, there is only a brief and subtle reference to the Trail of Tears, one of the most embarrassing events in US history.

Grandma's character is apparently the teacher of the way of the Cherokee. Her calmness, her natural wisdom and her love for both Grandpa and Little Tree is what brings the family together. As impressive as Tantoo Cardinal is, the power of the women within Indian culture is reduced to New Ager motifs. It is true that she is assuming the role of storyteller of the family, which is reserved for women as the keepers of the tribal traditions, but her natural teachings are diminished, as they do not show any tribal or cultural tenet. Actually, there is no reference to a tribal community or nearby Cherokees (Huhndorf 160); therefore, her function of teaching Little Tree is rather confusing. She is not a Princess, nor a Sexualized Maiden in Marubbio's fashion. Her most significant feature makes her closer to

the definition of the Mystic American Indian, in this case, female, a role she passes on to Willow John who lives in the woods and who appears and disappears from the movie.

We assume Willow John is the "Last of the Cherokees" as there are no other Cherokees in the area, therefore, once again, we see the depiction of Indians as vanished, as having no future. This is accentuated by the fact that we do not see Little Tree's training with Willow John in the Cherokee cultural views. In fact, at the end of the film we are informed that Willow John also died. Then, his death leaves Little Tree alone so we wonder how he continues with learning of the way of the Cherokees and where.

One of the recurrent topics in the depiction of interracial relationships is that problem of miscegenation. Even in the most revisionist films we have analyzed such as *Dances with Wolves* and *The Last of the Mohicans*, miscegenation was avoided by mixing up the white characters together, Dunbar with Stands-With-A-Fist, both white people gone Indian; and Hawkeye with Cora, both white people. In *The Education of Little Tree* miscegenation is possible but only because they are apart from social rules and order. Then, Grandpa and Grandma can live their love away from the curiosity and the racist attitudes of the white civilization. For instance, they face racism when both arrive for the funeral of their son and daughter-in-law and they are isolated and denied the custody of Little Tree, although the latter has already decided to live with them. Again, society denies the possibility of accepting an interracial relationship living within their boundaries. Social taboos and the construction of society disallow a couple to be regarded as part of the community, especially the woman, who will be considered as morally inappropriate.

Until now, we have seen the process of going Indian has always been associated to a positive aspect of a person. However, in *The Scarlet Letter* (1995) the process has been linked to madness with negative connotations. In the movie, the character who links madness with savagery and the process of going Indian is the white character, Roger Prynne. Captured by Indians in an attack on the ship he was travelling, Prynne spends two years in captivity with them. We suppose he learnt their ways, although there are no insights into their cultural and tribal life. In fact, the only image we have within the tribe is Prynne's stereotypical dancing around a fire covered with blood and ornamented with a deer head on his own head His crazy dancing, we assume half-drunk or drugged, or simply driven by the ecstasy of the moment, make even the Indian suspicious and frightened of his behavior, which ends up in his liberation and reappearance at Hester's house with his 'Indian kit': an Indian necklace and a feather in his hair. Yet, his stay with the Indians has radicalized his Puritan religious zeal and ideas even more. His scalp and murder of a fellow white Puritan thinking it was Hester's lover provokes not only townspeople's hysteria of an Indian attack but also his suicide, when he realizes he has gone too far.

The question we ask ourselves is whether his captivity with the Indians has deprived him of mental sanity, as it was associated with torture and madness; or, on the contrary, if, as Indians are always associated with degradation, violence and degradation, he has also acquired those features, maybe trespassing the blurry line between savagery and civilization. If we interpret madness in the first statement, his madness provoked by his captivity plus the extreme Puritan fervor makes him attack and murder the wrong person, which can be considered a kind of religious wake-up call in his mind ending up committing suicide (Welsh 299). On the other hand, as Indians are always associated with savagery and it seems

he was adopted and lived as one of them during his captivity, his extreme savagery (even for Indians) does not have any space within his white community (Dunne 37). Therefore, he must be punished as savagery committed by whites cannot be acknowledged or transferred to the new America. However, acts of savagery committed by Indians, featured in the last attack in the town, are regarded as appropriate as it is their most significant feature and the justification for their vanishment.

The Indians in *The Scarlett Letter* are used as a frame for the story and the perfect way to contribute to Hester and Dimmesdale's escape. Then, the Indian attack at the end of the film is the "*deus-ex-machina* device" (Dunne 37) that provides the only possible reason and excuse for them to escape from a Puritan society (Lepore 1167-1168). Furthermore, the Indians seem to be related only to death. At the beginning of the movie, we witness Chief Massasoit's funeral, what shows the conflict and tension between both civilizations through dialogues. At the end of the movie, we see Indians attacking the town, what causes death and savagery among the townspeople. However, we are not informed what Indians and settlers were fighting for or what their plights were, either land or religious. We do not see any Indian violent interference in the life of the colony, so at times it is difficult to understand why they want to attack the white settlers. However, as we said, they give the perfect alibi for Hester and his lover to escape.

In addition to this, apart from Johnny, the assimilated Indian living within white community, the rest of the Indians are absent from the plot. Metacomet's Indians are depicted *en masse*. The attack to the town reinforces that idea as none of the Indians are recognizable from the scene of the funeral at the beginning of the movie, creating more confusion and terror, which is very convenient for Hester's escape. The only Indian we are able to discern in the movie is Johnny,

an assimilated Indian who works in the town and whose role, apart from being an English teacher to other Indians, is apparently being the vehicle by which Indians and Dimmesdale communicate. His allies apparently are his new society however, when the Indian attack takes place, he stands for his people and starts killing whites. In fact, he is the only Indian we can distinguish from the confusion and chaos produced by the attack. The interpretation of his change of sides could be that an Indian never ceases to be an Indian, and when violence erupts his inner character comes out and he behaves as a proper Indian of the time, i.e., as a Savage Indian.

3. 4. 4. *The Missing, The Lone Ranger,* and *Silent Tongue*

In *The Missing* (2003) we find a positive point of view of the 'Going Indian' myth as the person gone Indian comes to the rescue of Maggie Gilkeson in the frontier, confirming Turner's vision of the frontier as a male enterprise and Hollywood's inability to challenge the canon even in a revisionist Western (O'Connor and Rollins "Hollywood's West" 15). The film shares topics with at least three iconic movies in Western genre: (a) *The Searchers* in the main plot of the movie, taking back a kidnapped girl from Indians (Mitchell "Film Review"); (b) *Dances with Wolves*, in the white man gone Indian who keeps a journal as part of his white civilization; and, finally, (c) *The Last of the Mohicans* in its clear division between Noble and Savage Indians.

Samuel Jones deserted his family 20 years ago to live with Indians. We are not informed why he did that, nor even why he comes back. His new identity as Indian is identified by physical appearance as it endows the proper elements of the 'Indian kit' (Friar and Friar 93): long hair, Indian necklace, moccasins, a

constant sorrowful look in his face and a mastery in Apache language that we see throughout the movie. He is also characterized continuously writing and drawing in a journal-like notebook, which is a mark of white civilization similarly to what we saw in *Dance*s. His unexpected return to the farm where Maggie, his daughter, lives coincides with the kidnapping of his granddaughter, Lily, by Indians and the cavalry's inability to assist Maggie. Samuel and Maggie embark on a journey to track the Indians. Also, the journey is a way of reconciliating the family just before Samuel's death. This reconciliation could symbolize the reconciliation of two worlds in the new America but by punishing the Indian worldview. Maggie has never understood why Samuel left, as she does not understand why he came back. Her question "What did you see in them?" ("The Missing" 00:57:07) meaning Indians, is left unanswered. However, Maggie gives Samuel a Christian cross that belonged to her mother as an approval sign of what he is doing. This gift is the reconciliation within a family but also between two civilizations. Yet, Samuel is punished by crossing the border and leaving his white family unprotected in the frontier, as it does not respect the values of family, home and America, therefore, the Indian side must die. Indeed, Samuel death's jumping off the cliff provokes the Sorcerer's death too, thus, erasing savagery from America.

In the film, we have two clear types of Indians. Kayitah and his son Honesco, both Chiricahua, represent the Noble Indians who are also tracking the Sorcerer as Honesco's girlfriend is also among the kidnapped girls. Their pain and their similar goal bring the two families together, white and Native, in their search. They are portrayed positively with the features of Noble Indians because their suffering resembles Maggie's and her family. Indeed, we could say that they are not being portrayed as Indians, but as a family looking for their relative. These similar feelings and closeness are what fosters Maggie's approach to his father

Indian story. However, the director's treatment of Kayitah's death and subsequent Honesco's lack of emotion at his father's death brings back the image of the insensitive and stoic Indian (Poupart 150) who is unable to show any sign of grief or sadness over the death of a relative. In addition to this, after the Indian girl being released, the camera work focuses again on Maggie and her daughters, leaving the Indian ostracized once again. In terms of women, Honesco's girl is not a developed character and does not show any feasible trait to describe it.

One the other hand, we find the Savage Indians represented by The Sorcerer, Pesh-Chidin, a sort of "Freddy Krueger" figure (Newman "The Missing Review"). He is the Indian character characterized by the violence of his killings and the kidnapping of girls to be sold as slaves in Mexico. This violent Indian is associated with madness to reinforce the idea of the Savage Indian type he personifies. To add more elements to this idea of madness and violence, there is no reason why the Indians behave like that (Poupart 150). Indeed, it is the Indian character with his brutality attacking and killing more settlers in his way to Mexico with his band, his sneaky behavior, and how he moves like a ghost at night what stand out in the film. His madness is accentuated with his witchcraft, which includes spreading some kind of dust into the eyes of two photographers so their eyes bleed out, or using Maggie's hair to make her weak and sick. His looks help his depiction as a crazy Indian. At first, we only see parts of him, contributing to the mystery and fear of his actions and when he is shown full-body, he seems different from the rest of the band: his face is tainted in white, he does not speak English and he only gives orders to his band. At least, contrary to the Pawnee warrior in *Dances*, we are able to listen to him speaking in his own language with his fellow Indians. However, these Indians are described as a group whose only distinctive feature is their savagery and their use of their native language.

Poupart in her review of the film explains how the Hollywood trend of allowing Native characters speak their own language on screen is considered an advancement for Native American vindications when it is a direct appropriation of Native culture. She points out how the language is used to differentiate the characters. While the Apache language refers exclusively to terms of death, conflict, hate and negativity, Samuel's use of language reflects Apache worldviews (150). We analyze the use of language as another trademark of Indian identity and as Samuel has gone Indian, he needs to use it, as he is the vehicle by which they are going to negotiate, at first, the girls' ransom with The Sorcerer. As Samuel is the protagonist, he needs to lead the action, not even allowing a real Indian (Honesco for example) to negotiate with The Sorcerer.

The punishment of death to a character who might have gone too close to Indianness or Indians is also portrayed in Dan Reid's death, the Texas Ranger in charge of imprisoned Butch Cavendish in *The Lone Ranger* (2013), probably one of the most awaited movies in recent years and the most disappointing critically and at the box office. During several scenes in the movie, there are subtle hints that Dan may be another white man gone Indian. His wife comments how he spends most of his time in Indian Territory. Even his brother, John, points out Dan is wearing Indian jewelry. Both characters imply a negative meaning to the fact of being friends or friendly to Indians without realizing that Indian's relationship with Dan ensures peace between white settlers and Indians. Yet, the plans of the greedy businessmen are to get rid of Indians so they can build the railroad even by murdering and kidnapping members of the law. Therefore, Dan's death seems to be more connected to the protection of a doomed way of life than protecting the town from outlaws and corrupted businessmen. In fact, his death

at the hands of another white representative, ally of the outlaws and corrupted, associates savagery not to Indians but to white civilization.

In this case, although the film is presented as a Western, it reverses some of the traditional features. The setting is the same, the frontier; Monument Valley emerges once again as the iconic symbol for the setting. We have settlers, a possible love triangle, law-enforcers, greedy business people, a hired killer and an Indian-white conflict going on due to land. The title is usually significant as it makes a summary of the action or a character in the movie. If in movies like *Dances* or in *the Mohicans*, we mentioned how that Native name was misused as the protagonist of the story was a white man and not an Indian, in *The Lone Ranger*, it is the opposite. Toro/Tonto, the Comanche Indian, is the authentic hero of the movie altering the traditional balance of characters (Bradshaw "The Lone Ranger"; Hilger 79) due to the election of the actor to interpret it, Johnny Depp.

Toro/Tonto's story starts giving homage to *Little Big Man* (1970), as both stories are narrated in different flashbacks between the protagonist of the story and the audience (Ebert "The Lone Ranger"; Patterson "The Lone Ranger"): the movie starts in 1933 when a child stops at the exhibition of "The Noble Savage" and Tonto comes to life. Similar to Nobody in *Dead Man*, it is a novelty that an Indian sidekick has more screen time and dialogue than his white partner, probably because of the actor chosen, although it does not mean that the stereotypes carried from the original version end. His broken English, his isolation from his own people, his excessive ornaments and manners in his characterization makes him a less real character than other Indians do in other movies even from the past like Chief Dan George (Errigo "The Lone Ranger"; Indian Country "The Lone Ranger"). The reason is because the actor's presence

is larger than life and his character rather resembles Captain Sparrow in the franchise *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Although Depp himself claimed that he wanted to make "Tonto a warrior with integrity and dignity" (Soghomonian "The Lone Ranger"), he needs the stereotyping to do it. Yet, his intention is a failure. In fact, this mockery and apparently Native masked-painted face adventure lessens the seriousness of some of the topics that arise in film such as the extermination of Native Americans, the appropriation of Indian land, the corruption of business and law-enforcers. Indeed, they are left aside and the Myth of the Frontier is reinforced, as the winners are always the same.

If the importance of having Indian characters goes through having a big white star in the role, we need to reflect, then, about the real goal and consequences of the movie and the representation of characters. Shohat and Stam in their book *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* explain how the racial politics of casting of a non-member can be considered an insult in three ways: (a) you do not deserve to represent your own community; (b) there is no one in your community who could represent it and (c) producers are the ones who take the decisions (190). From the publishing of the book to nowadays, things have changed a little bit and we have more native actors in Hollywood. Therefore, this decision of using Johnny Depp as the Indian character is completely attached to producer's investment and economic factors, using him as a kind of cash cow for appropriating of Native culture. In addition to this, the criticism the character has been receiving "actually saved a Native actor the awkwardness of trying to sell viewers a story they were never going to buy" (Indian Country "The Lone Ranger").

Part of Tonto's character is linked to mental instability or madness that can be traced back to Tonto's childhood where a naïve Tonto led two corrupted

white settlers to a site abundant of silver. As a 'gratitude' farewell, the two bounty settlers killed Tonto's tribe and burnt the camp leaving Tonto with no family or attached to anything. The only thing left for him was just a cheap gold watch, promising himself that one day he will find them and take revenge. Because of this tragedy, "his mind is broken" as the Comanche Chief Big Bear affirms ("Lone Ranger" 01:20:41-43). However, this scene, which parallels Western tradition of white people taking advantage of Indians (Hilger 78), is confusing in its interpretation. Big Bear and the film director focus on Tonto's mental instability as a reason for his non-Comanche identity ("He is not a Comanche anymore; his mind is broken, he is a band apart" 01:20:31-56) rather than focusing on Tonto's family and tribe extermination when he was a kid. It diminishes the traditional family values of the Indians as well as it completely despises the consequences of extermination in Indian culture. What is more, it leaves Tonto with no identity and no future at all after the death of his family. In addition, the Comanche chief also assumes his doomed Indian type as he mentions how progress has come and his time has passed calling himself and his people 'ghosts'. His tragic death at the hands of soldiers using new weapon technology reinforces the idea of Native American doom. As part of the doomed feature of the Indians in this film, we do not see women present to indicate a future generation so community and tribal life are non-existent.

Thus, Tonto links madness in the form of savagery and personal revenge as Cavendish is one of the bounty settlers from his childhood. Another symbol of his mental instability is his unreliability in telling the story in a logical order, as the young boy points out several times, but mostly, in his constant feeding of the blackbird he wears in his head (King "Change" 59) even though he knows it is

dead. Yet, the tone of the film, the actor chosen for the role and his costume[25] turned this pitiful background story and apparently a revenge story to a mere anecdote in the main plot of the film.

In addition to this, we encounter some whites 'playing Indian' using Philip Deloria's words as part of the plot to accuse Indians of breaking the peace with the Texas Rangers. As we explained in the first chapter of this dissertation, the colonists disguised themselves as Indians, they created "an Interior Other" (26) that could differentiate them from its European roots. With 'The Boston Tea Party' as it was called, the colonists made a stand for their distinctive identity as Americans. Cavendish and his gang disguise themselves as Indians terrifying, killing and scalping a man in Rebecca's farm not to reassure their identity but to mislead the townspeople so they accuse the Indians of murder so the construction of the railroad and the access to the silver mine can be done in Indian Territory. Therefore, this "playing Indian" and the massacre of the Indian tribe at the hands of the Army associates white civilization to savagery and not to the Indians.

Similarly, in *The Patriot* (2000) we also see a connection among Indianness, whiteness and madness. The only and main difference is that we do not see any Native American character in the movie but the association is done through Martin, the white main character, and his possession of a tomahawk. The film is about Martin's initial reluctance to join the forces of the colonials in war and his leading position in a multicultural militia, after the murder of one of his little children, forcing him to take a political stand and paving the way for his personal revenge. His madness is reflected twice in the movie but the audience had the opportunity to see only one on screen. The one we see on screen justifies

[25] He is the vivid image of Two Whistles-Apsaroke, the Crow chief Edward S. Curtis portrayed in 1908.

Benjamin's decision to lead the militia. When Col. William Tavington kills one of his little children, Benjamin takes revenge killing brutally soldiers in front of his children. This act as justifiable as it marks his distance with some of his children, especially his little daughter. However, the scene that marks madness and savagery is the one that we do not see, probably because it would suppose rejection by the audience.

As we said, his madness and savagery are only mentioned during a conversation with his elder son Gabriel about the fame and respect he has from people in the militia. In that conversation, he explains how he and his mates disguised as Indians and killed members of the army with non-canonical methods[26] and the tomahawk is a sign for that event. Jose Armando Prats affirms there are three ways of presenting the Indian in Westerns. One of them is by presenting them by showing parts or fragments of their culture; in this film, that fragment is the tomahawk. Using a literary figure, the synecdoche, Prats claims that synecdoche is a "sign of the hero's power to define the Indian as a virtual absence and signals the hero's as he is knowledgeable in Indian issues ("Invisible" 63). Indeed, it can be used to mark the border of the space where the white settler may have racial 'pollution' ("Invisible" 57). Yet, in this movie, we do not witness any blending or any 'contamination', using Prats' words, of the white man because there are no Native Americans characters in the film, although his shortly Going/Playing Indian moment is recalled in the memories of his fellow militia men. However, the tomahawk indicates a cross of identities between Native

[26] In previous conversation with John Billings, he tried to hide that event.
John Billings**:** "There's a story going around 'bout how some twenty Redcoats got killed by a ghost or some damn thing, carried a Cherokee tomahawk."
Benjamin Martin: Aren't you a little old to be believing in ghost stories? ("Patriot" 01:01:50-01:02:01)

American and Benjamin Martin, whose skills and knowledge of Indian ways allow him to pass for Indian when it was required. At the same time, that tomahawk becomes a symbol for Native American presence/absence in the area (Prats "Invisible" 237-238). As Native Americans are usually linked to conflict and violence in the frontier by making the tomahawk the symbol of their culture, the object is clearly linked to violence. Yet, that short moment of madness and savagery acknowledged by other whites as heroic just because he is white lives forever in the memories of the community and what prevails is the association between Indian and degraded violence. Although he seems remorseful about that unseen event from his life ("I have long feared that my sins would return to visit me, and the cost is more than I can bear" "Patriot" 02:07:07-19) , he seems to wear proudly the tomahawk, as a sign of a previous identity (Prats "Invisible" 236).

Another possible reading of the tomahawk is the previous step for an American identity. Both Huhndorf and Turner explained how Native Americans or the men of the wilderness have been regarded as the necessary previous step to attain a real exceptional American identity. This view is clearly visualized in the final battle when the militia is about to retire from the battle against the Army, Benjamin drops the tomahawk and substitute it for the American flag. With this raising of the flag, not only him but the whole country is certifying the death of savagery and disappearance of an old way of life and celebrating the birth of a new country, a new exceptional identity as Americans (Prats "Invisible" 241, 243).

Although savagery and madness are always associated with Indian characters or white characters gone Indian, we also find two examples where the absence of Native Americans provokes in white characters mental insanity. The strange thing is that mental insanity is caused by the guilt or pity for the death of

Native Americans who are somehow a background story for the main protagonist as in *The Last Samurai* (2003) or because the ghost of the dead Native American is tormenting the protagonist as in *Silent Tongue* (1993).

In *The Last Samurai*, Capt. Algren is mentally tormented by his implication in the atrocities committed against Native Americans. His mental state is so degraded and chaotic, he even suffers from nightmares, that he takes refuge in alcohol and a small diary where he narrates the battles against Native Americans reflecting his thoughts, ideas and admiration for them[27]. Only when he disassociates his Native American guilt from his tormented mind, he can be in peace with himself and help his new Other tribe, the Samurais in Japan.

The death of a Native American is the reason why the character of River Phoenix, Talbot Roe, in *Silent Tongue* (1993), goes insane as he seems unable to cope with Awbonnie's death, his Indian wife, at childbirth. What it seems at first sight to be a justifiable reason to be temporarily insane in his constant grief state, the fact that his father goes to purchase another Indian wife for him, indeed her own sister, discredits the loving relationship. As we know more insights of the relationship between Talbot and Awbonnie, we see through her ghost how her life was a prison and how she was used as his commodity, his possession (Wynands 304). Her ghostly appearance is what is really driving Talbot insane as Awbonnie's purpose as a ghost is to torment her husband, what she manages when stating, "he's far out of reach (...)he's in another world" ("Silent Tongue" 01:23:07-16) Thus, the Indian female figures in this film deconstruct the romantic aura of interracial relationships between the white man and the Indian female (Marubbio 206-207). Firstly, the spirit of Silent Tongue tortures his husband,

[27] We actually do not see him writing or drawing anything, but Katsumoto mentions them and reads them when Algren is kidnapped in the Samurai town.

Eamon, because of her rape and the economic value Eamon gives to his own children. Her role is problematic as she is the spiritual guide for the daughters even though she abandoned them. She was also the victim of violence as her tongue was cut so she could not lie anymore, according to her people. Thus, the traditional image of the Indian female as a family protector and keeper of traditions is completely broken.

Awbonnie and Velada, her two daughters, are just economic transactions for Eamon, as he sold Awbonnie, while she does not want to lose Velada since she is one of the main attractions in the circus. For Talbot's father, she also has an economic value, as he wants to buy her for Talbot and ease his pain. Therefore, the romantic aura of the Princess type is out the picture. In fact, if we could describe both sisters it would be with a mixture of the Sexualized Maiden, as both become mere sexual objects and commodities for the white civilization, and of the femme fatale of the 1950s (Marubbio 209). The femme fatale traits they share such as "beauty, mixed-blood heritage, overt sexuality, marginalization in white society and deadliness to men" (Marubbio 93). Awbonnie's spirit tortures Talbot to the point of becoming insane but it is the opportunity to see her reality in the marriage in the role of wife and mother-to-be, which she makes clear she despised because it was imposed on her against her will. This again deconstructs the traditional image of women as nurturing and caring.

The other Indians in the film, although they are portrayed *en masse*, they fulfill their traditional role in Westerns: to feel fear and danger. Copying *The Searchers* kind of first appearance over a cliff, the film twists the traditional image. On the one hand, Native Americans' first appearance is not as scary as it is supposed to be. On the other hand, in this film their violent charge and revenge

on Eamon is completely justified (Wynands 307) considering the development of the story in the film.

3. 4. 5. *Maverick, Wagon's East,* and *A Million Ways to Die in the West*

When we were commenting the setting in this part of the research, we grouped together some films which we considered 'Parody Westerns' because they play with the pre-knowledge audience have in relation to the Western in terms of stars and plots, dialogues, historical events and laughable violent acts. (Turner "Cowboys and Comedy" 228-234). In these films, Native Americans are not the protagonists of the action but elements introduced in the plot at a specific time with a specific role. If in the past parody Westerns have used iconic actors of the Western to accentuate the ironic and comic effect of the movie in our decades as Turner has pointed out, those iconic figures have now become Native Americans. Native actors such as Graham Greene, Wes Studi, Russell Means and Rodney A. Grant, whose roles as Kicking Bird, Magua, Chingachgook and Wind-In-His-Hair respectively still live in the memory of Western lovers in the last decades.

Vine Deloria in his book *Fantasies of the Master Race* claimed that in filmmaking there has been a trend to create "cinematic travesties" (173) to refer to the blending of costumes, rituals and traditions from one Nation to the other. However, these cinematic travesties concept can be applied to the varied Native nation the same actors have to 'enact' creating a Pan-Indian acting identity. This may be a consequence of inability of filmmakers to correct the mistakes of the past, in other words, they just reenact on and on the same Indianness audience is used to watch. It is also important to consider that most of the audience do not

even know the Native nation the actor belongs to, and sometimes the information provided by the film does not specify the nation they are representing. For instance, Wes Studi was an Huron in *The Last of the Mohicans*, but a Cochise in the comedy *A Million Ways to Die in the West*; Russell Means, as the doomed but solemn noble Indian in *Mohican*s but as the humorous chief in *Wagon's East*; Graham Green as the wise and emotional Kicking Bird in *Dances* to the wicked Joseph in *Maverick*; and Rodney Grant as the brave and ferocious Wind-In-His-Hair in *Dances* but the whining Little Feather in *Wagon's East*.

The parody Westerns deconstruct the traditional topics such as the Go West movement, the masculine power associated with the life in the frontier, the possibility of an attack to the wagon train or stagecoaches, the meaning of scalping, the appropriation of the land and/or the miscommunication between settlers and Indians due to the lacking language skills and the importance of the naming in Native American culture. All these topics are all turned into mockery by filmmakers having Native Americans participate in that mockery. Although the goal of these films is to deconstruct the Western genre and turn upside down all the archetypes, their final consequence is to keep Native Americans constrained to the Myth of the Frontier, i.e., as Deloria claimed of more 'serious' Westerns, the same geographical place, the same time span ("Fantasies" 168-175). Indeed, as we are talking about comedy, we are not going to recreate the consequences of those topics had for Native Americans. Therefore, once again, the film places Indians and the impact of the Conquest in the past, distancing the audience from the tragic history of Native Americans and making current Native American and their on-going battles invisible in twenty-first century America.

To add more distance between the audience and the reality/history dichotomy, in these films, the role and screen time of Native American have been

reduced to the minimum. They have become a necessary element or stage for the main protagonist to progress in his/her venture in the frontier. For instance, in *Maverick*, Joseph's presence is brief but helps Maverick fool people for money so Maverick can attend the big Poker of the century. Joseph deconstructs the way Indian should behave using Tonto-like language; he even has Maverick playing Indian to deceive more people. Although they are in Joseph's tribal grounds, the rest of the community is depicted *en masse*. Neither Joseph nor Maverick are the masculine type associated to the frontier experience. They do not use the weapons like guns or arrows, traditional markers of masculinity and their conflict and power nature, in order to overcome the obstacles. Rather, they use wit and wicked tricks. The reason for this is that their goal is not to survive in the wilderness or fight against the Indians but to get hold of enough money to play poker.

In *Wagon's East*, the Indians see quite shocked to learn how white settlers have decided to go back East against the Cavalry and the politicians of the time, disappointed with their adventure in the West. In their journey back East, they need to pass through Indian lands. The important mission of a tribal council is reduced to the settlers wearing moccasins to let them pass through their territory. Chief (Russell Means) and his son Little Feather (Rodney Grant) represent two views of the Indians, the former representing the Noble Savage type and the latter, the Savage one. However, the sign language used by the settlers in order to communicate with the Indians plus the surreal debate between the chief and his son about the best death method for the settlers and the origin of name of Little Feather are used to deconstruct the depiction of the Indians.

The Cavalry also got a stellar and brief role in the movie. Curiously enough, the appearance of the Cavalry's attack is to play with Western conventions: the Cavalry attacks the settlers, not the Indians; the Indians instruct the settlers in

how to protect themselves with the wagon trains; Indians play Cowboys; Indians and white settlers mingle assuming traditional roles assigned to the other to create a comic effect. As in *Maverick,* the isolated and masculine hero as the quintessential American individual disappears, therefore presenting maybe a more realistic picture of the West. In films, novels and poems we are told of the successful stories but never about those who did not succeed or those who disappeared when white civilization entered into Indian space.

In *A Million Ways to Die in the West* (2014), the comic effects and puns in language also erode the topics of the masculinity and virility associated to the hero and the savagery of Indians. Albert, the main protagonist, is unable to hold a gun or to show up in a duel; his profession, sheep bearer, is not the virile job depicted in traditional Westerns; his knowledge of the Apache language makes him closer to the traditional enemy of white civilization; and, it is a woman, Anna, who teaches him how to shoot like a man.

On the other hand, Native Americans are either constantly laughed at their fate or their traditions are mocked. In a conversation between Anna and Albert, they wondered why Indians are always so enraged if both Indians and whites are sharing the land equally. Of course, this playful dialogue infers meaning from the audience of the millions of acres stolen forcibly from Native Americans. Again, the film takes away from the audience the responsibility and guilt for the forced removal of Indians and stealing in their lands. Thus, the impact on the cultural and tribal life is left unattended throughout the film as the removal was carried out by other people in the past "comfortably out of reach" (Deloria "Fantasies" 241).

In fact, Indians are barred from the main action-taking place in town. They literally live out of the border of the wilderness with no contact with civilization.

In fact, we only see them because Albert gets lost and is captured in the desert. The main Indian character we encounter is Chief Cochise (Wes Studi) more than an hour and a half into the movie. The following summary of the dialogue between Albert and Cochise after Albert's capture shows this:

> Cochise: "How is it that you, an asshole, have the power to speak our language?"
> Albert: (in Apache language) "I am a nerd asshole. Since the other white assholes do not like me, even though I am one of their own, I have always kept to myself. Therefore, I have read many books, know many languages, and am good at math."
> Cochise: "Why are you out here?"
> Albert: "Please untie me, and I will tell you."
> Cochise: "Well, he speaks our language, which means there's no reason not to trust him."
> Cochise: (after Albert explains his story) "I will show you the way." (01:36:09- 01:37:00)
>
> Cochise: "You drank the whole bowl!"
> Albert: "Oh, shit! Oh, shit, is that bad?"
> Cochise: "That was for the entire tribe! You're totally gonna freak out and probably die. Good luck." (01:37:35- 01:37:52)
>
> Cochise: (after Albert has a vision): "Did you shoot the black condor and kick it in the balls?"
> Albert: "Yes. How do you know that?"
> Cochise: "It means that true courage does indeed lie within you. If you can trust in its power, then you may yet find happiness."
> Albert: "Thank you for everything, Chief Cochise. I don't know what I would've done without you."
> Cochise: "There is an ancient proverb among my people: Sometimes the only way for a man to discover his true path is to take drugs in a group."
> Albert: "Thank you for letting me take drugs with you. I know what I have to do now." (01:41:46- 01:42:38)

During their dialogue, the Indians are associated to the natural world, the world of mysticism by taking drugs. Therefore, the famous and great conflictive warrior Cochise has been reduced to a kind of modern New Ager. Indeed, this comedy dialogue reinforces the idea of the vanished Indian. Their remote place within the West and within the story accentuates Cochise's change of attitude. In the West Seth MacFarlane has created, the Indians are just a small part in the

whole picture, and, even though Indians are part of the Western imagery, they are not developed characters. Their use of the peyote scene to seek a vision, mocking sacred Native traditions, reinforces the idea of Natives as disposable characters, whose traditions are turned into commodities for the white consumption.

3. 4. 6. *The Burrowers, Cowboys & Aliens,* and *Bone Tomahawk*

When we were discussing the setting, we set up a group of films around what is called 'Weird Western' (Hewitson 167), or other films that linked Cannibalism, Wendigo Spirit and Conquest (Saunders 182), which mixed the Western format and the addition of supernatural elements or elements from science-fiction. In *The Burrowers* (2008), the Indians are linked to the supernatural world and violence, as they seem responsible for the abductions. However, the journey to recover the captives leads to the discovery of Native American non-involvement in the event as they have also suffered from their attacks once the buffalo was exterminated. Yet, the Ute tribe are the only ones who have the key to end with the creatures momentarily. Therefore, the Conquest has not only displaced Native Americans, as they live isolated from the rest of the civilization, but it has also created a double peril for them as they have also been the victims of the Burrowers creatures. Yet, they have come to aid them as white settlers have suffered from them. The sad part of the story is that the Cavalry, as it is usual in this Native American-white settlers' relationship, are portrayed as the 'bad whites' as they murder the Ute, the key saviors in the film. Consequently, once again, we have the image of the Indians as victims of the Conquest and a

disposable tool for whites to fight the wilderness and once used, they are despised or, as in this case, murdered.

This collaboration between Native Americans and white settlers is also reflected in *Cowboys & Aliens* (2011) where they need to fight together as one when aliens or supernatural forces attack both civilizations and abduct members of both. Native Americans are represented by two main characters, Nat Colorado, Harrison Ford's despised Indian handyman and Black Knife, the chief of Chiricahua. Both characters, each in their own space, are representative of the new and old social order.

Nat Colorado is working for Woodrow Dolarhyde (Harrison Ford), the cruel and rude cattle baron who used to be a colonel in the Cavalry. Nat really admires him despite Dolarhyde's antagonist comments to him. It is never specified or explicitly said in the movie why Dolarhyde despises Indians so much, and why he took care of Nat when he was a child. In fact, his continuous comments about the impossibility of reasoning with Indians seem to locate him as an "Indian hater" yet without any clear reason behind. Nat's important role in the film is not only to be the linguistic interpreter between the white posse and the Indians to overcome the clash but also to mediate between two cultures who are reluctant to work together for a common cause, especially in terms of who will lead the joint group. In this event, Nat assumes the role of convincing Black Knife to fight together. It seems the Indians must assume the role of secondary actors in the fight and the ones who need to adapt to the circumstances, as in the history of the Frontier and Conquest. Although the Indians are unwilling to be led by a white, Nat authorizes the white hero accentuating his skills as a warrior and his personal features showing compassion and family values when he cared for Nat as a child as a sign of his superior moral status. In fact, Nat with his attitude also

confirms his superior moral status in comparison to other Indian fellows as he is the living proof of the blessings of the white civilization. The racial difference in favor of the whites is accentuated as Nat confirms white people's higher military strategies, better skills and weapons; their superior capacity is not challenged but reinforced. In fact, Nat's death saving Harrison Ford's character from death has a double purpose. On the one hand, it is the chance for Ford to redeem himself as the father figure for Nat ("I always dreamed of having a son like you" 01:32:45-55) showing compassion and affection, something we do not see in the whole movie, not even with his own son, Percy. On the other hand, it is the turning point needed to unite the biracial allegiance and fight together as one against their common enemy.

The other Indian character, Black Knife, announces himself as the last of his tribe, which makes him and his people doomed or disposable characters, as it will happen at the end of the film. Curiously enough, in the Indian camp we see dozens of Indians who will later fight for the white hero and liberation of their beloved ones, so his speech about being the last one is quite misleading. Although initially reluctant to fight with Harrison Ford's character and his white posse, Nat, the seller of white goodness, convinces him. The fact that only Indians adapt to the circumstances and work for the maintenance of the hero's high status stereotyped them as an inferior race. They need the white man to lead them and their final disappearance for the film once all the captives are liberated confirmed their doomed existence in the universe of the Western and, consequently, in American History. Before the battle against the aliens, another stereotype arises: the wise old medicine man. The old medicine man prepares a beverage so it helps Jack to remember where the aliens are. As in previous films, the power of medicine of the Indians or sacred rituals is used as a commodity for white

consumption and with the purpose of confirming the white higher status. Furthermore, it trivializes Indian traditions as something you can buy-and-go, like what the New Age movement has been doing in the last two decades.

In *Bone Tomahawk* (2015), the Indians are absent and present at the same time. As Armando Prats claimed, the Indian is absent as we only see parts of their culture, like the literary figure synecdoche, for instance an arrow in the immediately indicates Native Americans presence in the area even though we do not see them. In fact, the arrow seems to foresee the abduction of some townspeople by evil Native Americans. However, the director of the film introduces a local Native American inhabitant of the town who thanks to his expert knowledge infers the kidnappers are something different from Indians. This character, with no voice, no name, and dressed in suit, differentiates himself from the abductors ("They are not my kind", "Bone Tomahawk" 36:00) when accused of not helping the townspeople. This is a rather flat character as it is introduced with the excuse of being a Native American disclaimer or representative of political correctness not to hurt racial sensibilities (Bitel; Newman; Lodge).

The troglodytes' characterization is a mixture of Tonto in *Lone Ranger* and The Sorcerer in *The Missing*. However, the savagery and cannibalism shown on the screen surpasses the level of savagery shown by all characters included in all movies included in this research. They have their own 'language' in the form of screams or cries to communicate among them, and their behavior seems an amalgamation of what the director thought the first primitives on Earth should have behaved like, mixed with the aura of the heathen Native Americans.

In all, the role of these troglodytes is to bring to the forefront the 'Indian fighter' character, Brooder. Slotkin defined this extreme frontier hero as a

character "whose suffering at savage hands has made him correspondingly savage, an avenger determined at all costs to exterminate the brutes" (16). As a result of his mother and sisters' death at the hands of Indians when he was just a ten-year-old boy, Brooder's obsession has been killing Indians, boasting and taking credit for 116, including women and children. His character shows with his words a savagery like the one shown visually by the troglodytes. He has to be reminded at least twice that they are going to the Valley of the Starving Men for a rescue and not for a massacre. As usual, this form of savagery, linguistically and visually, must come to an end and he is punished; he dies fighting in their first real encounter with the troglodytes.

3. 4. 7 .*The Revenant, Where the Rivers Flow North, Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron,* and *Hidalgo*.

This kind of Indian-hater character is also reproduced in *The Revenant* (2015) with John Fitzgerald, who shows an unjustifiable animosity toward the frontier man, Hugh Glass, and his half-breed Pawnee son, Hawk. The animosity seems to come from a Fitzgerald's encounter with a group of Indians in the past, who left an eternal sign in his head: a partial scalp. Linguistically, Fitzgerald's comments reinforced his racist ideas of marking the Savages, as he calls them, and, especially Hawk, of a different nature due to his horrific experience.

During the film, we can see two different nations, the Arikara and the Pawnee, although these appear in visions. On the one hand, the film starts with an attack of an Arikara war party. The traditional sign of Indians, arrows, starts flying round terrorizing the camp of fur trappers who try desperately to come on board a ship to go down the river. Although the attack seems unjustifiable,

throughout the film we learn that the Arikara are looking for Powaqa, the chief's daughter, who has been kidnapped by the French who have used her as a sexual slave.

On the other hand, we see the Pawnee tribe personified in three different people. Firstly, the Pawnee Indian, Glass, whom he finds in his way to Fort Kiowa. The Pawnee have been traditionally depicted as the Savage Indians as in *Dances with Wolves*. However, in this film the Pawnees are related to family, affection and protection. The nameless Pawnee provides Glass with food and he even builds a sweat lodge to protect him from cold. However, his destiny is doomed as he encounters the French traders who hang him.

The second Pawnee we find is Hawk, Glass' son, who has part of his body burnt due to an attack on his village when he was a child. He is the prototype of the noble but doomed Indian. He speaks out against Fitzgerald's racist comments what enrages Glass as he constantly reminds him to be silence because people just see his skin color, i.e., he must be invisible for whites if he wants to survive. That invisibility means having no voice in the microcosm of the fur trappers. In that microcosm, Glass and Hawk try to stay isolated from the rest as they are regarded as different by the group. Indeed, the film is completely tainted by the unconditional love Glass has for Hawk, which is what drives Glass to fight, to survive and to take revenge. Hawk is the symbol of the mingling between both civilizations, yet he is doomed to die because of his skin color.

The third Pawnee we see is the nameless Glass' wife. In a flashback, we see an attack to the Pawnee camp where all Native Americans were murdered, including his wife, who becomes the constant companion in Glass' journey to revenge. She becomes the mystic strength Glass needs to recover from Hawk's death and from his own wounds from the bear attack. His wife connects him to

the natural world, especially to trees for their strength and stability even in storms. Native American women have been traditionally cast either as 'Princess' or as 'Squaw' (Bird 72-73). Both share with the male counterparts their dual representation as Noble or as Savage. However, these female figures do not appear on their own terms, and when they do, they are "defined in terms of their relationship with male figures" (Green 185). M. Elise Marubbio in her book *Killing the Indian Maiden* defines the princess type a helper and/or lover to white men who is connected to nature and the American landscape and who is innocent, exotic and a mother-figure, yet she dies either by committing suicide or by being the innocent victim of a tragedy (Marubbio "Killing" 20). On the other hand, we find the Squaw or Sexualized Maiden, as Marubbio calls her, who is a heavily sexualized figure (as the Indian Princess is). This type of Indian women is considered a threat to the establishment, she is always living physically at the edge of the town/society, she is extremely beautiful, she is usually mixed-blood and is a "sexual and racial fetish" (Marubbio "Killing" 93). Indeed, "squaws are understood as mere economic and sexual conveniences for the mean who are tainted by association with her" (Green 189). For example, her death or destruction is regarded as necessary for the progress of white civilization.

Glass' wife represents the Princess type in the sense that she is the connection to nature and to the land. As the American landscape that is being ripped off by trappers and settlers, Glass' wife dies without any resistance in the attack of her Pawnee camp. She retains in her appearances in the movie the image of the mother figure and the spiritual side of Native American. Her voice is Glass' continuous companion throughout the film. She reminds him of the strength of Nature, specifically of the trees, whose branches and roots are the strongest part of the tree. We think that trees symbolize family, as it is the force that keeps Glass

alive throughout his venture. No matter what disgraces Glass must endure in the story, his family is his root and the base of his determination and strength. The Princess type allows the viewer to see a possible relationship between the white hero and the Indian woman. However, we only see her in violent images or in relation to death until the last scene in the movie where she reappears voiceless as Glass is in peace with himself after revenging his son's death. She represents Native American tragedy in the American continent, she is nameless and 'bodiless', like the thousands of Native Americans who were exterminated in the name of progress. The film seems to send a message by saying that the only thing left from Native Americans is their connection to the land (the environmental protector stereotype) or their spirituality (the mystic 'warrior'), which comes really close to the message sent by *The Education of Little Tree* and the New Age movement.

On the other hand, the other Indian female figure in the film is Powaqa. Although she does have a name, she is voiceless throughout her worst nightmares, being the sexual toy of French trappers. We may catalogue her as the Princess too as she is the daughter of a chief but she does not sacrifice or entangle a relationship with a white, quite the opposite. She is kidnapped by trappers exchanged for horses and sexually abused. She is just a commodity for white civilization. Her story makes the Arikara human in the sense that their brutal attacks on white fur trappers are the response to an attack on their people. Her story is intertwined with Glass' story not only because Arikara's attack provoked the stampede of trappers with the later event of Glass' grizzly attack and Hawk's death at the hands of Fitzgerald but also because Glass becomes the white savior type, using Hughey's words, when he liberates Powaqa from the trappers when she was being sexually abused. It seems that her liberation is paid back in the final

scene in the film when the Arikara finds Glass at the bank of a river after his final battle with Fitzgerald and ignores him. However, we may read the final scene as simply as two people who have finally reached their objectives, Glass' killing Fitzgerald and the Arikara having Powaqa back, and both people will not intervene in the other's life.

The reason for this reading is that we really think Native American people are used in the film as a metaphor for Nature. Nature, with its harshness but openness and beauty, is the place where the characters develop their inner selves. It is the spiritual guide for humanity. On the other hand, white civilization is closed, full of wicked minds and death. Fort Kiowa is a disheartening place, cold and in the middle of nowhere. Even the Native Americans who live close to the fort are just 'bulk' people. We do not know why they are there and, even, we do not see them as they are just faces in the crowd. However, the Native Americans living in Nature, like the Pawnees and the Arikara, show positive civilizations traits: family, connection to the spiritual world, trust, and survival. Yet, they suffer from attacks and violence. Their violent responses are the result of the attack by white intruders. However, their stories of strength and survival in Nature are not are visible unless a white man brings people's attention to them; their stories are unable to be seen not on their own. Indeed, the betrayal of Glass' fellow fur traders symbolizes white civilization betrayal to Nature as Earth is only seen as profit and financial wealth. Therefore, we interpret DiCaprio's speech[28] at the Golden Globes Awards Ceremony in 2016 in similar ways to Marlon Brando's Oscar representative, Shasheen Littlefeather, in 1973: we need to hear current Native Americans speak for themselves and not white messengers. Native

[28] The whole speech can be seen at: https://youtu.be/2qHzoF9mIME

American characters in *The Revenant* are just background prompts for the real protagonist of the story. The story is not about the survival of Native Americans, indeed, all those who care for Glass die; but the survival, adaptability and triumph of human spirit of Glass, as DiCaprio stated in his speech. In fact, DiCaprio's speech relates the protection of Native Americans, providing once again a stereotyped image of the Indian as the guardian of Nature, reviving the campaign 'Keep America Beautiful' at a time where the controversy over the construction of Dakota Access Pipeline was at its highest point.

This use of Native Americans as prompts for the protagonists of the story makes Native Americans appearance in films as just anecdotes in the plot, as devices by which the white protagonist can develop himself or accentuate his high morality while emphasizing Native American invisibility and lack of voice in the stories filmmakers pretend to tell about them. This is something Jane Tompkins in her book *West of Everything* (1992) claims by saying that

> the Indians I expected did not appear. The ones I saw functions as props, bits of local color, textural effects. As People they had no existence… but there were no Indians characters no individuals with a personal history and a point of view… An Indian in a Western who is supposed to be a real person has to be played by a white man. The Indians played by actual natives are extras, generic brand; those with bit parts are doodles in the margin of the film (8-9).

Therefore, instead of having full round characters, we have characters who represent Nature to contrast two worldviews or characters whose innate Native wisdom help resolve different situations for the white civilization. These are minor films, whose impact is minor and their success at the box office was kind of discreet. Indeed, they are just simply companions or background characters

for the benefit of the story or the development of other characters, usually white. In addition, the screen time of these characters may vary depending on the story and on the effect of these characters' actions have within the story.

For instance, in the franchise *White Fang* of 1991 and 1994, Indians are associated with Nature and animals especially to White Fang, the wolf dog who stars in both movies. In the 1991 film[29], Han Indians are part of the scenery, of Nature. They are always in outdoor places and they are the vehicles by which Jack connects and learns about White Fang. We see some glimpses of the community but always related when White Fang is there, for instance, when the Indian boy tries to train White Fang. Apart from that, they are just shadows in the distance.

In the 1993 production *Where the Rivers Flow North*, we find a female character in a leading acting position in the film that is not a Princess or a Sexualized Maiden. Bangor symbolizes Native wisdom and common sense, as a counterpart for Noel and his crazy and erratic behavior (Budd 178). Thus, she is the female wise old chief. She is isolated from any tribal affiliation and seems to be the last of her race. Her role is to offer advice to the white man although he does not appreciate it. She also symbolizes the possible cohabitation of two different civilizations however, as in *Legends of the Fall* and *Little Tree* it must take place out of the social order. In fact, there is a violent episode in the town when Bangor is called the derogative 'squaw' term in a restaurant. In fact, this event is what ignites Noel's rage to open the dam, even though he had agreed and signed not to do it, what provokes his death. However, her story is not the focus of the story. Bangor's fate is left open and unknown, as the Indians are left when they are not the protagonist of their stories.

[29] We have already studied the 1994 sequel.

In the cartoon movie *Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron (*2002) the role of the Indians is to represent Nature and freedom in contrast to white civilization represented by the cruel Colonel Cavalry, whose goal is to tame Spirit harshly; and by the railroad, whose advancement provokes destruction and perils for the natural inhabitants of the continent. Little Creek is the only who understands and treats Spirit in a loving and caring manner. Spirit is not easy to tame but at last he knows Little Creek, who also represents the freedom Spirit is looking for.

If in *Spirit,* the role was to present and reduce the Indians to symbolize the freedom and the natural world, in *Hidalgo* (2004), Native American identity becomes once again the exceptional device by which Americans identify themselves. Frederick Jackson Turner claimed in his Frontier Thesis Speech that the new man in America must blend with the wilderness, to follow Indian ways to become a new American. What is different in this film, apart from the setting that is the Middle East, is that the identity is provided by external forces, firstly, by Hopkins' aids during the race and, finally, by the Western lover Riyadh. He must be recognized as the 'Other' is the Middle East desert for him to acquire his own identity as Native American and to honor that heritage, symbolized with the Native American flag at the end of the race. If in the American frontier the hero was transformed from a man of the wilderness to a man of progress, in the Middle East frontier, he needs to prove proudly his native heritage, wisdom and mastery of the wilderness.

3. 4. 8. *Miracle at Sage Creek, Seraphim Falls,* and *September Dawn*

The native wisdom used to resolve a family situation can be seen in *Miracle at Sage Creek* (2005), a typical Christmas movie where two antagonistic men finally find mutual respect in a tragic family situation. The story deals with the parallel story of two families, the one led by Ike, a harsh rancher with no feelings whatsoever because of her wife's death at the hands of Indians and Chief Thomas' interracial family. Ike must overcome his racism and prejudice against Indians when one of his grandchildren gets sick and the only possible solution is to use Chief Thomas's medicine. Chief Thomas is the wise old chief medicine man in communication with the spirits; in fact, he senses Ike's grandson illness in the same way One Stab from *Legends of the Fall* sensed Samuel's death. Both are similar figures in the sense they are middle-aged, no Indian tribal affiliation although his daughter is married to a former Cavalry soldier. Yet, Chief Thomas uses his wisdom to teach his own grandchild about the Crow Indians functioning as a storyteller, like Grandma in *The Education in Little Tree*.

However, this interracial family does not avoid the danger of eviction from their farm or their categorization as Indians by the law. Ike's initial reluctance to have a 'heathen' at his place reciting Indian chants (in English) and providing unknown medicine to his grandchild is turned into respect and Christmas spirit as the boy recovers and, as a big happy family, they all celebrate Christmas. Once again, the fact of using an Indian chant in English with a medicine the Crow people have used for generations, as Chief Thomas clearly states, is diminishing Indian culture and Indian language in favor of the white one. Another flaw of the movie is the focus on the cultural and social clash Ike has with the rest of the people in the film like his own family, his workers and obviously Chief Thomas

and his family. Indeed, the two families have an excellent relationship personalized in the brotherly friendship of the young kids. In this case, the filmmakers missed a great opportunity to deepen into an interracial marriage between Sunny, Chief Thomas's daughter and her husband, and their relationship with the community they live in. Sunny is just a background device in the story to show another mother worried about the future of the kids due to the eviction notice, but she is not a developed character. In fact, their eviction notice and their probable relocation to Red Cloud Reservation bring forward the topic of land ownership between white settlers and Indians, which magically disappears at the end with Ike's intervention (he was also the promoter of the eviction).

We again see Wes Studi in *Seraphim Falls* (2006), where his character is one of his shortest and smallest parts, his only role is to mark the entrance to the desert for both protagonists, Gideon, a former lieutenant in the Calvary, and Carver, a former farmer turned into killer seeking revenge for Gideon's massacre of his family. The desert is marked by the Indian character, nameless and dressed in suit, who seems more a philosopher and offering a moral punch line to both characters than anything. He does not pass any native wisdom for the white man although he is isolated. The film seems to infer that Indians belong to the desert but with such a short role, it is impossible to discern. His only role is to be the meeting point of the exchange of a horse. Gideon has to leave the horse for entrance while Carver takes the horse as "That which is yours will always return to you. That which you take will always be taken from you" ("Seraphim Falls" 01:31:25-34). There is no more development for him.

One of the cruelest stories in the USA is the Mountains Meadows Massacre, which is recreated in *September Dawn* (2007). The film plays with the traditional

image of the Indians as Savages as Mormon Bishop Jacob Samuelson states, "I will lose the Indian upon them" ("September Dawn" 00:39:33-36). 'Them' meaning a group of Christians going through Mountain Meadows in Utah territory. Blinded by his religious fervor and promised to revenge the death of his Prophet, Samuelson tricks the Paiutes by telling them the Christians have poisoned their ally Creek tribe in their way to Utah. In addition, he promises them to defend them against their enemies and that they will be protected in the battle. Although initially reluctant, finally the Indians attack the Christians with the help of some whites 'Playing Indian'. However, the Christians repelled the attack and the Mormons must finish themselves the attack by tricking the Christians to drop all weapons while they are supposedly being protected. However, the Mormons, hidden and disguised as Indians, indiscriminately massacre the group.

This film shows not only the Savage Indian type but also them as a kind of a pet, or the subservient inferior whose only role is to serve the white. In this movie, they are the war tool by which the Mormons want to revenge the death of their religious founder. Yet, the Indians are still stigmatized with their association with violence, conflict and death. Even if they are isolated people, as they are shown in the movie, they must fight, but against who? There is no hint in the movie that the Paiute are having issues with other Native tribe or even with other whites. It is just the white man's word what the Indians and the audience believe. Yet, instead of watching Indian people fighting for their cultural survival and watching or listening teachings from Native Americans, we see them driven by whites' wicked, political, and religious fervor with no gain for them.

3. 4. 9. *3:10 to Yuma, Meek's Cutoff, The Legend of Hell's Gate,* and *Yellow Rock*

These war-like Indians are also referred to and shown visually briefly in *3:10 to Yuma* (2007), which deals with the story of the impoverished rancher Dan Evans who takes desperately the dangerous job of taking the famous outlaw Ben Wade to justice. During the journey, the posse including the sheriff and a doctor needs to go through Indian Territory to avoid Wade's men. In this scene, an hour into the movie, there is a dialogue between Byron, the sheriff and Wade that shows how savagery belongs to both civilizations: Indians and whites. At the time of the railroad construction in El Paso, the sheriff and his men killed 32 Indian women and children because, according to the Sheriff, they killed the men working on the railroad. Wade also expresses this association of violence and death to Indians when he warns them about the dangerous journey through Apache territory because the Indians who remained are the ones who stayed to fight as they love killing. When three Apaches ambush them, Wade is the only one capable of killing them. The Indians we distinguish wear the traditional Indian kit associated with Indians: knife and rifles, feathers and full-feathered bonnet. The importance of the appearance of the Indians is to provide Wade's escape. They are part of the desert and part of the perils people must face in the desert.

In *Meek's Cutoff* (2010) the Indian, at least, is provided with more screen time. Yet, he is nameless and voiceless. We do not mean voiceless in the sense that he cannot talk; he does speak, but the audience is not provided a translation of what he says so, as the travelers, "we do not know what he is thinking" (Ebert "Meek's Cutoff"). He is an unknown and mysterious figure in the story as the place they travel in. The traditional and fierce enemy of the white civilization becomes

their only hope for survival (Young "Meek's Cutoff") but leaving an "open-ended ending to the mystery", is he leaving them to water or to death? (Brody "True West"). It is very difficult to classify the Indian in any of the other stereotypes we offer in the second chapter of this dissertation. At times, he seems defiant, at other he is just a victim of the setting like the travelers are. His appearance can be contrasted to Meek. The Indian is naked but adapted to the territory and to the white people while Meek's extravagant looks, attitudes and comments accentuate his lack of adaptability to the place and his beliefs in prejudice. On the other hand, we have Emily who is willing to give an opportunity to the Indian only because of self-interest as she states when she somehow 'protects' the Indian. We could say that both these three characters reflected in the film are a metaphor for" America's unresolved cultural and political wars" (Taylor "Meek's Cutoff").

In *The Legend of Hell's Gate* (2011), Indians appear more than an hour into the movie. They are needed so the three protagonists of the story, James, Kelly and Will can rest, have some food and grab a mule. At this moment, the Indians Koopoo and Peekee are presented with broken English language as Noble Indians. In fact, their appearance does not pose a threat to James and co., indeed, they are dressed in a mixture of suit and Indian clothes and their business seem to be the trade of beads. However, their weakness is alcohol as they got drunk following James and Kelly's plan who steal the beads and the mule leaving the Indians and Will behind. The apparent Noble but drunk Indians turned into traditional Savages on the hunt for their beads and animals. In fact, this change is accentuated with their changes in look, now they show war paint and the attitudes are fierce. Apart from the two main Indian characters, the rest of the Indians are background prompts, we see them physically but we do not hear them or know any extra information about them.

Released in the same year, *Yellow Rock* shares with *Legends of the Fall* the technical device of having a Native American as the voice-over narration. In fact, the movie itself presents a circular story as Native Americans appear at the beginning and end of the film with the same narrator and the same message: whites are taking our lands, we have fought and survived but more will come. The film starts with a posse seeking a relative. They need to go through Black Paw Tribe territory and its sacred burial grounds for the search so they need the approval of the Indians. However, once they cross the territory, they desecrate the burial grounds only to look for their real goal: to find the gold mine. However, the Fever of Yellow Rock comes alive making them fight and kill each other.

The Indians in the movie represent the two options to approach the white man. On the one hand, Broken Wing, who is against allowing the whites to cross their sacred site. On the other hand, Angry Wolf agrees to collaborate with them. When tribal council agrees, Broken Wing decides to go along to check they will not pass the Sacred Ground, as well as the white doctor who serves as the translator for the white posse. The rest of the tribe is shown on the background but as helpless figures. The white doctor is their contact with the outer civilization as she uses white methods to cure them.

Broken Wing is shown with the attributes of a brave warrior, he does not back up from fight, he is fearless and shows connection with the spirits and with Nature, something that brings him closer to the female doctor. Yet, there is no romantic aura anywhere in the movie. As we said, the way and the message the Indian narrator sends accentuates their doomed fate as the narrator claims he is the last of his tribe. Therefore, the Indian narrator is not used to tell their story, their fight for survival or their tribal traditions or rituals, it tells us the sign of their disgrace, the story of the gold and what provokes in people. Then, it

reinforces the idea of Indians as non-materialist people but living and respecting Nature and the Spirits.

If in Chapter Two we made a general overview of the main policies on Native Americans carried out along American History up to the 1990s, it is important to study those policies enacted during our research period, 1990-2015, as it is necessary to compare the evolution of the policies with the evolution of the depiction of Native American in the film industry. Thus, in order to analyze their depiction, we have divided the films into two groups. On the one hand, those films related to the Western genre; and, on the other hand, films that belong to other genres. Thus, the goal of this chapter has been to present the main features of the Western in terms of setting, plot and characters and to analyze the films following the tenets established by scholars like John Cawelti, Richard Slotkin, M. Elise Marubbio or José Armando Prats.

Although the relationship between the Native Americans and the western genre is undisputable, as it has been explained in this section, we cannot forget that Native American characters are also present in other genres. Their role in these genres, particularly in recent times, will be the main content of the following section

Chapter 4:
How to be a Native American in Recent Times

The previous chapter was devoted to the analysis of the films that belong to the Western genre, or to films that were set in the frontier or in an isolated area away from civilization in a very specific time span. As we have discussed, the revisionist movement failed because the Native American is still presented as ahistorical and frozen in time, but above all, vanished, which gives them a sense of absence and invisibility in American society. Furthermore, we commented on how the Indian is never the protagonist or the hero of the action. If the Native American vanishes in the end and he/she is never the main character in the story, someone is required to inform the audience about the Native American culture and way of life. Therefore, the main character of the story, the white man, must be viewed by the audience and by the Native Americans themselves as a deserving and reliable narrator, not only of his encounters with the Indians, but also about Native American life. It is almost a requirement that the hero cohabitates with Native Americans and adopts Native ways of life to be a reliable source of knowledge for the audience. This adoption and, consequently, education is part of the 'Going Native' myth that we explained in previous chapters. Thus, Native Americans just appear as devices for the white hero to find a new self, a new identity that he abandons once he decides to come back to white civilization. Even in those films where the American Indians are given more screen time because the film had somehow a Native American theme, they were telling the story of the white man, such as in *Dances with Wolves* or *Last of the Mohicans*.

In this chapter, we focus on films that are set in contemporary America. By contemporary America we mean that the characters and the plot of the film are set from the late 1930s until 2015. As we presented in previous chapters, the historical relationship between Native Americans and the government has been marked by back-and-forth policies depending on the social and political views of

the time. As we enter into the last decade of the twentieth century, we suppose the film industry would collect those ideas of multiculturalism and revisionism to present Native American characters as visible entities living in contemporary America, taking into account the unique legal and political relationship that Native Americans have with the federal government in terms of economy, political sovereignty, and the access to land and/or the practice of religious ceremonies with traditional cultural artifacts.

In Chapter One of this dissertation, we offer some figures of the last three American censuses reports where we could see an increase not only of self-identification as American Indian, but also in the tribal affiliation figures. In fact, the number of federally recognized Native American tribes has also increased despite the long and arduous process any tribe must go through. As we said, the census works as a self-identification tool, so we must be cautious with the figures. Self-identification does not mean automatically establishing a relationship of any kind with a tribe or with the federal government; in fact, some tribes require members to meet some specific criteria to be eligible for any kind of tribal benefits. On the other hand, this increase of identification can be related to the increasing awareness of their identity among Native Americans and their increasing participation on political spheres such as the current election of Deb Haaland and Sharice Davids as the first Native American women to be elected to Congress.

This increased activism of American Indian population may have two consequences. On the one hand, Native American are going to be more visible in society, for instance in the news. As we saw in *The Reading Red Report: Native Americans in the News: A 2002 Report and Content Analysis on Coverage by the Largest Newspapers in the United States* published by the Native American

Journalists Association (NAJA) and News Watch, the main issues about American Indians were catalogued around three main topics: casino gaming by tribes, the issue of the mascot team names, and "on the res" datelined stories. Indeed, in 2003, this association published another report focusing on the news coverage on the issue of team mascots and urging the US news media to stop reporting the racist and derogatory terms when referring to sports teams' Native mascot names and images. In addition, the report also offered information about six newspapers with policies against the use of mascot names when informing on teams that use Native American mascots. The 2007 the Red Reading Report's goal was "to examine if newspapers in circulation areas with high percentages of Native Americans fairly and accurately cover Indian Country" (3). The report shows that in communities where there are more American Indians, the coverage is better, more accurate and more neutral, although the sources of the news still presented a high percentage of non-native sources. Unfortunately, the 2008 Reading Red Report has not been available at their website.

This visibility in population and in news outlet could also have a consequence in the world of art, especially in the film industry, with the appearance of more Native American actors in mainstream films. Thus, in this chapter, we will examine the inclusion of Native American characters in movies away from 'their natural environment' of the Western. Therefore, we will find multiple genres such as the road movie, comedy, biopic, drama, or war movie. Obviously, in the analysis we will have to determine what kind of Native American characters are portrayed, how the character is introduced in the story, the aim of introducing this character, the role they play in the story and the way this character refers to and is referred to by other characters in the film. We strongly believe that having more or less screen time does not necessarily imply presenting

a stereotyped character. We have already seen that giving Native American actors more screen time such as in *Dances with Wolves* or *The Lone Ranger* does not prevent their characters from being stereotyped.

This apparent visibility in the media together with the resurgence of Indigenous culture due to the landmark of 1992 and the revisionist trend that infused the film industry may give the opportunity for Native Americans to be portrayed realistically. We saw in our previous chapter that, despite the 'good intentions', Native Americans were still depicted with stereotypes, they were not telling their stories, they were frozen in time and space, and, most of the times, they were still the sidekick of the white character. As we introduced in Chapter Two, there were two attempts in late 1980s to portray Native Americans as real and current members of American society in current America: *War Party* (1988) and *Powwow Highway* (1989). These films were set in 1970s-1980s and both portrayed the current political and generational division among Native Americans within reservations. The characters also reflect that division in the way they approach their Indian identity mixing traditional approaches (powwow dancing, consultancy on a wise elder) with a more modern approach (cars as horses, modern tokens, soldier as previous warrior).

4.1. Setting and Plot

As we did in the previous chapter, we are going to provide a list of films to be analyzed in this section. If in the chapter devoted to Westerns, the study films were divided into three subgroups, in this chapter we have divided the film into two groups. On the one hand, we will have films where, although the film is set in current United States, the Indian shown in the film is depicted as if he or she were

part of the wilderness and still living in the frontier in mid-1850s, away from civilization. In fact, the portrayal reminds us of the depiction in Westerns: feathers, braids, no English language and living separately from the white world, i.e. Indian characters will the full 'Indian Kit'. This depiction, away from current Native Americans, give the impression that contemporary Indians do not exist within current American and, consequently, distancing current white American society from the guilt of their past. We will analyze in which setting we find them: we will try to figure out what the aim of this is.

On the other hand, we will have films where the Native American characters we will encounter are ordinary and current Indians living within current American society. We will analyze the relationship of the Indian with the white man and society to see if Native Americans are visible in mainstream society outside the Western genre. Contrary to the previous chapter, where it was basic to define the Western archetype, in this analysis, most of the films will take place either in the city or in the reservation.

The movies analyzed in this chapter will be the following:

YEAR PRODUCTION	ORIGINAL TITLE	YEAR ACTION
1991	*The Doors*	1960s-1970
1992	*Thunderheart*	1970s
1993	*Free Willy 1*	1990s
1994	*Natural Born Killers*	1990s
1994	*Pontiac Moon*	1960s
1994	*North*	1990s
1994	*On Deadly Ground*	1980s-1990s
1995	*Last of Dogmen*	1980s-1990s
1995	*Free Willy 2*	1990s
1995	*Die Hard 3*	1990s
1995	*Heat*	1990s
1995	*The Indian in the Cupboard*	1990s
1996	*The Sunchaser*	1990s
1996	*Fargo*	1990s
1996	*Lone Star*	1990s

YEAR PRODUCTION	ORIGINAL TITLE	YEAR ACTION
1997	*Free Willy 3*	1990s
1998	*Deep Rising*	1990s
1999	*Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai*	1990s
1999	*Mystery Men*	Future
1999	*The Green Mile*	1935
1999	*Mystery Alaska*	1990s
2000	*Reindeer Games*	1990s
2000	*Skipped Parts*	1963
2000	*Big Eden*	2000s
2001	*The Score*	2000s
2002	*Windtalkers*	1945
2005	*Transamerica*	2000s
2005	*Man Thing*	2000s
2006	*Eight Below*	2000s
2006	*Night at the Museum*	2000s
2006	*Expiration Date*	2000s
2006	*Flags of our Fathers*	1945
2008	*Twilight*	2000s
2008	*Frozen River*	2000s
2009	*Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian*	2000s
2009	*The Twilight Saga: New Moon*	2000s
2010	*The Twilight Saga: Eclipse*	2000s
2011	*A Warrior's Heart*	2000s
2011	*The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 1*	2000s
2012	*The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 2*	2000s
2013	*August Osage County*	2000s
2013	*Jimmy P.*	2000s
2013	*Tiger Eyes*	2000s
2014	*Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb*	2000s
2014	*The Activist*	1973
2015	*Unnatural*	2000s

4.1.1 .The Frozen Indian

In the first group of films, the 1850s-Indian, we find *The Last of Dogmen* (1995). In this film, Lewis Gates is required by the sheriff of the town to track two prisoners who escaped from an accident. Both prisoners disappeared in the woods and the only thing left is a blood-stained shirt and an arrow. Puzzled with the finding of an arrow, he goes to the expert in Native Americans, Dr. Lilian

Sloan, who catalogues the arrow as a souvenir of the vanished Cheyenne Dog Soldiers and dismisses him. However, Gates keeps on searching for information until he convinces Sloan to go to the woods to look for answers. In the woods, they are discovered and made prisoners by Yellow Wolf and other Cheyenne warriors. However, they gain the favor of the Cheyenne when they help recover Yellow Wolf's son using penicillin Gates stole from the town's pharmacist. Yet, being aware that their presence with the Cheyenne endangers their hidden existence, Gates decides to leave with the intention of deceiving the sheriff and his men and of blocking the entrance to the Cheyenne land, which he does successfully with the help of Yellow Wolf. On the contrary, Sloan decides to stay to study and research them to provide "a memorial to the last of their kind" ("Last of Dogmen" 01:32:45-47).

The film is at times a less sophisticated and less sentimental copy of *Dances with Wolves*. On the one hand, the landscape of the Montana's Oxbow Quadrangle resembles the frontier of the 1850s, not the arid desert but a more welcoming setting. The waterfall and the mountains mark the frontier between the Cheyenne and the white civilization. The discovery of Native Americans provokes the eternal conflict between different worldviews and the possibility of destruction of the weaker civilization; a weaker civilization that the two protagonists need to protect. This romantic idea of making contact with people from other times serves to tell the audience that real Indians do not exist, so it is not surprising that their plights and their struggles are not considered by society. We wonder if Sloan is more worried about the possibility of destroying the Cheyenne culture than about the possibility of giving a boost to her scholar career with the discovery of a lost civilization and consider them as ethnographic objects of study.

The protagonist, Gates, is a loner, still suffering from his wife's death, who penetrates the isolated frontier with the goal of finding two lost prisoners and what he finally finds is a lost way of life. This incursion in the frontier provides him another opportunity in love and in life. His contact with the Native Americans makes us discover a caring and loving human being ready to come back to civilization to heal the wounds and animosity with the sheriff, his wife's father, and to protect what he has learnt to love, as the voice-over narration tells us at the end of the movie. On the other hand, although the Western has been a male enterprise and the women have been described as the civilization symbol, in this movie the role is somehow reversed. Although Gates is the expert of the terrain, the area and how to live in the 'frontier', Sloan is the one who knows how to deal with Native Americans. She is the cultural mediator between two different worlds: Gates and the Indians as representatives of an old way of life, and Sloan herself, who represents white civilization and the world of academia.

In *The Indian in the Cupboard* (1995), Omri is a nine year-old boy, who lives in a real urban setting and who is given a magical cupboard with a figure of Indian inside. The cupboard brings the Indian to life, revealing himself as an English-speaking eighteenth-century Onondaga/Iroquois Indian named Little Bear. Omri offers him the traditional house of the Indians of the prairies, the teepee. Yet, Little Bear explains that he is an Iroquois warrior and requires the appropriate materials to be able to build his traditional house, which he can build on his own. Through their conversations we learn about the Iroquois culture. However, Little Bear is not away from danger. For instance, during a brief outing, Little Bear gets injured and Omri needs to bring a doctor toy to life. Secondly, Patrick, Omri's friend, decides to bring a cowboy, Boone, to life with disastrous consequences, as both are cultural and social enemies. As Little Bear is alone in

the world because his tribe was apparently exterminated (Omri does not know anything about the Onondaga or Iroquois in current society), Omri decides to bring a female Indian to life, but Little Bear talks him out of it. Then, Omri and Little Bear agree that it will be safer if the latter is not brought back to life again.

This coming-of-age story (Sanchez and Stuckey 80-81; Turner "Animated Indians" 406) told from the point of view of a child is equally nostalgic and it reproduces, as well, old stereotypes from the past. Little Bear is not able to survive in Omri's world and his survival depends on the boy, not on his own resources. Therefore, once again, an Indian character dependent on white civilization. Little Bear does not have any future because he does not even belong to the present. He is out of place and time although he is a device by which Omri learns "about stereotypes, power differentials and responsibility" (Sanchez and Stuckey 85).

This film resource of bringing back to life inanimate figures is also used in the trilogy *Night at the Museum* with its three installments, *Night at the Museum* (2006), *Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian* (2009) and *Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb* (2014). In the three films, the characters are recurrent although with different focuses. The protagonist of the three of them is Larry Daley, a divorced father who applies for a job at American Museum of Natural History as a night-shift guard. At night, he discovers that the wax figures are brought to life due to the Golden Tablet of Pharaoh Ahkmenrah. The first installment establishes the recurrent figures to appear in the later films: Easter Island Moai, Theodore Roosevelt, Native American Sacagawea, Attila the Hun, Dexter the Monkey, Old West cowboy Jeddediah, Roman soldier Octavius, and Pharaoh Ahkmenrah. Yet, in each of the installment more historical figures come to life as these wax figures travel to other museums. In the second installment, the wax figures are moved into the archives at the Smithsonian Museum in

Washington DC, as they will be replaced with technology. This time they meet Kahmunrah, Ahkmenrah's brother, George A. Custer, Amelia Earhart, Ivan the Terrible, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Al Capone. In the last sequel, with the danger of not coming into life again due to the corrosion of the Golden Tablet, Larry and his friends need to travel to London to find the explanation of this effects of the Tablet of Ahkmenrah, which results in the need of exposure to moonlight. The enemy this time is Sir Lancelot, who thinks he has found the Holy Grail and flees. Finally, Larry and his friends manage to get ahold of the Tablet with a sour ending as the Tablet will remain in London, meaning the wax figures will never come to life again, until a travelling exhibition from the British Museum gets to New York.

4.1.2. The Modern Indian

Once we have reviewed the films that depicted the Indian in the traditional past following the Western archetype, it is time to analyze the films that contain Native Americans in present time and in current America. In order to do so, we have grouped the films according to common traits either because the Native Americans depicted share specific features like being portrayed as a soldier like in *Flags of our Fathers* (2006) or *Jimmy P.* (2013) or because the topic of the films where the Indians are portrayed are similar, for example, movies that we could call the 'teenage dramas' in which there is an American Indian character presence.

4.1.2.1 The Indian Soldier

The first of these subgroups is the one we have called 'the military men' because the Native Americans characters that appear in the films are soldiers. In chronological order, *Pontiac Moon* (1994) tells the story of Washington Bellamy, a high school English teacher who decides to take his eleven-year-old son, Andy, on a road trip through Western US just before the 1969 Apollo moon landing. Katherine, the mother, suffers from panic attacks due to a car accident in the past. Therefore, at first she refuses to leave home yet she feels the obligation to follow his husband and son to challenge herself. Then, during their road trips, they can learn more about themselves and about life, especially with the different characters they encounter along the way.

One of these characters is Ernest Iron Plume, acted by Native American character Eric Schweig, a soldier who accompanies Washington and Andy during part of the trip after defending them from some rude whites in a gas station. Ernest has just come back from Vietnam and is heading to Flathead Indian Reservation. During his stay, he seems to be the silent companion although there are three key moments for him in the film. The first one comes when they stop at Washington's brother house, Jerome, for money, which gives Andy the opportunity to see his father with a different perspective as he watches old pics from the family. At night, as Andy is "listening to the planets" ("Pontiac Moon" 00:55:33), Ernest gives Andy an eagle feather as a kind of "telephone with spirits (...) for bravery or whatever" ("Pontiac Moon 00:51:28-37) his grandfather gave him before going to Vietnam. The second moment comes when Washington tells the story of Katherine's accident and her miscarriage, which resulted in her deep phobia and strange behavior, while Andy overhears from the distance. The last

moment is when Ernest decides to stay with the hippy community they encounter, he has time to give two rules Ernest' Medicine man told him: "First rule, never sweat the small stuff; second rule, everything is small stuff" ("Pontiac Moon" 01:12:12-21).

As in the Western genre, the journey around the Western geographical area, the last frontier in Western films, becomes even in the twentieth century the place for a new beginning, as Hoberman comments in Kitses's *The Western Reader* "the Western landscape still holds the promise of liberation, and/or redemption, rebirth or reinvention" (91). In this film, the trip is a new beginning for the family as they can finally face their fears and heal their wounds. Even, for Ernest Iron Plume the brief trip means a new beginning as he decides to stay away from the reservation, maybe haunted by the violence he experienced in the Vietnam War.

A more insight story of soldiers fighting in war is John Woo's *Windtalkers* (2002). The film is based on the story of the Navajo Code Talkers, Navajo Indians who were recruited and trained by the US army so Japanese forces could not decipher the messages in the tribal language. Two US Marines, Engers and Henderson, have the mission of protecting two Navajo Code Talkers, Ben Yahzee and Charles Whitehorse, interpreted by Native actors Adam Beach and Roger Willie respectively even if it means to kill the Navajo soldiers if they are likely to be captured by the Japanese army. Both white soldiers and the Navajo Code Talkers must overcome their cultural and racial differences and proof their military strength and bravery to defeat the common enemy, the Japanese. The relationship between both races is little by little constructed on mutual interests like music and religious upbringing, especially between Enders and Yahzee. However, that mutual respect is destroyed when Enders tells Yahzee he had to

kill Charlie and his Japanese captors, so the code could not be deciphered. Still angered by Enders' acts, both Yahzee and Enders end up in a minefield in Mt. Tapochau, where both are wounded by Japanese fire. Although Yahzee can send a message with the exact coordinates for an US bombardment, the danger of being surrounded and captured by Japanese soldiers make him realize Enders must complete his task. Yet, Enders refuses to complete his task just in time to take Yahzee to a safe place before the bombardment, which Enders did not survive.

The film starts and ends in the traditional Western Monument Valley during a ceremony to the spirits celebrated by Yahzee and his family before Yahzee leaves his community in the Greyhound for war. At the end of the film, we see Yahzee again with this family during an offer to the spirits honoring Sgt. Enders. The inclusion of Monument Valley as the initiation and conclusion is not a coincidence. On the one hand, it places the audience in the heart of America and the Indian land indicating that the film will deal with Native Americans. However, the association the audience does is "Cowboys and Indians" and John Ford (Doherty 36), yet not in the past, as we see Yahzee catching a Greyhound bus. The iconography of 'Cowboys and Indians' brings back images of conflict, violence and racial conflict in the frontier, and the origin of the identity as America. Indeed, in the film the American ideals are represented by Enders, the US Marines and the Indians, who mark the exceptionality of America. In the past, we had the Cavalry guarding the Indians, and in the twentieth century we still have "cowboys watching Indians' backs", like Yahzee tells Charlie ("Windtalkers" 01:46:16-19).

In addition, Monument Valley represents the Western and John Ford, Hollywood, and by definition, America (Buscombe "Inventing" 119-120). Woo's

choice of this opening and ending visually emphasize the influence of Ford's ideals of "manhood ... masculinity... loyalty ....and self-sacrifice" in the film (O'Hehir 79). However, with the development of the story, we see those myths of manhood, loyalty and self-sacrifice do not refer to the Native Americans but to Sergeant Joe Enders and his internal demons. Therefore, once again, the title of the film is misleading the audience. We ask ourselves, as Ebert does in his review of the film, the reason why it is so difficult to "trust minority groups with their own stories" (Ebert "Windtalkers"). Then, the choice of topic and characters join two genres, "the Western and the war film" (O'Hehir 80) by mixing iconography and myths to a time where it was necessary to show the qualities that forged the country and its exceptional place in the world. In fact, during the last scenes in the film when Yahzee is performing a ritual honoring Enders, it seems the cowboy's life is still being celebrated in the US although we are in the twentieth century.

In our next film, *Flags of Our Fathers* (2006), Adam Beach interprets Ira Hayes, one of US Marines who participated in the raise of the American flag in Iwo Jima during WWII. The film focuses on the story behind the most iconic image of war during WWII and on the lives of those who raised the flag, who were considered national heroes at home and who embarked on a war bond tour across the country to recollect money. However, the image of heroism, courage and superficiality with the construction of a partially inaccurate story is contrasted with the reality of three soldiers who cannot cope with the attention they suddenly caught and, especially, with the cruel and brutal experience of war where their soldier friends died. Thus, the film tackles the thin line between national triumph against personal defeat and the construction of truth against the construction of myth (Cardullo 249; Morris 99; Smith-Casanueva 4). Through the different

characters, we see how the words 'hero' and 'war' weigh heavily on the soldiers' shoulders as they are exploited by a society and the political forces who trivialize the suffering and pain, and who do not comprehend that suffering and pain apart from a monetary exchange. As such, it subverts "national myths by challenging the universality of national interests, primarily through a narrative identification with characters who illustrate a lack of congruence between national and particular interests" (Smith-Casanueva 4).

The film takes the characters and the audience through three different locations using the technique of flashbacks (Morris 101). The first one is obviously Iwo Jima and the battle that took the life of many American and Japanese soldiers and where the picture was taken. Although sold by the American government as the symbol of victory over the Japanese, the battle after the flag-raising lasted one more month. The battle gives us the opportunity not only to see the brutality of war in both sides but also to get to know the soldiers who lost their lives, the authentic heroes. The second location is the country in general, as the characters set off in a war bond tour across the country to fill the American Treasure Department, whose lack of funds endangers the war. In this bond tour, we see the two sides of the soldiers. On the one hand, their status as heroes exalted by the media, the government and society. On the other hand, we can see the three survivors cope with what today would be called Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Morris 99), racism and the insensitivity of their superiors who just considered them cash cows. The last location or setting where the characters move is the after-bond-tour life in which they come back to their normal life as civilians. There, we could see how the three soldiers deal with their lives with all the broken promises, invisibility, silence, and the fast oblivion of the country who once exalted them as the heroes of the moment. Thus, we see Ira struggling with his

alcoholism, which provoked his death. Rene, another protagonist of the film, discovers that nothing is left when the flashes of the cameras have found another hero or another hot story to fill the papers. All the promises, offers and opportunities are cancelled. Finally, Doc, the third main protagonist, who is tormented until his death by the images of Iggy's death (a soldier who died at Iwo Jima), runs a small funeral house. His son is the one trying to complete the story of the heroes and their lives to ease partially their pain.

The pain from death and how to cope with death is also dealt with in *A Warrior's Heart* (2011), where Adam Beach plays the role of a soldier, Sgt. Major Duke Wayne, who helps Connor Sullivan cope with the death of his Marine father deployed in the Iraq war. Connor, an enthusiastic lacrosse player, does not assume his father's death and starts a spiral of destruction until Wayne takes him to the Six Nations Work Camp, where problematic reservation children are taken to rebuild their confidence. In the camp, Connor needs to work not only on discipline but also in respect to others. Through Wayne and his disciplinary and harsh training methodology, Connor gets to know his father and his own responsibilities within his family and sports.

The title of the movie plays with the word 'warrior', which is usually associated to Native Americans, especially because the film starts with the voice of the narrator describing the sport of lacrosse and how the game has been played for centuries by Native Americans and the abilities it requires like speed, agility, teamwork, strategy and a bit of violence. This description may serve also to describe war and the skills soldiers should have. Equating sport and military actions is the excuse to transfer the meaning of the word 'warrior' from Native Americans to American society. In that way, the brave Native Americans warriors playing lacrosse leave their spots for the new warriors, white and soldiers.

The setting goes from the city to the Six Nations Work Camp, a camp that seems to be isolated and away from civilization. Connor's comfort zone of the city, high-school and family must be challenged and confronted in a remote place where his only chance to mature and to heal his grief is the company of a Native American soldier and Native American lacrosse players, who are briefly introduced. Yet, the Six Nations Work Camp is not shown at all, we only see images of Connor trying to demolish a decayed house to build it again and, of course, the lacrosse field, where real lacrosse is played, as Wayne points out. The goal of the camp is to deal with problematic reservation kids, as Wayne told us, are all subject to Connor's healing. Once Connor gets back to civilization, not only the Camp is forgotten but also Wayne disappears from the film.

In 2013, the French-American co-production *Jimmy P: Psychotherapy of a Plains Indian* was released with Benicio del Toro acting as Jimmy, a Blackfeet war veteran who suffers from migraines since he was injured in France in WWII. Living in Montana with his sister and his brother-in-law, he travels to Topeka, Kansas, for some doctors' screening on his case. Having lost his job in a railroad company as he could not stand the noise, the doctors cannot find a reason for his migraines as they are not familiarized with Native Americans' personality or behavior. Then, they decided to call on a French anthropologist, psychoanalyst and specialist on Native American culture, George Devereux. Devereux's role is to interview him, to study his personality and his behavior, and try to explain what happens in Jimmy's head.

The film is centered on their conversations, which are directed towards getting to know Jimmy's problem especially going through his dreams, his memories from childhood and his experiences in life. The French doctor's conclusions are that Jimmy does not suffer from any mental disorder. Being

authorized to continue with the treatment based on personal and ethnographic questions, a true friendship and respect grows between doctor and patient. The relationship is not based on power or stereotypes, as both seem to get along from the first moment they met as both seem isolated individuals within their respective cultures (Brody "Jimmy P"; Ebert "Jimmy P"). Indeed, the treatment Devereux is doing is based on making the patient participate in the treatment, in that way, the audience also participates in the process. The doctor's final conclusion is that Jimmy's soul was wounded in the past.

As in *Flags of our Fathers*, the film moves around two settings and times. On the one hand, the hospital and its facilities in Topeka in 1948, where the treatment takes place and patient and doctor bond. However, that treatment is successful only as Jimmy moves around his childhood and war memories, the real reason for this tormented mind and soul, through flashbacks. In that way, we see how he witnessed his mother having sex with another man, how he was accused of molesting a girl, how he fathered a child as a young adult and how the war experiences molded him. As Devereux says in the film, the dreams are used to shed light on the past, contrary to what Native Americans believe that they foresee the future.

4.1.2.2 The Indian from the Rez

Although in the 2002 NAJA report the stories from the reservation were one of the top three stories that newspapers were dealing with, we only find four movies which deal with reservation themes: *Thunderheart* (1992), *Reindeer Games* (2000), *Frozen River* (2008) and *The Activist* (2014). In the previous chapter, the study of the frontier was a basic element to understand the

relationship between the hero, the land and the Indian. For obvious reasons, since we are dealing with current America, the frontier itself has disappeared. However, we could say that another frontier has been built up in order to recreate that encounter between two different ways of seeing the world. Therefore, the Western frontier has been substituted by the meeting point of the reservation.

Thunderheart was released in the middle of the celebrations for the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus, after the success of *Dances with Wolves* and some months before another production that portrayed Native Americans in the past, *The Last of the Mohicans*, was released. The time of the release could not be more accurate to show Native Americans in their daily life in the reservation but showing current Native Americans facing the oblivion of the rest of the American society. Set in the 1970s, Ray Levoi, an FBI agent and partially Native American, is sent to the Sioux Reservation in South Dakota to help in the investigation of the murder of Leo Fast Elk, a member of the tribal council. With an Indian in the field, the FBI expects the Sioux will cooperate to capture the killer. In the reservation, he is paired with Frank Coutelle, who is already tracking Jimmy Looks Twice as a suspect and member of the ARM which, in Coutelle's words, is provoking a civil conflict among Indians because they opposed the new pro-government officials in the reservation.

Throughout the investigation, Ray learns the Indian ways and rediscovers his Indian roots with the help of the tribal police officer, Walter Crow Horse; the tribal elder, Grandpa Sam Reaches; the political activist, Jimmy Looks Twice; and Maggie Eagle Bear, the political activist and schoolteacher. Nicknamed as "Washington Redskin", Grandpa Sam traces Ray's origins back to Thunderheart, a Native American murdered at the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890. Maggie teaches him the Indian ways and gives him the final clue for the resolution of the

investigation before being murdered, and Walter Crow Horse and Jimmy Looks Twice are the ones who present the reality of the reservation and Native Americans to Ray. With all this information, Ray starts making a personal picture of himself and a picture of the alliances within the reservation. Thus, he discovers the financial connections among the tribal GOONS —the pro-government council military faction—, Coutelle and Jack Milton, the president of the council, with a mining company who is polluting the reservation water while mining the land for uranium.

Some scholars have described the film as a modern Western (Arnold 353; Burgoyne 46; Johnson "Thunderheart" 71; Keller 242; Nelson xiv) and, in fact, the film shares many features with the Western. On the one hand, the landscape. Richard Slotkin in his study of the frontier throughout American history sees how in recent years, especially since the 1970s, the displacement of the Western genre has provided other genres the acquisition of the ideological premises that the Western had (633). This post-Frontier setting as Slotkin described it as "urbanized, and its possibilities for progress and redemption are constricted by vastly ramified corporate conspiracies and by monstrous accumulations of wealth, power and corruption" (634). This post-Western scenario retains the underlying mythic structure with the hero divided between the order and the disorder of the new setting. There are not historical references to the formation of the American nation, yet to currents events in the Pine Ridge reservation However, Levoi is the hero who penetrates the Indian land, the reservation, and leaves it with a renewed identity, like it happened in the classical Western films.

Neil Campbell in his book *Post-Westerns: Cinema, Region, West* defines what post-Westerns are. He defines them as hybrid cinematic forms (57) created in the postwar period (10) which repeat

> tropes and styles established under earlier forms of the Western (...) not to emphasize their timelessness, continuity or essential significance to identity, community, or nation but to refocus attention on them in order to critically reflect and disclose their assumptions (37)

Thus, these post-Westerns may not take place in the west, but the film establishes a critical discussion with the Western genre by using its features, tropes, characters and themes in order to examine and question American set of moral and political values in the present (Campbell 31; González 54- 56).

As we discussed, although we are not anymore in the era of the frontier of the nineteenth century, we find a new frontier, a new territory in which the hero needs to get into. Thus, firstly, the hero, as in the Western, travels to the reservation that is also on the outskirts of society. Secondly, it also seems to imply that reservations resemble the lack of law that the frontier used to have because there was not a solid social and political structure. And, thirdly, it also seems to assume that Native Americans are not able to control themselves because they need the intervention of someone outside their own world to be able to solve their problems. Although this time the outsider is partially an insider.

Using Prat's theory of the 'Spaces of the Same' and 'Spaces of the Other' (79-80), both spaces are unified in Ray. The point of view of each of the spaces changes along Ray's change of worldviews. This is shown in his sentence "they are not my people" ("Thunderheart" 00:14:27-29 and 01:40:05-06). The first time he uses the sentence he is entering the 'Spaces of the Other' as an outsider and he uses the sentence to refer to Native Americans, as Ray is being 'catalogued' as his FBI colleagues. Through his relationship with some of the key Native American characters, he reverses the meaning of the sentence as he is not anymore in the 'Spaces of the Other', but in the 'Spaces of the Same'; therefore,

his second use of the sentence refers to white people. Indeed, the choice of the place is not an arbitrary decision. Wounded Knee carries a special meaning not only for Native Americans but also for American society in general, as it carries the notion of violence and conflict. In fact, as we penetrate the land, we see how conflict and violence are still vivid nowadays. As Burgoyne says, this geographical place teaches "the historical lesson that define and reinforce Indian imagery and identity" (51). Thus, it is clear why Native American activists have always chosen Wounded Knee as the site of their protests and political vindications. In the film, Wounded Knee links the past and the present in the person of Ray as his ancestors were killed at Wounded Knee and he visits it to see the name of Thunderheart there. In other words, Wounded Knee creates the perfect framework for the development of story, a circular story of conflict and violence, and for the discovery of Ray's identity as Native Americans. Quoting Prats in *Invisible Natives*, we could say that the reservation and, especially Wounded Knee, have become the place of savage spectacle.

This joint "Spaces of the Same" and "Spaces of the Other" shows also the contradiction of the reservation. As Ebert points out in his review of the film, on the one hand we get "the beauty of the rolling prairie… interrupted by deep gorges", and, on the other hand, we see, the reservation filled with "rusting automobiles and the subsistence level of some of the housing"("Thunderheart"). These two spaces cohabitate within current American soil.

However, the problem with locating the geographical as the defining element for both Native Americans and the protagonist is that current problems such as environmental pollution, land rights, poverty, and tribal conflicts among tribal members are only partially seen by the audience. Indeed, they are left unresolved at the end of the film because the plot is focused the rediscovery by

Ray Levoi of his truthful and real identity and his coming to terms with the memories of his father, i.e., the audience is left in their comfort zone of not addressing the reality of the state of Native American land. Their struggle becomes invisible and the national guilt is diluted through the white hero, a white savior character, who has achieved his moral and ethical duty of helping the others but once he has achieved a moral superiority is able to come back to his old world wiser and with a renewed identity (Shohat and Stam 206). This resembles the white man gone Indian in the Western who abandons the source of his knowledge because now he has become a better man throughout his spiritual and geographical journey (Pack 99; Wilson 220).

His geographical journey from the city to the reservation and throughout the reservation is a rebirth for Levoi but, most importantly, it shows the two worlds where Levoi resides. The visual images of both worlds are shown in the first scenes in the movie. Levoi wearing his Ray-Bans, his Rolex, and his suit driving his car along the highways is contrasted with his first drive with Coutelle around the reservation. Coutelle's remarks describing the reservation as the Third World in the middle of American (Internal Colonialism) or as the highest murder rate in the state have a simple goal: establishing the difference between us and them (Pack 100). Indeed, it is accompanied visually with abandoned houses and rusted cars and a feeling of disillusion and abandonment that is expressed once again by Coutelle, who claims Native American future is ruled by the nation that conquered them, assuming that this is how history works. Therefore, we see how the Myth of the Frontier and the Myth of Conquest is still present in the relationship between Native Americans and the federal government.

The last conclusion we can draw is that, reviewing the definition of the Frontier, we said that it was a basic element for Americanizing the people going West, and Indians too. Since the Frontier has disappeared as it was known in the past, we could infer two things: on the one hand, the process of Americanization has ended since Indians also seem to be assimilated in American society. On the other hand, once all people have been integrated into the main social group, other frontiers have been established to keep them apart. In the case of Native Americans, the reservation system serves to maintain them in a specific place and to isolate them once more within American society.

In *Reindeer Games* (2000) the plot is centered on an Indian reservation and its casino. Nick and Rudy are cellmates who are two days away from their release when in a prison fight Nick is murdered trying to defend Rudy. Nick had been exchanging letters with Ashley, who is waiting from him outside the prison when Rudy is released. Rudy decides to impersonate Nick. Yet, Ashley's brother, Gabriel, forces him to plan the robbery of the Indian casino and its Powwow safe Nick was working on before prison. After trying to rob the casino dressed as Santa Claus, the set-up of the characters is discovered. Ashley and Gabriel are not relatives but lovers; Nick staged his death at prison; and Ashley and Nick planned the robbery together using Gabriel, his men and Rudy.

Native American land and reservation is also a key element in *Frozen River* (2008), the independent film directed by Courtney Hunt. The film is set just before Christmas in Upstate New York near the border with Canada and the Mohawk Reservation at both sides of the St. Lawrence River. The two leading protagonists of the film are Ray Eddy and Lila Littlewolf, single mothers, abandoned by their closest family members, and struggling to survive financially and socially in current America. The stories of both women are intertwined when

Ray sees Lila driving her partner's car. Both need the car for their own purposes. On the one hand, Ray wants to sell it to recover some of the money her partner stole to purchase a trailer home. On the other hand, Lila needs a car to continue with her trafficking illegal immigrants' 'job' that gives her money as she longs to raise her child, taken by her mother-in-law upon her husband's death. Thus, both desperately decide to form an alliance to cross into Canada driving across the frozen St. Lawrence River, which forms a natural border and frontier between the two countries uniting both sides of the Mohawk Reservation. After two successful trips, Ray convinces Lila of a final trip taking two Asian girls from a club. However, the owner tries to fool them with money what originates Ray and Lila's persecution around the Indian reservation. They ended up in an old Indian woman's house in the reservation while the tribal and federal police are waiting outside for a scapegoat. As Lila is expelled by the tribe for five years and already has criminal records, she seems to be the person to surrender. Ray leaves but returns to save Lila knowing that her time in prison will be shorter than Lila's. They agree Lila will take care of Ray's children and will live in the trailer home with them and Lila's baby, whom is taken from her mother-in-law.

As we mentioned, the action of the film takes place around the border between USA and Canada divided not only by the 45th parallel, which is the political border between the two countries, but by the natural frontier of St. Lawrence River a "natural and a geopolitically constructed border" (Raussert 21). We have already seen in Chapter Two how the Myth of the Frontier has shaped the American character, literature and film, as the frontier has been the setting where different characters dwell and live. The frontier topic setting has been established as one of the main features in the Western genre. If we recapitulate how the frontier was regarded, we need to start with Berkhofer. According to him,

it is the moment of encounter between civilization and savagery which originates the conflict. In this setting, the action requires individuals who are strong and who can engage in a struggle without the assistance of law or social institutions, although these ones "are not far behind in space or time" (97). For Kitses, it represents an ambiguous set of binary contradictions between wilderness and civilization (individual vs. community; Nature vs. Culture; West vs. East) (59). Cawelti in his book *The Six-Gun Mystique Sequel* also uses the frontier as one of the main elements to define the Western genre. All these authors inherit their view of the frontier from Frederick Jackson Turner's *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* in 1893. To him, "the frontier is the outer edge of the wave –the meeting point between savagery and civilization… The most significant thing about the American frontier is, that it lies at the hither edge of free land". To Richard Slotkin in *The Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in the Twentieth-Century American* (1998) the frontier has acquired new meanings for younger generations although it retains the ideological position of the frontier depicted in the Westerns. This post-Frontier setting as Slotkin described it, was an urban setting surrounded by chances of progress and redemption (634) but attacked by external forces away from the control of the hero or heroines, as it is the case in *Frozen River*, where the urban setting of Upstate New York and the Mohawk Reservation mark the frontier between two different characters.

The natural border presented in the film is regarded and interpreted differently by both Ray and Lila, as both represent different worldviews. On the one hand, the river for Ray is the traditional political border between two countries. On the contrary, the river for Lila is just a natural aisle between the two parts of the Mohawk Reservation, which can be dwelt and crossed freely.

Therefore, Lila does not see the political consequences of her acts as she considers both sides of the river and the reservation a continuum, not as bordered lands with their political and legal implications. In fact, this border, as we see at the end of the film, brings not only spatial but also legal conflicts for both heroines. As Raussert claims, it is "the juxtaposition of indigenous traditions in the border-free Mohawk territory and the geopolitically defined territories of the USA-Canada nation states" (18). However, both borders are depicted differently in the film representing both views on the frontier. On the one hand, the border, the traditional one, is limited by fences, patrol borders and it is depicted in daylight, and as rigid and linear (Raussert 24). On the contrary, the natural border of the Mohawk Reservation is depicted as an open space, always at night resembling the dark business of human trafficking, and as a zig-zag line following the frozen tracks of St Lawrence River (Raussert 24).

As both protagonists travel around the border, they cross the limits between the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' (Prats "Invisible" 79-80). On the one hand, Ray's views of the frontier make her distinguish the spaces in political terms. She is 'invading' the 'Spaces of the Other', i.e., Canada to gain economic power in the 'Spaces of the Same', i.e., the USA. She also experiences the 'Spaces of the Other' in the Mohawk Reservation at the end of the film when she firstly decides to flee and make Lila take all the responsibility for their trafficking business and she comes back to avoid Lila's imprisonment. On the contrary, Lila does not regard any 'Spaces of the Other', she believes that the landscape is her 'Spaces of the Same' as legally it is all Mohawk territory, that is the reason why she feels protected and immune. Yet, her 'Spaces of the Same' is hostile to her, transforming that 'Spaces into the Other'. She lives in the outskirts of the reservation, she is estranged from the people in this place, where she is

deprived of her child and the tribal council expels her. She does not fit into that space although she belongs to it.

In fact, the difference between both, the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Space of the Other', disappears within the car, which represents a microcosm where Ray and Lila bond over their broken lives, yet it becomes the space whereby the immigrants are taken illegally from one country to the other. The car symbolizes the movement and the journey both women and the immigrants take; indeed, the journey is a spatial, social and psychological journey (Raussert 26). Firstly, the car gives them the possibility of moving around the political and geographical borders, as we have discussed before. Secondly, the car gives Ray and Lila access to some financial stability as both are living in harsh conditions, isolated from the rest of the society and fighting their own internal battles. The use of the car means the involvement in a deeper political problem of the human trafficking activities around borders (Misra 45-46). Lastly, the journey in the car is also a psychological and mental journey. Although in the film there are clear hints where racism or "ethnic tensions", as the New York Times mentions in its review of the film, are brought up. The first time is when Ray informs his son, T.J., that the car has been taken by a Mohawk woman and he wants to go to "kick some Mohawk ass" ("Frozen River" 00:22:20-22). The second time is when Lila takes Ray into Mohawk land lying to her, which becomes the first illegal trip they make together. When Ray expresses her concerns about the patrol border stopping them, Lila's only response is that patrol borders do not stop white people. Finally, the third time there is a hint of racism when Lila expresses her unwillingness to work with whites but the necessity of money to recover her child makes her regard Ray as an advantage, as she uses a white person to avoid the police. Apart from this, it is also a psychological journey for them, as the

relationship develops from a mutual disregard for each other into a caring and bonding relationship as both share the needs and worries as mothers, and, what is more, it is the place for "interracial female solidarity" (Gonzalez 60) or "socio-cultural interaction" (Dodds 563). Curiously enough, Ray sacrifices herself in benefit of Lila, and Lila becomes the guardian not only of her child but also of Ray's children. Gonzalez affirms that this interracial female solidarity and friendship can be considered another feature of post-westerns: to reverse passive female roles in order to create strong female characters fighting with male weapons but in women's own terms (60-61, 69-70).

Our last film in this subsection is *The Activist* (2014), which takes place during the Wounded Knee occupation in 1973. The film combines real-life footage and real events with fictional characters and events when telling the story of two Native American activists, Marvin and Bud, who are arrested and retained in a local police prison with no apparent charges and with no reason at all. Marvin is a white lawyer who married Anna, another Lakota activist who died in a suspicious car accident. Her cousin, Bud, is at times a narrator and at times a victim of the system. Apart from the white lawyer they are assigned, Clare Chapman, they receive the visit of three completely different people: a Senator, a Nixon representative and Marlon Brando. The actor is the one who provides Marvin with Anna's notes and books about 'The Sacrifice Zone", a plan that consisted on uranium weapons being tested on specific lands without considering the population in those areas, for instance, in the Black Hills. The reason of these visits and how they all know Marvin and Bud are in prison are not acknowledged in the film. It seems the Senator and the Nixon representative want to offer Marvin a kind of deal but he or Bud do not seem to have any kind of political power within the American Indian Movement, according to the development of

the story. Only at the end of the film, when Marvin, Bud and their lawyer face Nixon representative, the reasons behind Marvin and Bud's imprisonment are clarified: the government needs to check what they know about Anna and her discoveries.

Throughout the film, we see three different subplots. On the one hand, there is the environmental problem with the uranium and its possible effects on the population within the reservation. On the other hand, Anna's death as a possible case of murder because of the information she discovered and gathered for the first subplot. And, in the last place, the Wounded Knee's siege and the Native Americans political expectations. As it happened in *Thunderheart*, the political vindications and real problems of Native Americans are left unresolved, as Marvin's release coincides with the end of the siege, and the environmental problems of the reservations are addressed with written note explaining how 'The Sacrifice Zone' was suspended and how most of Indian reservations are facing environmental threats.

The setting of the film is the prison near the Wounded Knee reservation. Wounded Knee is a mythical place not only for Native Americans but for white society. The massacre of Wounded Knee in 1890 marked the end of the Indian Wars and the final defeat for Native Americans. To white people, the site reminds them of the atrocities committed against Native Americans in the name of progress and conquest, but these have never been politically and socially addressed by American society. Therefore, the site has a clear political connotation for both worldviews. This is the main reason why the American Indian Movement chose it for their political and social recognition and vindication in the 1970s. However, in the film we just see the site in the real footage, the director shows bits of images, and from the comments of the police

officers and the radio the prisoners have, the latter being a spy-device. Therefore, Wounded Knee is the necessary framework for the development of the story.

Then, the setting is the jail and the cells where the visitors, lawyer, police officers and other prisoners come and go. The cells symbolize a microcosm where two opposing worldviews in society are shown. On the one hand, we have the Native American activists, a real Native American and a white man gone Indian through marriage, both defending Native American land. On the other hand, the corrupted government representatives, and the law enforcers who keep Native Americans at a safe place in order to control them. Although the prison is the place where they cohabit, we cannot categorize it as the 'Spaces of the Same' or the 'Spaces of the Other'. Literally, it is the 'Spaces of the Same' as it is the space representing order, law and the social layers. Indeed, the protagonist of the film is Marvin, the white lawyer gone Indian. However, this space is located within the 'Spaces of the Other', Wounded Knee, which seems to represent the chaos, the conflict and the violence. Yet, we also see chaos, conflict and violence in prison, where one of the police officers, Frank, delivers his racist speeches and he commits his violent acts. The end of the movie with the death of the protagonists at the hands of Frank and his later back-up story is a metaphor for the relationship between Native Americans and the federal government.

4.1.2.3 The Teenage Drama Indian

In *Sunchaser* (1996), the two protagonists of the film, Blue and Michael Reynolds, cannot be more different in viewing and experiencing life. Blue is a 16-year-old Navajo boy who is in hospital for cancer treatment with a prognosis of two months left. His life has not been easy, as the bullets and scars all over his

body prove and, in fact, he is in prison for killing his stepfather. On the other hand, Michael Reynolds, Blue's doctor, is an uptown surgeon who has just been promoted to Head of the Surgery section and whose life is defined by his possessions: a trophy wife, a perfect daughter and a luxurious Porsche and house. While in hospital and overhearing the conversation between Reynolds and the nurse about his 2-month life expectancy, Blue decides to kidnap Reynolds and head to the Navajo Reservation where there is a legendary healing lake and where he will meet the medicine man to help him. From that moment, the film takes the form of a road trip in which both characters face their own beliefs, fears and themselves. Thus, the trip is a self-discovery, spiritual awakening and personal growth for both characters (Kemp 50; Kilpatrick "Celluloid" 157; Natali 117-118). On the one hand, Blue reconnects and holds to his Navajo roots, cherishing his childhood memories in the reservation although living in the city. He holds the expectation of meeting Skyhorse, the medicine man who sent him a book a while ago about the sacred mountain and lake where they are heading to. Although we are informed throughout the movie about Blue's harsh life in the city, we do not see those memories, not even those he cherishes as his most precious events in his life. It seems that the important thing is his present and his not-so-sure future. On the contrary, we have Reynolds' life and his childhood memories all the over the film as they haunt him during the trip when Blue and Reynolds become closer. Reynolds' older brother was terminally ill in hospital and asked Reynolds to terminate his life. That moment has been hidden in Reynolds' mind and heart for his whole life. Then, Blue's condition and the closeness they develop during the trip makes Reynolds treat Blue as if he was his little brother. The guilt syndrome Reynolds has from the past is one of the key elements to understand his coldness

and distance with his patients and his attitude towards life based on material things and his disdain for everything that has not a scientific explanation.

We have already said that the film is a road trip around the Western landscape and the presence of Monument Valley reminds as the importance of the landscape in the development of the characters. As in the Western genre, the journey around the Western geographical area, the last frontier in Western films, becomes even in the twentieth century the place for a new beginning, as Hoberman claims: "the Western landscape still holds the promise of liberation, and/or redemption, rebirth or reinvention" (91). In this film, the trip is a new beginning for Reynolds'. On the one hand, he can finally address his older brother's death and his involvement in it obeying his brother wish of being disconnected as we said before; on the other hand, he can be free from his own social and personal constraints to believe in something else away from a scientific rational in order to face his fears and heal his wounds. As Kilpatrick says in *Celluloid Indian*, after the trip, leaving aside his scientific rationalism and knowledge, Michael Reynolds can "listen to his own heart, his own past and allow himself to believe in something… without judgment and without posturing (168).

The Navajo landscape, as in Westerns, signified the last frontier in the twentieth century. This frontier is not to establish order in the wilderness but, on the contrary, it is a frontier to acquire a new identity and a new way of seeing life. Thus, the image of Native Americans and the use of Native Americans are still grounded on the images from the Western genre. In fact, the journey and its consequences make Reynolds the protagonist of the film and the plot, not Blue, as Blue holds to his beliefs since the very beginning. In this sense, the film relates to *Thunderheart* even in his ending as Reynolds leaves the Navajo Reservation with a new understanding of life, like Ray Levoi in *Thunderheart*.

Both characters move around two spaces: the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other', which can be interpreted as the city and the reservation. However, there is a great different from previous films. The 'Spaces of the Same', that is, the city, defines both characters as it represents for both identity and culture. Blue is a city Indian partially disconnected from the reservation life and Reynolds is a surgeon in a hospital. Both know how the 'Spaces of the Same' work and how to take advantage of it. However, the 'Spaces of the Other' seem to be the reservation and the trip towards the final destination. In this space, Reynolds is lost and misunderstood; he is not prepared to leave behind his scientific knowledge. In addition, the encounter of Blue with other Navajos and with the New Ager Dr. Renata Baumbauer challenges his views, but at the same time it allows him to rediscover "his vocation for medicine" helping Blue (Natali 118). In fact, he must adapt to the 'rules' and 'order' established in the 'Spaces of the Other' and leave behind the 'order and rules' of the 'Spaces of the Same' in order to survive. This is another clue for considering the film the story of the awakening of Reynolds and not Blue. However, Natali in her article "The Sublime Excess of the American Landscape: *Dances with Wolves* and *Sunchaser* as Healing Landscapes" claims that the Navajo landscape and the sacred mountain at the end of the film represents a "healing frontier" (117) for both characters: it calms their spiritual anxiety (Blue and Reynolds) and the physical illness (Blue) (118).

In *North* (1994) we encounter Native Americans as part of the plot. North, a brilliant eleven-year-old boy who is tired of his parents being too occupied with their own individual lives, decides to sue them in order to divorce them. The judge gives North the summer to find new parents and he sets off on a journey staying with different families around the USA. The only requirement is that he must be with the chosen family by Labor Day, go back to his former family, or he will go

and live in an orphanage. One of the families he goes to live with is an Inuit family in Anchorage, Alaska. The family's place is an igloo that is equipped with the latest technology although it retains some traditional elements, such as fishing, which they do in the middle of the living-room. As it is said in the film, they live far away from any distraction, so they concentrate on their family. During the trip to the port, North has the opportunity of getting to know some Inuit traditions and his grandpa. However, this apparent tranquility and family intimacy is disrupted when North goes with his new family to the flow. The flow is an Inuit tradition that consists of sending those elders who cannot contribute anymore to the community on an ice floe, so they can die with dignity and pride. However, this incomprehensible act makes North decide to look for another family.

Sam, the protagonist of *Skipped Parts* (2000), also must go through a journey to encounter a Native American person in 1963. Her mother, Lydia, and he arrive to a town in Wyoming after being expelled from North Carolina, where her father is running for Governor. Lydia's liberal, carefree and expensive way of life harms his campaign and he promises to take care of her expenses if they can conduct their lives in a suitable way away from North Carolina. However, Lydia does not make any effort to amend her life and soon starts a relationship with Hank Elkrunner, a Blackfoot, who falls in love with her. On the other hand, the mature and responsible Sam is not away from problems. He falls for the only girl who can read at school, Maurey, whose only interest is sex. After their first sexual relationship, Maurey becomes pregnant and soon all this dysfunctional family comes to live together after Maurey gives birth to a baby girl.

In these last two films, we find settings and Native Americans that are away from the traditional Western iconography and ideology. We do not find many occasions where we can see Inuit depicted on film like we do in *North*, maybe

because Eskimos and Inuit have remained apart from the American visual imagery since their 'conquest' was a more peaceful one as the region was too cold to settle, and in order to survive they require Native labor (Huhndorf 100-101). On the other hand, although we have seen Blackfoot Indians depicted in films, we always find them in the prairies and not in an urban setting as it happens in *Skipped Parts,* where he assumes the responsible role in his relationship with Lydia. This imagery away for the Western iconography and ideology is the necessary step to include Native Americans as any other character in any kind of movie without the necessity of just being related to specific places and times.

In *Transamerica* (2005), the protagonists, transgender Bree and her son Toby, set off on a journey from New York to Phoenix, some days prior Bree's final surgery to become a woman. Her son, Toby, does not know Bree is his biological father. During the trip, they are aided by Calvin Manygoats, a Native American male, who does not only pay for their lunch but also offers them a ride home as he is driving back to his home with his rodeo horses. The movie takes on the journey as a framework in the development of the relationship between Bree and Toby and with the relationship with the rest of characters appearing in the film.

An involuntary trip from Atlantic City to Los Alamos is also the reason why Davey and Wolf meet in *Tiger Eyes* (2013). Davey has just lost her father at his small restaurant at the hands of some robbers. Her mother, unable to take care of herself or her children, decides to relocate the family to Los Alamos at her sister's house. In her first outing in her new surroundings, she meets Wolf, a Native American climber who seems to see Davey's internal emotional struggles.

The setting of the film is the steep and rocky landscape of Los Alamos that reflects perfectly the harsh life of Davey due to the loss of her father and new life away from her friends, her school and trying to cope with the grief while taking

care of her little brother and mother. However, that landscape becomes her refuge when she meets Wolf as in his space, the mountain, she can find a new meaning in life and the necessary courage to face it. This courage and new beginning in her life is symbolized by her burial of her father's clothes within the cave where she and Wolf share their emotions. The only places where they can share their inner fears, more in Davey's side, are the mountain and the cave. This cave is part of the 'Spaces of the Other' but becomes the 'Spaces of the Same'. In addition, as in previous films, the protagonist must set off on a trip to a distant land, especially to the West, to have a spiritual rebirth. During that stay in Western territory, the encounter with a Native American character gives the necessary practical and emotional support for the protagonist to go back to her original place with renewed emotional strength and a renewed appreciation of life. Thus, it seems that the West still retains the meaning of a new life and a new beginning. However, once again, the Native American character is left aside. In fact, we are not given any type of information about his own grief due to the loss of his father.

The city is also the setting for *Expiration Date* (2006). Charlie Silvercloud III walks around the city to run errands and make all the necessary arrangements before his 25th birthday. The reason behind his obsession with his 25th anniversary is the family curse by which the male head of the family dies on the day of his 25th birthday run over by a milk truck. Charlie's mother even draws the milk truck route onto a map to avoid the encounter and even tries to stop Charlie from walking around Seattle. To complicate things even more, Charlie meets a girl, Bessie, who needs to buy a casket for her mother. Yet Bessie has her own curse and she is being stalked by a milk truck around the city.

The action in the film takes place in the city except for the last scenes where they seem to drive into an isolated area. Yet, since the characters are depicted as

ordinary people having their own events in their lives and moving around the city as any other citizen of Seattle, there is no distinction between the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other'. There are not different spaces, i.e., the different characters move freely around a unique space, the city of Seattle. Therefore, it is quite an improvement from previous films not to make past references to the Western in order to define and identify the characters. It is true that this is an independent film, which traditionally allows the director more freedom in terms of creativity and less ties in financial pressures.

However, in the *Twilight* franchise, we go back to the different spaces where the characters move. In the first installment of the saga, *Twilight* (2008), we see how Bella Swan moves to a small town in Washington state to live with her father, who is a policeman. Since the very beginning, Bella feels estranged in her new habitat and her new friends. However, her nearly-hit van accident provokes her approach to Edward Cullen, a mysterious boy who saves her from being hit and with whom she starts a romantic relationship. The fact that he is a 108-year-old vampire does not change her feelings and she is soon considered as part of the Cullen family. However, Bella and Edward's relationship is jeopardized by the fight they have with other three vampires who desire to terminate with Bella's life. In its sequel *The Twilight Saga: New Moon* (2009), Bella is abandoned by Edward as her life is in constant danger within the family even though they do not drink human blood. This event makes Bella go through depression as she is unable to overcome Edward's absence. Yet, she tries to distract herself by engaging in scary activities and by becoming closer to Jacob, a boy member of the Quileute tribe who transforms into a wolf and whose role is to protect her against vampires. Thinking Bella has committed suicide, Edward offers to expose himself into a crowd in Italy, saved in the last moment by Bella who promised the Volturi

to convert herself into a vampire to save Edward. Although disgusted by the idea, Edward is forced to accept Bella's wish of him converting her as long as she marries him. In the third installment *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse* (2010), the traditional enemies, the Quileute tribe and the vampires, become allies in order to protect Bella from an army of newborn vampires and the Volturi, who demand Bella's conversion. Meanwhile, the love triangle of Bella, Jacob and Edward complicates more as Bella loves both, although her choice of Edward enrages Jacob in the first moments. In *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn, Part 1* (2011) Bella and Edward decide to convert her after they marry and consummate her love. However, Bella becomes pregnant, which puts her health in danger as she is carrying a half-mortal, half-immortal child. As the baby grows rapidly into Bella's belly, her health starts deteriorating until she is about to die during labor. Thus, in order to save her, Edwards is forced to convert her into a vampire by injecting his venom into her heart. Assuming Bella is dead, the wolves attack the Cullens. However, Jacob has imprinted Bella and Edward's daughter, Renesmee, therefore, according to the pact between the Quileute and the vampires, the Quileute cannot attack the little girl. The film ends with the waking up of Bella converted already in a vampire. In the last installment, The *Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn, Part 2* (2012), Bella needs to adjust to her new life as a vampire as well as protecting her child from the Volturi and Jacob, especially when she realizes that Jacob has imprinted her daughter. However, the Volturi's threat to kill Bella and Edward's daughter makes the action shift from the love triangle to the battle between the Volturi and the Cullen and their witnesses, as they need to proof that Renesmee does not pose a threat to the vampire society.

Like in the West, the setting of the *Twilight* saga moves around two spaces, in this case, La Push and the Cullens' house. Both places are depicted in the film

as representative of their ideas. On the one hand, La Push is the remote area of the Quileute nation, an isolated area within Nature with "meager means" (Siegel 88). This area is contrasted with the Cullens' mansion, a lavish family home also in the middle of Nature to protect their way of life and their privacy. However, because of the nature of the film and the pact between the Quileute and the vampires, it is very difficult to distinguish which is the 'Spaces of the Same' and 'Spaces of the Other' for Bella, as both spaces are strange for her. It is true that because of her relationship with Edward, it seems more natural for her to consider the Cullen's house her Space. Yet, La Push, the Cullen's house and, why not, Charlie's house can all three be considered spaces of danger and protection. Depending where she inhabits, she is protected by a different group of people making the line between the 'Spaces of the Same' and the 'Spaces of the Other' blurry, at times inexistent.

4.1.2.4 The Mystic Indian/The Wise Old Chief

In 1991, Oliver Stone released the biopic *The Doors*, the film that deals with the success and fall of Jim Morrison, the leader of the rock band who died at the age of 27 in Paris. The film starts with the memories of a van accident in the desert in which a Navajo elder dies. Then, the film moves to 1965 with Morrison at UCLA where he meets Pam, his girlfriend, and the rest of the later members of The Doors. However, along his life, the ghost of the Navajo elder accompanies Jim through his life, his performances and his music and his encounters with different people like the journalist Patricia Kennealy or Andy Warhol, and especially with the effects of drugs. The setting of the film varies depending on Jim Morrison's life, yet, the main setting is the city. However, the presence of the

Navajo elder always links Morrison to the desert and his child memories. Therefore, we find, once again, the connection between desert and Indians, who seem to be assigned exclusively to their apparently natural space.

Also linking the wise elder Navajo, the desert and the both the supernatural and esoteric is also Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers* (1994). The film is a satire of the influence of the mass media and the violence in current society and its glorification by the mass media itself. Thus, Stone films the story of Mickey and Mallory Knox, a dysfunctional married couple who leave a path of dead people along their trip and whose life is publicized by the unscrupulous mass media. In one of their encounters, Mickey and Mallory drive in the desert and meet Warren Red Cloud, a Navajo Indian, and his young grandson. As in the previous film, the setting of the film is not fixed, as the characters move around different locations, from the city to the desert. If in the Western the presence of Native Americans was linked to the frontier between civilization and wilderness: in the films that take place in current America with current characters, Native Americans have not left what it seems their natural habitat for some filmmakers, the desert. This is significant as in the past the desert was characterized by the presence of the Savage Indians, as they were the inhabitants of the 'Spaces of the Other'. Yet, the violence engraved in the image of the desert and Native Americans in the past has left room for a new figure, the wise old chief and the mystic Indian. Thus, in both movies, the Navajo are linked to hallucinatory images of vision quest or spiritual unrest.

Yet, from time to time, we find a different setting in which Native Americans appear. In *On Deadly Ground* (1994), Forrest Taft is a specialist extinguishing oil fires who, after discovering the sub-standard equipment in Aegis Oil's plant in Alaska, becomes the target of the oil company. Wounded by

an explosion, he is rescued by Masu, Silook's daughter, the chief of an Alaskan tribe. With the care of Silook and his people, and the vision in which Taft is induced by Silook, Taft is able to come back to 'civilization', on the one hand, to destroy the refinery and, on the other hand, to preserve the land of the Natives. As in the previous films, the setting is both the city and the wilderness. In the city, we see modern Native Americans protesting and contesting the CEO of Aegis Oil led by Masu, Silook's daughter and other Native Americans. In the wilderness, the Alaskan land, we see Native Americans leading a more traditional way of life, linking them to the past once again, especially to spiritual ceremonies, vision quests and spiritual rebirth of the white protagonist. Thus, the film seems to be following Prat's classification of the Spaces. On the one hand, the 'Spaces of the Same' is the city, where the corruption and environmental hazard is dealt with. At the same time, in this space we see a current Native American figure, the environmental protector. On the other hand, the 'Spaces of the Other' are outside the city and in a remote and isolated location. Here, the image of traditional Native American emerges and it is the one who helps the white protagonist to have a spiritual rebirth and become an advocate for their environmental plights. In addition to this, similarly to Levoi in *Thunderheart*, the white protagonist must set off on a trip, in this case unwillingly, in order to find himself and take revenge on other evil whites. Thus, the geographical journey from the city and the refinery to the Native village is also a spiritual journey, a rite of passage we have already analyzed in previous films.

In the saga of *Free Willy* (1993, 1995 and 1997), the action takes place in the city near the sea as one of the main protagonists is Willy, the captive killer whale. Jesse, a 12-year-old boy, is a street kid who has been abandoned by his mother and after being caught vandalizing is sent to live with the Greenwood. As

he is 'punished' to clean his graffiti work in the aquarium, he befriends with the killer whale so he is offered to participate in his training. However, the owner of the aquarium has other plans for Willy. Therefore, Jesse with the help of Randolph, the Native American caretaker, and his new family plans to free Willy into the sea so the whale can reconnect with his family. In the second installment of the film, Jesse and his new brother reconnect with Willy after three years and Jesse and his troupe, once again, rescue Willy and other killer whales from an oil spill. Lastly, in the third installment, Jesse and Randolph save Willy from illegal whale hunters in the sea so Willy can start his own family.

4.1.2.5 The Ordinary Indian

Curiously enough, one of the first films where we can see an ordinary Native American character in current American society is *Lone Star* (1996). Yet, the film retakes the topic of the frontier set in recent times, in Rio County, a small town in Texas where different races shared a common history and past but with different points of view, as Roger Ebert states. The film starts with the discovery of the remains of Charlie Wade, the old sheriff who terrorized the town, specially the minorities, until he supposedly disappeared. Yet, the popular story is that Buddy Deeds, current sheriff and Sam Deeds' father, kidnapped and killed him. As Sam is researching the possible crime, he also investigates his own personal story with his late father and part of his family story.

The setting is a mixture of the 'Spaces of the Same' and 'Spaces of the Other'. As we said before, the film is set in a small town, in the middle of nowhere. The location retains some of the elements of the features of the Western genre, as it is a defining place. Yet, the location is not divided into different places as the

different minorities in the town interact and their personal stories are mixed. As Sultze claims "Sayles represents the history of the West as a dynamic process, one in which personal history is intermixed with 'official history'" (263). Thus, on the one hand, Charlie Wade's history in town is discovered by the voices of those he terrorized. On the other hand, Sam discovers his personal story, and that of his father's through the voices of the same ones that tells Charlie Wade's story. In that space, the stories of Native Americans, Latinos, African-Americans and Anglo-Americans are interconnected.

Set in another remote town yet in Alaska and focused on sport is *Mystery Alaska* (1999). The film deals with the story of a small Alaskan town called Mystery, where the local favorite pastime is watching different inhabitants play hockey on Saturdays. The town becomes national news that they are scheduled to play a nationally televised game against the professional team of the NHL, the New York Rangers. Encouraged by the townspeople, they start building an ordinary hockey arena as the town sees a wonderful opportunity to have some financial gains with the game. Coached by a former player, John, the team prepares for the game while the lives of all inhabitants are somewhat affected by the celebration of this event. Among the players, we encounter two Native American brothers. However, the Rangers call off the game. The frustration makes the town hire a lawyer, Bailey Pruitt and travel to New York to sue the Rangers over the cancellation. The judge agrees on the celebration of the game and the game takes place in Mystery.

Alaska is also the setting for *Unnatural* (2015) where a photographer and three models arrive in an Alaskan weather station for a photoshoot while a genetically-modified bear escapes from the laboratory. During the photoshoot, one of the models is attacked by the bear with the rest unable to save her. The

Eskimos living in the station refer to the legend of Man-eater: Man-eater was not born from another bear but from a vengeful spirit so Man-eater cannot be killed. These Eskimos are just the perfect background prompts to situate the action in Alaska.

In *Big Eden* (2000), the action also takes place in a small town in Montana where Henry Hart, a high-class artist living in New York, goes back after learning that his grandfather had a stroke. Henry does not want the townspeople to know he is gay as he thinks the villagers are still very traditional. However, the townspeople 'conspire' to bring together Henry with more gay people, first with Dan, Henry's crush in high-school, and then with Pike, the shy Native American gay owner of the General Store of the town. Although everybody in town is prone to hide their own secrets, everybody collaborates in bringing together the gay protagonists without questioning anything.

Another isolated town, this time of Oklahoma, is the setting for *August Osage Country* (2013). The Weston family gather together after the disappearance and later death of the head of the family, Beverly Weston. The mother, Violet, suffers from cancer and is addicted to pills. The older daughter is Barbara, who is facing at the same time marriage problems and the generational conflict with her teen daughter. Karen, the middle daughter, arrives with the fiancé of the moment who molests Barbara's daughter at night. Ivy, the youngest of the three, is the only one who stayed close to the family abandoning her own aspirations in life. Ivy is in love with her cousin, Little Charles, whose mother, Mattie Fae, is against the relationship as Little Charles is the product of the extramarital relationship between her and Beverly. The Weston family is assisted by a Cheyenne Native American maid, Johnna, who was hired by Beverly before

his disappearance and who witnesses the rage and accusations among the family members.

As we have seen, the setting of these films takes place away from large populations. All the stories take place in isolated and remote parts of the country as it was impossible to see Native American living in big cities. The microcosm of *Mystery*, *Big Eden* or *Osage Country* helps introduce Native Americans in current American society. The small roles they play in the films, even the full-starred cast of our last film, are just secondary or lingering roles. It is true that at least we have a partially protagonist in *Big Eden*, who is a current and real Native American, away from the stereotypical image of the desert and away from the wise old chief. Yet, we must recognize that we are able to see Native Americans off the context of the desert and the Western genre. However, this is not enough.

4.1.2.6 The Fantasy/Horror Indian

In this group, the Native American characters are in films whose topics deal with the mysterious or science fiction. For instance, in *Deep Rising* (1998), the film deals with the mysterious events taking place in an ocean liner in the South Pacific, where a man-eating creature has taken over the ship. In 1999, Ben Stiller starred in *Mystery Men* as Furious, a super-hero becoming less necessary, who decides to make up a team with other absurd superheroes such as the Shoveler, Blue Raja or the Sphinx to save the city from supervillain Casanova Frankenstein, freed by mistake. In *Man Thing* (2005), a Native American legend of Dark Waters is resurrected to justify the bloody consequences of desecrating sacred Native land by oil tycoon Schist.

4.2. Native Americans and Their Relation to White Characters

4.2.1. The Frozen Indian

The Native Americans who appear in the first subgroup of this chapter, those who reflected Indians from the past, all share a common feature: they are the exotic historical objects and object of ethnographic or anthropological study. The best example we can find are the Dog Soldiers in the *Last of The Dogmen*. We find how Lewis Gates' stubbornness in finding the mysterious disappearance of three convict men in the Oxbow attracts Dr. Sloan, a scholar specialized in Native Americans. When they are found by the Dog Soldiers in the mountains, Sloan's dreams as an anthropologist come true. The first time the Cheyenne appear in the film is quite revealing. Instead of showing them full figure, the camera works with the audience's previous knowledge of the Indians. The camera focuses on the arrow Gates receives, the horse, on the feathers, on the long hair, on the skin clothes and, then, finally in the painted faces of one of the warriors. Indeed, it is the Indian kit (Friar and Friar 93), just the way we all think Native Americans look like. The problem is that the audience only retains that image. Indeed, although there are some images from the village and the protagonists are present in a tribal council, the Indians are background prompts. As Kilpatrick claims in his *Celluloid Indians* book, the Indians have been transferred from the 1850s into the twentieth century with no change (154-155).

As if this image was not enough to catalogue them as relics from the past, when Gates enquires Sloan about why she admires Native American so much,

Sloan repeats one by one Turner's idea of the Frontier and the idea of American Indians as the previous stage for a unique American identity:

> Sloan: Oh, because I admire them. And because we owe them a tremendous debt.
>
> Gates: How's that?
>
> Sloan: Well, they gave us romance, myths, legends. They gave us a history. The Indians shaped the character of our entire nation. What happened was inevitable; the way it happened was unconceivable.
>
> Gates: We picked a hell of a way to say thank you, didn't we? ("Last of Dogmen" 00:50:35-55)

With this conversation, the Conquest and the Frontier Myth tenets are confirmed. What's more, it emphasizes "the myth of Indian culture as heritage" (Budd 203). On the one hand, it establishes Native Americans as a previous stage in the formation of an exceptional identity and the character of the country, as Turner and his Frontier thesis had done. On the other hand, this conversation does confirm that not only Native Americans have vanished, but also they are an inferior culture as they could not resist the conquest. These comments also distance the protagonists from History and trivialize the terrible consequences of the arrival of the white civilization into Indian land. In fact, their own presence within the Indian village and back into History, like Sloan tells Gates, endangers once again Native Americans. Therefore, although Sloan and Gates did not participate in the original conquest, they can redeem themselves from guilt by helping the Cheyenne to remain isolated from white civilization. Thus, they are transformed in their white saviors, using Matthew Hughey's words. It is white medicine what cures Yellow Wolf's son and it is white dynamite and tools (objects Native Americans do not know how to use) what will protect Native Americans from their enemies, the bad whites, following the Western archetype. Obviously, both Gates and Sloan have different interests in the Cheyenne. On the one hand,

Gates is a loner, tormented by his wife's death and leading a life to self-destruction. Meeting the Indians and Sloan gives him a new purpose in life and a way to redeem himself by being able to protect what he comes to love, as in *Dances*. On the other hand, Sloan is the necessary tool for Gates and for the Cheyenne to communicate with each other. Although initially reluctant about the existence of Cheyenne in the area, she is completely swept away by her academia world. She represents the white world eager to study and to know ancient civilizations without tackling political issues.

The story is told by a voice-over narration who does not belong to either Gates or Sloan nor speaks for the Indians. Then, the last scene in the film that hints to a possible 'couple gone Indian' also presupposes the disappearance of Native Americans and the coming back of Sloan and Gates to white civilization as it provides personal reflections and points of view of the protagonists, especially Gates'. The film resembles *Dances* in the sense that Gates and Sloan will speak to those who listen about a vanished culture with no future in current America. Indeed, we could say that the same characters that celebrate Cheyenne culture and discovery are also the responsible for putting them in risk and the only ones capable of protecting them from the white civilization. However, as Kilpatrick affirms, this voice-over narration is not very reliable in the sense that if Gates was willing to be in jail to protect the Cheyenne and Sloan, how is that possible that the narrator can give us so many insights not only about Gates' points of view but also about the Cheyenne? ("Celluloid Indian" 155).

Thus, when Gates suggests the possibility of leaving the tribe, Sloan cannot forget her job as a scholar of Indians and she expresses that she wants to set a living record of them, a memorial to their last of their kind. She knows that maybe she is witnessing the last group of people still living in the primitive ways. Thus,

she views them as already vanished and "feels the need to catalog them for future museum use" (Kilpatrick "Celluloid" 155).

The depicted Indians fulfill four different stereotypes throughout the film. On the one hand, they are already vanished, part of the past and, as such, they are treated as relics from the past and as objects of study. These two stereotypes do not change at all throughout the film. Indeed, they are emphasized when Yellow Wolf and the rest of the Cheyenne ask Sloan and Gates about other people. Cheyenne and they feel the obligation to tell them the truth; curiously enough, it is the only part of that conversation that is not translated. In addition, Sloan always talks about them in the past mixing her scholarly background and the white civilization conquest narrative. Even when the relationship between Sloan and Gates with the Indians turns to apparent friendship and affection, "Does Lilian Sloan truly respect these Cheyenne as equals and friends, or simply consider herself to have struck an anthropologist's mother lode?" (Budd 203).

The third stereotype they play briefly is that of the Savage Indian. At the beginning of the film, they are part of the darkness in the woods when prisoners are trying to escape. The only thing we can discern is the sound of an arrow hitting one of the prisoners. Obviously, we do not know who they are and why they kill the prisoners as they are trying to run away from Gates. The first encounter between Yellow Wolf and the Cheyenne warriors, and Gates and Sloan is also marked by animosity. Yellow Wolf is presented as the brave but stoic warrior; he does not show any sign or desire of communication even when Sloan talks in Cheyenne language. The fact that he shoots an arrow to Gates' dog emphasizes his coldness and stoicism. This violent imagery is also hinted once Gates and Sloan are in the Cheyenne village. In one of the tents, they discover tools, dynamite, wallets and more objects from white people. Yet, in a quite

paternalistic way, Sloan justifies the violence ("Wouldn't you kill to protect your life and your family?" "Last of Dogmen" 01:24:48-51), which converts them in Noble Indians in the eyes of the audience as they show a similar behavior to white civilization. This fourth stereotype stands out after the healing of Yellow Wolf's son with the penicillin Gates brings from the town. This unselfish act by Gates provokes that we can see the Indians treating Gates and Sloan differently: they are provided with some gifts and they are able to dialogue about life in the modern world with them. As noble but vanished people, they must authorize the white hero in their departure and to remember Gates that he is now a Cheyenne. A traditional exchange of gifts follows in which Yellow Wolf gives Gates a feather, a symbol for Indians, and Gates gives Yellow Wolf his grandfather's knife.

This type of Indian as relic of the past is also depicted in *The Indian in the Cupboard* with Little Bear. As we said when we were explaining the setting and the plot, Little Bear is a nineteenth-century Iroquois/Onondaga warrior toy figure who is brought to life due to a magical cupboard. As in *Last of Dogmen*, his only contact with reality is Omri, a nine-year-old boy who learns about respect and stereotypes along his relationship with Little Bear. Little Bear is used throughout the film to challenge all the preconceived ideas Omri and the audience have about Native Americans. The first deconstruction of stereotypes takes place right at the beginning. When we talk about the portrayal of Native American we expect someone like Yellow Wolf from the previous film or Kicking Bird from *Dances with Wolves*. However, we find an Iroquois/Onondaga Native American totally unknown for the average child and Omri himself who must go to the library to read more about the Iroquois. The second stereotype deconstructed is when Omri provides a tepee and a horse to Little Bear thinking he is an Indian from the

Plains. Little Bear informs Omri about his culture and the type of houses they live in. Then, Omri brings him some discarded material from dirt.

However, some other stereotypes are confirmed. On the one hand, it is Omri who needs to care for Little Bear because in the new world Little Bear is unable to survive. This guardian and paternalistic role may symbolize the federal government's assumed role of the guarding of Indian affairs and life (Sanchez and Stuckey 87). The other stereotype we commented at the beginning was of the vanished Indian, and consequently, a vanished culture (Sanchez and Stuckey 88). Little Bear's wife died so there is no possibility of future for him and Little Bear himself asks Omri about other Onondaga. As he lives in the past, he wants to come back to his people, but we never see them. As Paula Turner points out, although the film challenges typical stereotypes of Indian portrayals, the film lost an incredible and fabulous opportunity to show twentieth century Onondaga life (409); therefore, showing an Onondaga in the past, as a miniature under the will of a child and without any future, reinforces the idea of the Native American culture as extinguished, when in fact it is one of the nations that still today challenge American government (Sanchez and Stuckey 88).

Sanchez and Stucky considers Little Bear a multidimensional hero (83) as he is Omri's teacher in life not only about the wrongs produced by stereotypes, the power we have and the responsibility that every single human has upon the others but also about Native American culture, traditions and rituals. To us, the film tries to reverse the traditional inferior position of Indian culture in comparison to white civilization. However, the fact that this is done through a character who is dead or alive based on his position inside the cupboard lessens the effect. In addition, we understand the introduction of a cowboy toy, Boone,

and his racist[30] comments in the story to counteract and accentuate Native American superiority. Yet, we think it emphasizes again the fact the Native American cannot appear on their own, i.e., that he or she always needs to be compared to someone completely different to get some identity.

If the Indians in *Last of the Dogmen* were discovered in twentieth century Montana, and Little Bear is brought to life by some kind of magic cupboard, Sacagawea in *Night at the Museum* trilogy is directly a piece of a museum. Trapped behind a window glass at the Museum of Natural History, she is separated from Lewis and Clark even in the same space, which gives an indication of her role and her lack of proximity to both explorers. When the wax figures come to life she is unable to hear Larry and we are unable to listen to her, maybe resembling the treatment she received and the lack of voice and opinion she had in the expedition she guided. The only information we have of her comes from Rebecca, the museum guide, who is writing her dissertation on her. She comments how Sacagawea was one of the most famous trackers at her time. Larry will use this quality as he needs to track Cecil, one of the retiring guards who has stolen the Egyptian Tablet. Yet, as we are in a comedy, the tracks Sacagawea sees are those left by the van Cecil drives and crashes.

Upon the meeting between Rebecca and Sacagawea, the latter becomes, an object of anthropological study in the first installment of *Night at the Museum*, as the Cheyenne in the *Last of Dogmen*. However, in the next two installments her role is completely diminished, with almost no dialogue at all. In fact, it seems that the only reason for her presence is the 'romantical' relationship she and

[30] "I'm civilized, not like others" ("Indian in the Cupboard" 00:55:42-44); "I'm tired of getting hauled around all the time! I might've known you'd take the side of that stinking' savage!" (Indian in the Cupboard 00:55:08-15)

Teddy Roosevelt seem to have. Ironically, a president who helped the development of the cowboy status and the mythology of the West with his writings. The fact that she is objectified by Roosevelt resembles the treatment of Native Americans in the past, like the treatment she received in the Lewis and Clark expedition.

In addition, the objectification and the idea of a vanished culture is accentuated by the fact that the actress acting as Sacagawea is not even Native American, a practice that denies real Native American artists to act as people from their own race making them invisible in society. The fact that Sacagawea is a real person emphasizes the prejudices American society still has and trivializes the consequences of American History of progress and Conquest had on Native Americans.

4.2.2. The Modern Indian

4.2.2.1. The Indian Soldier

In our war movies, all the Native Americans play the role of a soldier or a war veteran still haunted from the experience at war. Although Native Americans have always served the US as scouts for the Cavalry and in WWI as coders, it must be WWII and present wars the setting in which the new Native Americans are made visible for mainstream society, specifically in the Army, probably, the most respected role anybody in the US could have. This new role, which partially links his old image of bravery and warfare with a new meaning fighting a common enemy, was researched by Michael Ray Fitzgerald. In his research, he analyzed the image of Native Americans in television applying Steve Clark's model of four

stages in the representation of minorities in television: (1) *non-recognition stage* in which the character does not even exist to the large dominant society undergoing 'symbolic annihilation'[31]; (2) *ridicule*, describes how the minorities are portrayed as less intellectual; (3) *regulation*, which presents minorities as enforcers of the law; (4) *respect*, which depicts characters as equals leaving space to interracial relationships. After analyzing different recurring Indian characters in different TV shows, Fitzgerald concluded that the more prominent and closer to present times the character is, the more likely he is to be presented as a law enforcer (376). In that way, the minority figure authorizes and approves the white colonial system by participating in it and at the same time it is a simpler way to challenge previous negative stereotypes (379-380).

In *Pontiac Moon*, we have the soldier Ernest Iron Plume, who comes back from Vietnam War probably tormented from the experience, as he refuses to fight when Washington and Andy are being molested in the gas station. At first, he is just another background prompt in the bar, he is silent, smoking a cigarette as if the action had nothing to do with him. He is portrayed as a stoic character even when he speaks and proclaims his anti-violence message. The only information we have from him is that he is heading to Flathead Reservation, but he does not provide any extra information about his family or his experience in the war. Thus, again, we have a Native American man away from his tribe. The fact that he decides to stay with the hippy community instead of going to his reservation reinforces two stereotypes: the vanished Indian and the Indian as the New Age spiritual guide. This latter role is also resumed in two occasions with Andy. The first one, when he catches Andy listening to the planets and talking about the Big

[31] Term used by Gerbner and Gross in 1976 and mentioned in Clark's article.

Bang Theory. Andy's scientific approach to Nature is contrasted with Ernest's, who gives him his Vietnam grandfather's eagle feather to show "bravery or whatever" and to function as a telephone with spirits. His non-traditional approach to religion or Indian spiritual life is emphasized with his stay with the hippies and his second Andy's spiritual advice: "First rule, never sweat the small stuff ; second rule, everything is small stuff" ("Pontiac Moon" 01:12:12-21).If the director wanted to present a reversal of stereotypes by linking Vietnam War with the bravery and warrior side of Native Americans, he completely failed on his purpose presenting the cliché of the hippy community, its New Age tenets and the escape of an American Indian soldier towards that community.

One of the issues that stands out from reviewing these movies is the use of language used by white people to refer to Native Americans. In *Pontiac Moon* it was not the case, as Ernest's forty-minute intervention was the device of the director to let the audience know the story behind the Bellamy family and to offer Andy an alternative view of the world. However, in *Windtalkers*, both Ben Yahzee and Charlie White Horse received comments as if they were extraordinary people such as "do you expect them with war-paint?" ("Windtalkers" 00:21:32-34), or "chief" (for instance, 00:25:36). Indeed, they are greeted by one of his guardians with the traditional "How!" ("Windtalkers" 00:20:59); soldiers make the sound of a horse when they get to know Charlie's surname; the fact that they mention they could be confused with Japanese soldiers; or, comparing Yahzee with Gary Cooper when they were posing for pics before being deployed. These name-calling or attitude towards the Indian soldiers is contrasted with Yahzee and Whitehorse ironic comment when they are 'assessed' by other white soldiers:

Charlie Whitehorse: I've never seen so many white men.

Ben Yahzee: Oh, they've never seen so many Navajos before. (“Windtalkers” 00:20:34-39)

In fact, Enders, the real protagonist of the film, only calls Yahzee ‘Ben’ after collaborating to get ahold of a radio to send a coded message and Enders receiving a Medal of Honor for his action. Curiously enough, this proper-noun calling that shows the final bonding between two different worlds takes place just before Enders is obliged by his superior commands to kill Whitehorse, as he is taken as a prisoner by the Japanese soldiers. There are two more signs of bonding between two races. On the one hand, Henderson, Whitehorse’s guardian, uses the music to approach Whitehorse as he is playing traditional Navajo music. The final musical duo means the integration of both cultures into one, in the end they share a common enemy and they share a common interest, they are not so different. The other sign of bonding takes place after Whitehorse’s death. Woo introduces a disclaimer paradoxically using the most racist character in the film. Of course, as a cliché, the most racist character, Chick, is taught a moral lesson when he was saved by Whitehorse just minutes before the Indian dies to protect the code, and by extension, his comrades and his country. This act of unselfishness and courage is acknowledged by Chic who claims that traditional old enemies may come together at some point.

Yet, if Woo was trying to present how war may function as a preliminary stage where races can bond and override stereotypes, he fails in doing that. Firstly, it seems that Whitehorse must prove himself a skilled soldier in the eyes of the white and to die and sacrifice his life for America just to be considered an equal, as Mitchell argues in his review of the film in The New York Times. Then, Native Americans are defined by their actions judged by whites, not on their own.

On the other hand, the fact that Enders is given the Medal of Honor for penetrating the Japanese lines disguised as Japanese to get a hold of a radio and his timid protest for Yahzee's heroic action not being recognized, leaves the Native Americans as inferior beings even when they are protecting the country. It is quite ironic that Yahzee is informed at the beginning of the movie by other soldiers that some Navajos have been killed because they were confused with Japanese soldiers, and in this action he had to disguise as Japanese in order to get a radio and call for air strikes, but he was not acknowledged.

Probably, we can read this scene as a symbol of the long wait these Navajo and other tribal nations had to wait to be publicly acknowledged by the government and society in general for their immense contribution to the victory in war with their still unbreakable code using their native language. The problem is that this is not even acknowledged in the film as it tells the story of a tormented soldier –Enders- and his heroic actions; not the story of the Navajo Code Talkers, as it is inferred in the title of the film, as Ebert claims in his review of the film.

The Western mythology we were talking about when we described the setting is maintained here through the white protagonist because the film is about a white hero. On the one hand, Enders is the loner, the cowboy, tormented by the death of his unit and by his wounds. He is constantly shown on his own and almost having no relationship with the rest of the unit, even with his Native American Code Talker, whom he must either protect or destroy. As in the frontier or the wilderness, the Native American is the element that must be destroyed for the society to advance. In this war context, the Native American must be killed before the Japanese break the code so the victory over the enemy is secured.

On the other hand, the Native Americans characters, Yahzee and Whitehorse, are more developed than previous characters although Thomas and

Ebert described them as the Noble Indians and as one-dimensional and sketchy characters. However, we think Yahzee is a round character showing the contradictions of time: he is helping defend a country who does not consider him equal to the rest of the society. He even emphasizes his American identity ("It's my war, I fight for my nation, for my people" "Windtalkers" 00:31:04-10) when requested why he is there, and by the fact of naming his son after one of the founding fathers, George Washington Yahzee. The problem is that Woo does not go into detail about Yahzee or Charlie's stories and lives by not making them the real protagonists of the story. Yet, they are shown with positive traits, they are loyal and friendly, engaged to their role, respectful of their rituals and of the others and eager to sacrifice themselves for the benefit of the majority if it is the case. Probably, Charlie is the "sketchy character" as Ebert said in his review of the film. In fact, Woo cannot escape from some stereotypical action like Charlie 'saving' Chick by throwing his knife to apparently nowhere but killing a Japanese ready to kill Chick (Doherty 37). In fact, Charlie is shown being more skilled with a knife that with a rifle, which links once again Native Americans to more primitive tools.

The inferiority of Indian characters is also emphasized at the end of the film. Yahzee, dressed in traditional Navajo clothes, is singing some Indian chants while doing a ceremony honoring Ender and using his military plate. We wonder why the ritual did not include Charlie Whitehorse, his friend, also killed in combat. Obviously, Woo offers himself the explanation with the last Western sign in the movie. The ritual is being performed at Monument Valley, the same place where Yahzee did a ritual before going to war. As we explained, Monument Valley means Native American land, Western, Hollywood and America in one (Buscombe "Inventing" 120). Therefore, Yahzee, by honoring Enders, is honoring

American values too. Yet, Woo seems to insinuate that Whitehorse was not worthy enough of being honored or that he does not represent America even if he sacrifices himself. Yahzee's last sentence accentuates Enders' centrality in the story, as in Westerns an Indian authorizes the white hero's heroism and exceptionality:

> Ben Yahzee**:** His name was Joe Enders, from south Philadelphia. He was a fierce warrior, a good marine. If you ever tell a story about him, George… Say he was my friend. ("Windtalkers" 02:08:27-56)

On the contrary, in *Flags of Our Fathers*, the focus of attention in the film is the Native American character, Ira Hayes, the Indian who was one of the flag-raisers at Iwo Jima. Among the three characters, he is the one who suffers most from the consequences of the war experience, what today is called Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Morris 99). However, although he is the focus in the film, his character is portrayed with negative connotations such as terribly sentimental, alcoholic, alienated from society and his own family and facing racism physically and linguistically.

During the deployment and during the war bond, he is constantly referred as 'Geronimo', or 'chief' or 'squaw' accentuating his exceptionality. It is true that we may consider the denomination 'chief' as an affectionate nickname among comrades, in fact, we do not see any kind of racist comments or behavior from his fellow soldiers as it happened in *Windtalkers*. Yet, the fact that he is always referred to as 'chief' diminishes his bravery and his military skills as no matter what he does, his race and color of skin speaks for him. He even faces members of the Congress or Senate and the President himself who speak out their expectations about Indians. For instance, before climbing up a fake Mount Suribachi at Iwo Jima, a Senator talks to him in what it seems to be Pima

language. Puzzled, Ira asks about the meaning and the answer cannot be more stereotyped, "Don't you know how to speak your own language?" ("Flags" 00:45:09-12). Ira's reply puzzled even more the Senator and probably the audience, "I've been away from the rez from a long time, sir" ("Flags" 00:45:15-18). Even President Truman plays History with him by saying "you are the most American person in here" ("Flags" 00:51:16-20).

These two last quotations demonstrate the contradiction of American History and the contradiction within society. In the former, Native Americans have endured a long history of federal policies, whose only purpose was to exterminate Native Americans and their culture by destroying the tribal governments, the reservation system and even forbidding their language and their religious practices and not even awarded with American citizenship until the enactment of Indian Citizenship Act of 1924. Therefore, it is quite contradictory that a member of the Senate and even the President proudly talks about Pima language and Ira's Americanness. One last expectation is confronted when another member of the Congress asks Ira if he used a tomahawk to kill Japanese, something Ira denies. As it happened in *The Patriot* with Mel Gibson, the tomahawk is used not only as a synecdoche for the identity as Native American (Prats "Invisible" 69), as we all recognize that tomahawk a part of Indian culture, but also to signify a primitive and violent Indian image, using a primitive tool instead of grenades or rifles. Even when Ira denies it, they insist on him using that story as it is what they like; 'they' meaning society and the press. However, once again, this reply implies the link between the Native Americans and the past, as if almost a century has not gone by. Therefore, the image the audience and mainstream society have depended on the Old West, probably because at the time the war bond tour was taking place, the Western genre was at

its peak of success. Ironically, his identity as Indian is apparently hailed as American while in the past Indians were defined as what white were not (Berkhofer 26). In addition, the story of the tomahawk means how heroism is a creation, an exploited marketing device that challenges the realities of war (Cardullo 249).

This monetary value imposed on heroism diminishes the personal experiences of war by the soldiers in favor of a designed and fake national identity as heroes. Ira externalizes these contradictions as he cannot bear being called 'hero' all the time while being discriminated and ignored. For instance, despite being catalogued as a hero, he is denied service in a restaurant, which is the final blow for his tormented mind. The waiter does not make the rules, as he said, but Ira, the hero, the flag-raiser, the soldier who fought for his country, is rejected as a human being in a restaurant just moments after being hailed in a stadium by thousands of people eager to see their national heroes. Therefore, his identity as American and as a soldier is fake heroism, it is only worthy if it serves publicly to the country, as Smith-Casanueva argues in his article (6). Individually, he is just a drunk and problematic Indian. Discrimination and ignorance are also reflected in his oblivion as Indian after the war bond tour. Actually, in the film we see how one of his superior crosses paths with him in the road but he does not stop because he is late and Ira is just an Indian. Although he came back to fight, that information is not shown or told in the film. He maintained his marketed identity as hero until the end of his life, especially visualized in how people would look for him in the fields to take a photograph with him while Ira showed his Medal of Honor. Thus, we find again the contradiction between creating heroes as national symbols and icons while ignoring their individualities. The narrator of the story, John Bradley's son, James, summarizes these contradictions in American society:

> James Bradley: I finally came to understand why they were so uncomfortable being called heroes. Heroes are something we create, something we need. It's a way for us to understand what's almost incomprehensible, how people could sacrifice so much for us, but for my dad and these men, the risks they took, the wounds they suffered, they did that for their buddies. They may have fought for their country, but they died for their friends. For the man in front, for the man beside him, and if we wish to truly honor these men we should remember them the way they really were, the way my dad remembered them ("Flags" 02:01:44-02:02:31)

One of the things that shocked us the most was the fact that, although the focus of the film is Ira, which is a novelty, there is not any reference to family members or any relatives. Through the film we can see his two-fellow flag-raisers, as well as other soldiers who died in the field, with their families. At the reunion in the opening of the statue where we see the family of the soldiers, Ira is stigmatized as being alone. We think the film plays with his isolation from society and from national attention with the idea of the Indian as vanished, with no future, as if Native Americans were not present in society, reflecting even the way he died, alone and drunk.

Adam Beach repeats for the third time a role as an American soldier, although in a totally different light, in *A Warrior's Heart* (2011), where he is Sgt. Major Duke Wayne, an Iroquois Native American. Apart from serving the country in Iraq with Connor Sullivan's father, Sully, he works at the Six Nations Work Camp to help reservation kids and where real lacrosse is played. The film starts with images of ancient Native Americans playing lacrosse, and the narrator even informs the audience about the origins and meaning of this sport for Native

Americans. Thus, the fact that the narrator also focuses on the real protagonist of the film means two things. On the one hand, it links the history of Native Americans and their ancient game to current America, especially because it seems Native Americans are vanished, as no current Native Americans seem to be playing lacrosse in the film, so the skills and abilities must be transferred to whites; therefore, once again, a white hero seems to be the natural heir of Indian features. On the other hand, the fact that the narrator focuses on the romantic side of the story and on the white protagonist diminishes the importance of the game for Native Americans. Then, lacrosse is used as a device for the hero to prove his skills and abilities and to mature:

> Narrator: This is a story about the guy I fell for but to really understand him you must understand the game he loves. The game's been played by Native Americans for centuries. It requires speed and agility, teamwork, strategy, and a bit of violence. You may know it as lacrosse, but Native Americans know it as the little brother of war. Their matches took days and were played over miles of terrain. The winners got land, wives, and sometimes glory. There's a lot that's different about the game now, but the thing a player needs most hasn't changed at all - and if you find someone who has it, I'd tell you to never let go. ("Warrior's Heart" 00:00:23-00:01:24)

Wayne takes Connor under his command in the Work Camp to teach him discipline, which reminds of that of a military training, as Connor failed in life and in lacrosse, as Wayne told him in Sully's funeral "A warrior doesn't run from pain" ("Warrior's Heart" 00:31:04-07), which is exactly what Connor did. As in previous films, Connor uses the language to diminish Wayne's authority ("crazy

Indian" ("Warrior's Heart" 00:54:18). However, the Native American character with just a long monologue establishes himself as an exceptional and unique character as Indian, something that we have not seen so far:

> Wayne: I'm a full-blooded Iroquois. It may sound antiquity to you, but Iroquois banded with five other tribes to form Six Nation, a participatory democracy that has lasted to this day. A participatory democracy means that my people got to vote 100 years before Thomas Jefferson decided all men were created equal, so you couldn't be more authentically and originally American than that. So, next time you called me a crazy Indian, I will personally tattoo those words to your forehead ("Warrior's Heart" 00:54:32-00:55:24).

At night, Wayne also assumes the role of story-teller, a traditional Native American role to pass on knowledge and traditions to younger generations. At first, Wayne explains the meaning of the word 'warrior': to spill blood in the battle-field, which is the traditional meaning attached to violence and conflict. However, the same words acquire new meanings when Wayne tells the story about Sully's father and how he saved Wayne in Iraq: "I never knew a warrior better than him" ("Warrior's Heart 00:58:37-40) which assigns a new meaning for warrior as bravery, courage, teamwork and sacrifice. Thus, the word 'warrior' loses the traditional violent and conflict meaning for a new meaning in life in general. The fact that, at the end of the movie, his lacrosse stick is replaced by the American flag reminds us of Mel Gibson's dropping the tomahawk and raising the American flag meaning a new American identity. Yet, in this film it links the Native American tradition and skills transferred to the new America.

In general, we can trace Wayne to the wise old chief stereotype that Elizabeth Bird establishes, although he does not present all the features ("Gendered 71). Among the feature he does fulfill is the representation of power, as he is a soldier, a law enforcer, thus, making the transition from a spiritual power to a law power. In addition, his character is not portrayed as a sexual commodity for the white people; he is completely desexualized. Yet, he represents how the wisdom (the qualities and skills lacrosse imply) can be incorporated into the modern world meaning life. His role is to heal the emotional and spiritual side of an authentic warrior, with the new meaning attached.

A character who also needs to be healed is the Native American war veteran, Jimmy Picard, in *Jimmy P. Psychotherapy of a Plains Indian* (2013). However, the first thing that caught our attention was the choice of a non-native actor for the role of the Blackfeet soldier. We agree with the film critic Rogert Ebert that Benicio del Toro delivers "one of his greatest performances" (Ebert "Jimmy") as Jimmy. Nonetheless, the fact that two real Native Americans actors like Gary Farmer or Michelle Thrush are practically non-existent characters in the film is a great failure, as the movie deals with Native Americans. As it happened with *The Lone Ranger,* maybe the use of a non-native actor had financial reasons we are not aware of. Yet, it minimizes the presence of Native Americans in both WWI and WWII and the effects that war had on them, the same as on any other soldier of any race. Thus, after watching this film released after *Windtalkers* and *Flags of Our Fathers*, the audience may think that the problem of Ira Hayes was not Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder but only alcoholism, when it was just a consequence of the Disorder. Even, Ebert said that the character happens to be Native American which we partially agree. It is true that the experiences Jimmy relates can be told from a white point of view, in the

sense that his experience at war is the same as that of another white American war veteran. However, there are specific events or moments in the film which cannot be replaced by any War Veteran, i.e., his Indianness is a marker of his medical treatment and of his personal identity.

The first moment is that the chosen psychoanalyst, Devereux, is appointed to the job because he has previous knowledge of Native Americans as he spent two years among the Mojave studying and learning about them. The fact that other doctors do not know how to treat Jimmy, focusing on his race, clearly shows an ignorant and discriminatory scientific approach to Native Americans. Secondly, Devereux is not only interested in the treatment as a psychoanalyst but also in his life as Native American. In fact, the questions he makes, especially at the beginning, have a clear ethnographic tone. Thus, we discover that Jimmy is Catholic, he dreams in English, he does not know much about his ancestors and that the only real Native American character in the movie, the character played by Gary Farmer, has a high administrative position within the tribe. Once the doctor informs the hospital that Jimmy is not crazy, and that he is not as different as any other person, we are able to see a personal and racial drama for Jimmy: he was on trial for fathering Jane White Cloud's child and, later, for his mistreatment towards Jane, which resulted in a forced separation of the family (we assume according to tribal laws). The third moment when Jimmy's Indianness is emphasized is in his angered claim that back in the reservation he was fed up of being told by an Indian agent what to do, "I have been living all my life with that thing and now here in the hospital it's been worse" ("Jimmy P." 01:33:07-15) . As Deborah Young claims in her review of the film, Jimmy finally "opens up of repressed anger over the prejudice and discrimination he is subject to as a Native

American" (Young "Hollywood Reporter"). Indeed, the only time he is called 'chief' at the end of the film, he corrects the person and asks to be called Jim.

Jimmy is difficult to be categorized in any specific stereotype. At the beginning, he seems the Noble Indian who needs the attention of the white doctors and who seems to be partially assimilated in American society. At the same time, he seems to be the object of study: since doctors have not treated an Indian before and they do not know the reason for his behavior, they need to call in an anthropologist and psychoanalyst. Devereux's interest resembles at times Dr. Sloan's interest in *The Last of Dogmen*, however the proximity and closeness Devereux and Jimmy develop for each other changing a scientific relationship into a friendship makes Jimmy appear as another patient, regardless of his race. This fact is pointed out by Devereux at the end when he claims that he helped Jimmy because he wanted to, and not because Jimmy was Native American; Jimmy's problem had nothing to do with his race, as the doctors thought. His soul was damaged.

There are two more films where we can see Native Americans as law enforcers. We have not included them when analyzing the setting or the plot as their characters do not interfere in the development of the story. On the one hand, *Heat* (1995), where Wes Studi plays the role of Casals, a police officer always next to Lt. Vincent Hanna (Al Pacino). On the other hand, Graham Greene plays the role of Joe Lambert, a police officer in *Die Hard with a Vengeance* (1995). In both cases, both police officers are present in the search and investigation carried out by their respective superiors. There is not any reference to his race or origin. These films came out only two and three years after their unforgettable roles of Magua, Geronimo or Kicking Bird in our three key movies. The two films were a complete success at the box office, so the inclusion of these two Native actors in

the cast is a complete breakthrough in their careers as it proves that Native actors can be as versatile as their white colleagues.

The question that comes to our mind is whether Native actors should play only Native American marked characters. By 'marked' characters we mean that the Native American identity is part of the features of the characters and it is explicitly conveyed and portrayed through dialogues and actions within the film. We really believe that specifying the race is not important; we do not do it when the character is white or African-American as long as it is a recognizable character and it does not play with stereotypes. Unfortunately, the image of Native Americans is still grounded on the images from the Western genre which every now and then appear in theaters and in TV movies. Something similar happens to our next series of Native American roles as criminals in movies. We find that in some of them the Native American character is not identified as Indian, which does not influence the plot or the characters. In those where the identification is done, we will look for stereotypes and how the individuality of the character has been repressed.

Someone could claim that Native Americans have been used as background prompts or devices in movies just because at some point they interact with the real protagonist of the story. This is reinforced as Native American actors act as mere supporting roles for the protagonists of the story or simply because their characters appear in the film just for some minutes. It depends on the story, it depends on the character and it depends on the film director. The important issue here is that no matter the screen time they are given, they should not be stereotyped or depicted as inferior human beings, i.e., that we find believable performances and believable characters in believable stories, being Native American-oriented films or not.

In the opposite extreme of the depiction of Native Americans as law enforcers, we find films that have included Native Americans as criminals, which can be considered an updated term for the Savage Indian stereotype. For instance, in *Fargo* (1996) we find Steve Reevis, Chato in *Geronimo* and Yellow Wolf in the *Last of Dogmen,* transformed into Shep Proudfoot, a mechanic invigilated by police as he is currently on parole. He is the key clarifying element for Marge Gunderson, Frances McDormand, the pregnant sheriff whose only goal is to resolve the murders that have been committed in her jurisdiction. Shep provides Jerry, his boss, the information about the possible kidnappers. The kidnappers' call to Shep is the clue to link this crime and some of the murders with Jerry, the car dealer. His apparently peaceful character transforms into a violent criminal when he beats up Carl Showalter, one of the kidnappers, for making the mistake of calling him.

In 1999, Graham Greene plays a taciturn Arlen Bitterbuck, a convicted on the death row in *The Green Mile*. We are given information about him from the conversation of the guards while rehearsing for his execution on the next day. From that conversation we know his complete name, that he has a daughter and possibly some grandchildren. His Indianness is marked as the guards are worried about the possibility of having a Cherokee medicine man to perform some kind of ritual before the execution is carried out. That is the only time we are informed he is Native American. We do not know anything about his crime or about his criminal life. The only thing we have is a kind of remorse when he wishes he could go back when he was 18. The other mark of his Indianness is achieved by language; for instance, when the word 'chief' is used in a derogatory way by the outsider and schizophrenic guard, Percy. The use of this term as a derogatory reference, firstly, ignores the important role Indian chiefs have within the Native

American community as political leaders; and, secondly, it denies and blocks the individuality of the person being called that.

In 1999, the Canadian Native American actor Gary Farmer acts briefly as a twentieth century mafia member in *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai*. His only two sentences are to identify himself as "Cayuga" when two Italian mafia men require his identification, although the name of 'Nobody' is written in the film credits, and, secondly, to repeat a sentence from *Dead Man* ("stupid fucking white man", "Ghost Dog" 00:46:18-20) when the two 'bad guys' kill one of his pigeons. In 2001, he plays Burt in a supporting role in *The Score* (2001). Burt is silenced throughout the whole film and his only role is to be the threatening and armed part in the meetings of de Niro with some criminals, to act violently if necessary and to provide him with the necessary infrastructure to commit the robberies. He is never identified as Native American although at the very beginning it seems he lives in a reservation as De Niro goes to take a van from here. However, it is only a brief scene without any more detail or importance for the development of the story.

4.2.2.2. The Indian from the Rez

In *Thunderheart*, the historical Indian from the past is partly brought to life due to the language that the white protagonist uses to refer to them or the assumptions that white characters make about them. For instance, throughout the film, the tribal police member, Walter Crow Horse, is constantly referred to as "Crazy Horse", "Geronimo" or "Tonto", quite identifiable names for the white audience. The same happens with Ray Levoi, a mixed-blood, who is called "chief" or "John Wayne" when he starts to assert and understand his Indian identity.

Furthermore, newly arrived in the reservation, he is called "Washington Redskin" by the American Indians, a clear reference to the controversy over the mascots of some professional and college team sports. The problem of using non-appropriate names becomes the cause of the categorization of Indians as objects, especially as the chief, as if being a chief were something superfluous and superficial to Native American culture when it is the most honorable position within the Indian tribe. In addition to this, white characters do not only use a specific language when referring to Native Americans, but they also make specific assumptions about Indian people and culture, such as that they continue living in the past. If they live in the past, they are invisible to the rest of the American society. For this reason, their tragic history is not addressed nor acknowledged, and therefore the audience continues living in their comfort zone and free of guilt of what happened. An ironic conversation between Levoi and Crow Horse exemplifies the policies enacted to erase Native American identity and culture, and its effects:

> Crow Horse: As a kid, I've played 'Cowboys and Indians'. I was Gary Cooper. I never wanted to be an Indian. Federal boarding schools made sure of that. They cut my hair, watch my own mouth… ("Thunderheart" 00:57:02-19)

However, these important topics of cultural and language prohibition are not fully addressed in the film, as they are left unresolved; the same as many other topics raised about the conditions of reservations and the internal turmoil between different factions of Native nations. This is depicted that way because the film is focused on Levoi's spiritual journey to his native roots and his own identity, and this journey is framed by the murder investigation and his presence in the reservation (Charity 57; Wilson 220). As we said, this spiritual and identity

journey resembles the journey or the rite of passage the hero went on in the Western movies not only to establish order in the wilderness but also to acquire a new identity. In this journey, we witnessed the meeting between two worlds in the border. In the film, we see the clash of two worldviews as one of the protagonists has repressed his own Indian identity, so the rite of passage is a reconnection with one's lost traditions and knowledge. However, this rebirth also implies two issues. On the one hand, that Indian identity is only a question of the amount of Indian blood that runs through his veins. Indeed, he is sent to the Pine Ridge because he has Indian blood. In cinematographic terms, Levoi is Indian enough for the Native audience to identify with him and, at the same time, he is white enough for the white audience to identify with him too (Wilson 220). Therefore, since he shows features and traits from both communities, i.e., the best of worlds (Pack 99), he can return to the white world, probably to become a city Indian, as he is called several times throughout the film, with Native knowledge and wisdom. On the other hand, the blood issue has always been a controversial topic within Native American Nations. Levoi seems to acquire his Indian identity just with his blood, not for his cultural experience or his community relationship. As Ellen L. Arnold claims, this is a quite problematic definition of Indianness (354). Especially there is a huge controversy within Native American nations about the requirement of a specific amount of Indian blood or the disenrollment of members just because they have a mixed-race origin. The film does tackle the appropriation of identity very lightly and in an unfortunate way. As Arnold also states, it is quite surprising how a person with no Indian cultural background at all can have a vision, be given a pipe and have a spiritual guide in less than a week (355).

We ask ourselves if this acquisition of identity is a metaphor for the internal turmoil that Native nations were going through at the time between a more traditionalist approach to Native American life and a more modern, i.e. 'progressive' form of understanding Native American culture. The only Native characters that seem to have adopted the traditional ways are Maggie, Crow Horse and Jimmy Looks Twice under the guide of Grandpa Sam who is also Levoi's spiritual guide. However, the fact that Levoi leaves the reservation at the end seems to make him not only a symbol of the Indian who uses his identity for other purposes, but it also reminds us of the concept of 'Playing Indian'. Thus, Levoi uses Native Americans as a unique form of self- identification, crossing legal, social and political boundaries. Thus, Native Americans become commodities but proved that, like in the formation of American identity in the past, "whenever white Americans have confronted crisis of identity, some of them have inevitably turned to Indians" (Deloria, "Playing Indian" 156).

This quest of identity and spiritual rebirth frames the reality that makes him the white hero: helping the Native Americans to solve an issue they are unable to do on their own or speak on their own (Pack 110). As it is established at the beginning of his mission, Ray Levoi is sent to help his people, to solve a civil conflict in the Pine Ridge Reservation. Thus, he is the white savior who comes with his knowledge of the white world but curiously enough, Native Americans are the ones to teach him how to make it the Indian way.

Using Prats' terms of 'the mystique of cultural appropriation' and 'the illusion of cultural divestment' ("Invisible" 196 and 229), we could say that if the characters are Native and they are going through a rebirth of their Native roots, the process of cultural appropriation is legitimate since they are appropriating their own culture. Therefore, Levoi's rebirth becomes the tool by which we, the

audience, are introduced to Native culture. This rediscovery of native identity and pride in one's own culture has to do with the teachings of the American Indian Movement that proclaimed pride in Native American culture and identity. The process of appropriation of Indian identity is done through an appropriation of native spirituality. Levoi goes through two religious rituals: the smoking of peace pipe with Grandpa and having a vision in which he sees his past, which is the quintessential dream of any wannabe Indian, taking into account that Walter, being a full blood, had not had one yet. In addition, throughout the movie the exchange of gifts (food, Ray-Ban glass, and the smoking pipe) between Levoi, Grandpa and Maggie's grandma has the only purpose of getting information to resolve the investigation or to start his spiritual journey. Consequently, "it commodifies spirituality. The message conveyed is that one can purchase native wisdom by giving something of material value in exchange" (Pack 102).

Together with the process of cultural appropriation, we mentioned the opposite, 'the illusion of cultural divestment' that allowed the hero to get rid of the Native attributes in order to come back to white society. As we have said, the appropriation is legitimate, so it is impossible to get rid of those elements the protagonists have acquired. Indeed, the possibility of losing those acquisitions would endanger their status as real Native Americans. However, in *Thunderheart* we could see the cultural divestment in Levoi in his way of dressing. In the first images, he is wearing a suit, Ray-Ban glasses and a Rolex, and he is driving an expensive convertible. Throughout the film, he loses these material items. He is obliged to give Grandpa his glasses, so Grandpa will talk about his origins. His suit and white shirt must be removed when he must take Maggie's son to the hospital after being shot by the GOON. And finally, when he leaves the

reservation to come back to the city, he is wearing jeans, a simple t-shirt, a truck and takes the sacred pipe and old dog as tokens of his stay at the reservation.

Of course, as in the Western, we have the Cavalry as the bad whites, like in *Dances with Wolves*, who are the obstacles for the white man to totally assimilate Indian culture and whose goal is to exterminate Native Americans. Yet, in *Thunderheart* we also find these representatives, in this case, personalized in Coutelle and his relationship with the GOON and the tribal council and, by extension, in the federal government. As Wilson states, the film makes an outrageous critique by "showing how an agency of the federal government, the guarantor of Indian tribal sovereignty, could work at cross-purposes" (221) with Native interests. That way, they are presented as more complex characters than simple 'rednecks' (Appleford 107).

In the character of Grandpa Sam, we find the blending of two stereotypes: the old wise chief and the spiritual healer. One of the reasons is that in Native culture, the elderly are greatly considered and their decisions and opinions are respected because of their experience in life. The other reason may be the lack of knowledgeable, young Indians in traditional ways. Curiously enough, Grandpa passes the most precious object for the Lakota to a mixed-blood, someone who has just discovered who he is. In this sense, although he is not the sidekick, this relationship resembles more the idea of the Indian as a parent (Simmon 28), as he is a teacher and a counselor. Moreover, Grandpa fulfills also the role of the new mystical American Indian of the 1990s. This figure is a consequence of the resurgence of New Agers in the 1990s who took Native American traditions and transformed them into commodities for purchase. This mystical Indian must be an isolated middle-aged with no Indian context or tribe nearby who communicates with the spirits and transfer his knowledge to a white hero, and

who is the clear embodiment of how native wisdom can be added to current society (Bird "Gendered" 71). In fact, Levoi abandons the reservation with more wisdom to use in the white world. Once again, it is a pity that the film focuses on Levoi's acquisition of an identity and not on the cultural wealth of Native American nations, in this case the Lakota; or on the problems Native Americans face in terms of land issues, religious practices, pollution or corruption. As we said, throughout the movie, these issues are subtly tackled but not deepened.

In this film, we do not have voice-over narration, which was one of the ways the Native Americans used to authorize the white hero to speak for them (Prats "Invisible" 152). Yet, the white hero is authorized and approved by Grandpa Sam when he exchanges with Levoi his expensive Rolex for the sacred pipe and symbol of the Lakota tribe. This point is controversial since a new Indian, someone who we may call a wannabe, is the recipient of such a sacred and holy artifact. Due to their commitment to Indian cultural and spiritual teachings, the most appropriate people to receive the sacred pipe would be Jimmy Looks Twice or even Crow Horse, but not Levoi.

Walter Crow Horse and Jimmy Looks Twice, the tribal police officer and the political activist respectively, could be described as the traditional sidekick of the main character. Jimmy Looks Twice represents the activism, the outrage of Native Americans but he is punished for his challenge to the establishment and as such, he must disappear, echoing the real person he is portraying, Leonard Peltier, the AIM political activist who has been in jail since 1976. Walter is probably the most stereotyped figure of Native Americans. He is the real sidekick for Levoi. As a loyal companion, Levoi discovers the entangled interests and plots related to the land rights and corruption within the reservation but Walter is another tool for him. It is true that, for once, a Native is a humorous, witty and

knowledgeable character but his role is limited to direct Levoi, and his position in the relationship is that of a subordinate (Pack 98). In fact, the case cannot be solved until Levoi is in the reservation. The fact that the relationship between the FBI and the tribal police is one of non-trust, the film and its director lost a great opportunity to reflect the complex legal and jurisdictional role of law enforcement within the reservations of the time.

In relation to Native American women, while in the *Last of Dogmen* they appear as part of the Native village but there was no development, in *Thunderheart* we find two female roles: Maggie Eagle Bear and her grandma. The character of Grandma is almost invisible since, firstly, she does not speak English, consequently, she needs someone else to speak for her (Maggie); and, secondly, she does not have an important role within the plot of the movie. Her only role is to be the first step Levoi must take in order to achieve his rediscovery of his Native roots[32]. On the contrary, Maggie Eagle Bear represents not only the fighting modern woman, but also the new image of the American Indian woman who fights for the welfare of her people, as well as for her empowerment within the tribe. She represents the modern version of what Rayna Green calls "the Native American Queen": "aggressive, militant and armed with spears and arrows" (184). In addition, Green also specifies that this Mother-Goddess figure "full-bodied, powerful, nurturing and dangerous embodies the opulence and peril of the new world" (184).

Maggie is aggressive in her militancy and activism and in her first moments with Levoi, differentiating herself as a political activist and as Native

[32] In their first encounter, Levoi cannot see how the surrounding changes his behavior with the Native people in the movie, thus he takes the attitude of a tough policeman. However, in their second encounter, Levoi has taken part of his clothing off and he is carrying a gift for grandma, which means that he has learned Native ways.

American from Levoi, who is away from his Indian roots. Instead of being armed with arrows, she is armed with knowledge of both worlds: the Native American and the white world. In her first encounter with Levoi, she is shown as "intelligent, confident, assertive, and powerful" (Arnold 355) mentioning not only her educational background, but also her important work within the tribe. However, the mention of her rape disempowers her on screen and in the eyes of the audience. The power she was gaining by her achievements and work is taken away because, after the rape is mentioned, she has a new attitude, we could say an almost submissive attitude, towards Levoi (Arnold 355). Indeed, she helps Levoi come to terms with his father and his past and, most importantly, she provides the final clue for Levoi to resolve the case. Marubbio in her book *Killing the Indian Maiden* also refers to the Native American Queen image and adds that the Indian female as warrior has be to be fought back and conquered like the land ahead of the settlers, in that way, a new image, less threatening and combative, erupts: the Indian princess (10-11). Thus, this hybrid figure of the Celluloid Maiden is featured in Maggie. She is close to her ancestors' land, she is an activist threatening the established order, and she represents the spirituality that emanates from the Earth and the care for the land as ecologist, indeed, she is the one who talks the most about the problem of the pollution of the water from uranium.

However, this strong depiction of a Native American female is diminished by the mention of the rape and the fact that she helps Levoi, thus she goes from the Native American Queen image to that of the Princess, as she sacrifices herself for the white hero, as a kind of Pocahontas. Her death is somehow a punishment for her betrayal. Moreover, the relationship Maggie establishes with Levoi reminds us of the past relationship between mixed-race couples. There is not a

consummated love relationship, although there is a romantic aura between them. The bond Maggie and Levoi have is based on friendship, but Maggie's death prevents that friendship and respect they feel at the end of the movie from evolving into a romantic relationship. However, her death reminds us that this possibility was not going to be allowed on screen.

Her death not only means the recreation of the stereotypes of the past, but also the impossibility of a complex and real character to be able to survive among her tribal fellows. Curiously enough, she is the most combative character in the film since she knows how both worlds work and she seems to be the appropriate voice to speak out about the current problems the tribe is dealing with. Consequently, her death may be a message for modern Indians, telling them not to be combative but either to associate with the whites or be submissive to white's rules and not to complain or fight back. Her Celluloid Maiden figure, as Marubbio claims, "weakens the film's political agenda and positions age-old stereotypes on contemporary images of Native American women" (206).

In *Reindeer Games* (2000), although the Indian casino is the main issue in the plot, Native Americans appear shortly in the film. The two main Indian characters appear in Jack Bangs' office, the manager of the casino, discussing Jack's plans. Jack Bangs is a manager with apparently great experience in Las Vegas, who has been hired by the tribe in order to increase the benefits of the casino. However, it seems he has been stealing money from the tribe. The Indians do not seem to agree with his methods and his obsession for the snow, as it is his brilliant idea to increase the revenues of the casino. Native Americans are not given names and they receive some stereotyped language and in previous movies; for example, when Jack Bangs tells the Indians how to get snow:

> Jack Bangs: I can't give you Las Vegas profits until you people get together around a campfire, smoke a pipe and do some kind of fucking spirit dance about snow ("Reindeer Games" 00:52:10-20)

In this case, the stereotypical image comes from Bangs, who plays with spiritual stereotypes from the past and seems to claim to be a higher intellectual person than the Native Americans. Oppositely, we find two current and real Native Americans dealing with business, who apparently are using white knowledge and power in benefit of the tribe. However, although they are represented as people in power and in charge of business, they seem helpless and frozen, as they do not take any action even knowing they are being stolen. In this way, the film plays with an intellectual stereotype rather than the stereotype of the 'Casino Indian' (King "Contemporary"48). Yet, the characters are not well-developed, and they appear in the film just to give a framework for the story, i.e., if it is an Indian Casino, The Tomahawk Casino, some Native Americans need to be present at some point. The fact they are not given even their names is quite revealing.

From the male businessmen in *Reindeer Games*, we go to the Native American female in *Frozen River,* where for the first time we find a current Native American female having a leading acting role in a film. Lila Littlewolf is a Mohawk woman who lives in the outskirts of the reservation making a living in the Indian casino and suffering the consequences of her illegal activities: her mother-in-law took her child upon her son's death. If we need to describe her in terms of Marubbio's description of the Celluloid Maiden, Lila is neither a Princess nor a Sexualized Maiden. Although she is not quite the activist as the character of Maggie in *Thunderheart*, Lila resembles more the Native American Queen image as she threatens the established order not only in tribal terms but also in national

terms. On the one hand, she thinks she is immune to the patrol border authority as she is a Mohawk travelling around Mohawk land even if she commits criminal activities. On the other hand, her illegal activities threaten the national security and the political border as she is involved in human trafficking introducing illegal people in the country for money. However, the story and reason behind her human trafficking activity is to get her child back, who was taken by her mother-in-law. In this way, we can see her as a mother, a woman doing everything she can to keep her baby. This mother figure also resembles the Native American Queen. Her struggle makes Lila a warrior although not in the sense of being someone who needs to be conquered, as it happened in the first images and concepts of landscape and Native American female images. She is a current warrior in social, economic and, to a lesser extent, political terms. She is fighting her ostracism within the Mohawk nation, who does not entangle in her fight with her mother-in-law and who, due to her smuggling activities, expels her from the reservation. As we stated, she already lives in the outskirts of the reservation in a trailer but her smuggling activity provides her with money to be able to take care of the baby although she does not have the power to take the kid from her mother-in-law. It is only when another mother believes in her and understands her situation, Ray, when Lila finds enough strength and courage to claim her baby. In fact, their bond makes Lila the guardian of Ray's family until Ray is released from jail. Lastly, Lila takes a political stand by claiming all the area as Mohawk land and where white authority is apparently powerless. The topic of the film is not the intertwining of federal and tribal jurisdiction, but the problems arising from two authorities over tribal lands. Yet, Ray's self-sacrifice act dilutes the message.

Ray's self-sacrifice may have two meanings. On the one hand, it is the reversal of the past concept of the white people abandoning Native Americans at

the own luck as it happened in *Dances with Wolves* or the recent *Thunderheart*. In this case, it is the white person who leaves the Indian in a powerful and important role as the guardian of the family, both white and Native American. Therefore, we could define her act as a positive improvement because the race boundary is deleted in favor of mother-to-mother relationship, which is the main topic in the film. On the other hand, however, with her self-sacrifice, Ray also fulfills the role of the white savior at the end of the film. Her only act saves Lila from jail although it does not prevent Lila from being protected by the tribal council. Moreover, as we have already said, in this final understanding and bonding between the two women and mothers is where Lila finds the strength to take her baby back. Thus, this racial and female bonding also shows the "futility of the American Dream (Gonzalez 71) for both as they need the break the law in order to achieve part of that dream (Gonzalez 59)

Although Lila is a leading character, the film offers more background information on Ray than on Lila. We know the story of Ray's husband, her dreams, her desperation and worries, and her future ahead. On the contrary, Lila's story is somehow hidden. For instance, we do not see her baby until quite late in the film although she talks about her kid in the car. We do not know about her dreams or expectations in life. In addition, we do not know why her husband died or why she leaves in a trailer. It seems her husband's death made her mother-in-law take the baby, but we are not offered any further information. Furthermore, we do not know why Lila cannot reclaim the baby, as it seems she could take it at any time, as she does at the end of the film. In fact, her only comment about the baby is the tribal police does not interfere in those kinds of issues. Therefore, we assume it could be a kind of punishment for her behavior or Lila's responsibility on her husband's death.

Some internal tribal affairs are shown especially in the tribal council that decides Lila's expulsion, but these are only bits of information. Also, the different way the police, tribal and federal, is depicted in the film shows the different perspectives in dealing with Native American issues. While the federal police or the patrol border always hints the danger of being caught and conflict and violence, in fact their appearance is what provokes the end of the film; the tribal police, on the contrary, is shown as close to the tribal members, as a kind of advisor. It is the tribal police officer who offers Lila help finding her another job in an office and advises her to surrender but defends her in the tribal council. In fact, after T.J.'s incipient criminal records, the tribal police officer offers him the possibility of apologizing to the old lady he tried to rip off using her credit card. All in all, these Native Americans characters are just background characters who frame Lila's story but who do not affect the development of the story.

As in *Thunderheart*, the protagonist of the film *The Activist* is a white man, Marvin Brown. Indeed, the title of the film may refer to him or to his deceased wife, Anna Ward, a Native American woman and activist who was killed in a car accident ten months before the story of the film takes place (Ritskes "Review"). Although imprisoned with her wife's cousin from the American Indian Movement, the film reproduces the story of the white man gone Indian in the twentieth century, like in *Thunderheart*. In the case of Ray Levoi, it was to reconnect his Indian side as he was part Native American by bloodlines. However, in this film, Marvin becomes Indian just by his marriage to Anna. We are not shown or given any information or images of their lives together prior to the siege of Wounded Knee. Indeed, she only appears in Marvin's dreams to remind him to continue her struggle and her fight against the corrupted government and the uranium company.

Marvin becomes the target of all the visits coming to the police headquarters to talk to the activists. However, all the visits talk only to Marvin, not to Bud, the real Native American activist in the film. As it happened in the Westerns and in *Thunderheart*, Marvin becomes Indian by participating in the struggle and the community. As Ritskes claims, the film presents another sample of the white savior subgenre existing in Hollywood, and in the film industry in general, by which they are unable to present a Native American character leading the action. We already saw how Hughey establishes seven denominators of the white savior film (28-71): Crossing the Color and Culture Line; His Saving Grace; White Suffering; The Savior, the Bad White and the Natives; The Color of Meritocracy; White Civility, Black Savagery; and, "Based on a True Story": Racialized Historiography. In this film, not all the denominators are fulfilled. For instance, Marvin becomes an admirer of the Other, in this case the Lakota, and abandons his high-class privileges and benefits to join the Lakota and Anna in their struggle against the government (Crossing the Color and Culture Line). As he is white, he is identified as the key mediator in the siege and he is the only one who seems to be able to solve Anna's death and the only one who is allowed to go outside the cell temporarily (His Saving Grace). Of course, Anna's death leaves him isolated and with no family attachments (White suffering), although Bud reminds him that he is now part of the Lakota family. In addition, Marvin is going to be entangled in a relationship with other characters to accentuate his status as hero. His acts and behavior are completely opposite to other Natives and to the bad white (Frank, the police officer), whose role is to show the racism, bigotry and corruption. On the other side, we have the Native, personalized in Bud, whose role in the film is to offer the audience bits of Native American history in relation to white history (The Savior, the Bad White and the Natives). Although it is not

based on a true story, the point of view chosen (white) and the historical moment of the story emphasize the relevance of the story, validating what it has been fictionalized in the film ("Based on a True Story": Racialized Historiography). Yet, the film departs from previous depictions of white men gone Indian, as Marvin is murdered by Frank, the racist police officer. Traditionally, the white man gone Indian became the narrator or the spokesperson for Native Americans and their stories, acquiring a new identity. However, as we have discussed, at the end of this film this role is left empty as Marvin is murdered and Bud's destiny is unknown: after Frank beats him, he might be dead or recovering in hospital. Marvin's protagonist role leaves also two readings. On the one hand, Native Americans are still ignored and regarded as the Other, i.e., as being racially or culturally different. On the other hand, it presupposes the Other culture or race does not have enough resources, skills or attitude to do it by itself (Hughey 18), thus, they still need a white voice or protagonist to be able to become partially visible in society. However, Marvin's death also symbolizes the tragic history of Native American within the American Nation depicting them as the losers in History. As Marvin dies at the hands of Frank, the corrupted American society lies to its people about the Native American history.

Then Bud, the other imprisoned activist, becomes a mere sidekick or framework to authorize Marvin's status as hero and as Native American. As we discussed, he is ignored by all the visitors and he is beaten up by Frank, leaving him dead or badly injured in hospital. His story as the real story of Native American within America is left unresolved, unattended and ignored. Between Marvin and Budd, the latter seems to be more involved in hands-on activism in the reservation, while Marvin seems to be more involved at a legal stage, as their lawyer, Clare Chapman, states in their first encounter. In addition, through their

dialogues, we see how the Western culture and archetypes still hold an important place in American culture and the influence it had both in Native Americans and white people. The following dialogue is a small proof of both previous statements:

Bud: Just like Westerns, cowboys against Indians.

Marvin: We all know how that movie ends. ("The Activist" 00:31:04-11).

Bud: I watched all that stuff (Westerns) when I was a kid.

Marvin: I was always on Indian side.

Bud: I wanted to be a cowboy, Gary Cooper was my favorite actor, or James Stewart. I didn't want to be one of those stupid Indians, all naked, howling round and on horses. They seemed like losers to me.

Marvin: We played 'Cowboys and Indians' in Grade School. I always wanted to be Geronimo or Sitting Bull.

Bud: Remember that movie? Apache. Burt Lancaster played Geronimo, who is like casting the Japanese actors to play Roosevelt. They realized where I came from, how my people were treated, how rich our history was. That's why I created the Indian school, to remember. One day, the government decided to shut down my school and took all the kids to white schools. They cut their hair off, taught them white history and threw me to jail (...) I remember when I taught. Everything on this Earth has a purpose (...) and every person a mission. ("The Activist" 00:32:08-00:34:39)

Therefore, when Bud is deprived of everything, he joins the American Indian Movement to fight for the Native Americans. Ritskes claims that Bud represents the 'savage' Indian associated with violence and conflict. We do not consider him as such, as we do not see him violent unless he is attacked; in fact,

he suffers from violent language and violent attacks from Frank. In addition, when the Nixon representative mentions that, although American society supports their cause, the appearance of violence is making Native American lose 'their momentum' and that they should finish the siege, Bud replies that it is the best thing that has happened to them. He does not mean it in a violent way, but as a key event that has joined Native Americans in a common ground to fight together for their recognition.

The other Native American presence is Anna Ward, Marvin's dead wife and Bud's cousin**.** Using Prat's words, she is known by her absence. Her death is caused by her research of the federal plans on 'The Sacrifice Zone' and the reason behind Marvin and Bud's arrest. Resembling *The Revenant*, Anna appears just in Marvin's dreams encouraging him to continue with her struggle. In fact, she becomes his constant companion during his stay in prison. She becomes the strength and courage Marvin needs to make her findings public. His wife connects him to the natural world, indeed, there are always images of Nature when she appears in the film, as she is the bridge for him to be considered as proper Native American.

Native American women have been traditionally cast either as a 'Princess' or as a 'Squaw' (Bird "Gendered" 72-73). However, these female figures do not appear on their own terms, but they are "defined in terms of their relationship with male figures" (Green 185). M. Elise Marubbio defines the Princess type either as a helper or a lover to white men who is connected to nature and the American landscape and who is innocent, exotic and a mother-figure yet she dies either by committing suicide or by being the innocent victim of a tragedy ("Killing" 20). On the other hand, we find the Squaw or Sexualized Maiden, as Marubbio calls her, who is a heavily sexualized figure (the same as the Indian

Princess). This type of Indian woman is considered a threat to the establishment, she is always living physically at the edge of the town and the society, she is extremely beautiful, she is usually mixed-blood and is a "sexual and racial fetish" (Marubbio "Killing" 93). Indeed, "squaws are understood as mere economic and sexual conveniences for the mean who are tainted by association with her" (Green 189). For example, her death or destruction is regarded as necessary for the progress of white civilization. Green also talks about the figure of the Native American Queen as "aggressive, militant and armed with spears and arrows" (184). Marubbio adds the feature of the Indian female as warrior who has be to be fought back and conquered (10-11).

On the one hand, Anna represents the Princess type in the sense that she is the connection to nature, to the land and to Native American identity. The Princess type allows the viewer to see a possible relationship between the white hero and the Indian woman. However, we only see her in Marvin's dreams. It seems that it is impossible to see on screen an enduring and successful interracial relationship. Miscegenation is still a taboo issue in Hollywood. Although her death took place before the story of the film started, it may be the sacrifice she has to do as the princess for the white hero to continue with her legacy.

On the other hand, Anna also resembles the character of Maggie in *Thunderheart*, as both seem to be educated, fighting for Native American rights and paying their militancy with their lives. Thus, as the Native American Queen, Anna is a warrior, the fighting modern woman. As Maggie, instead of being armed with arrows, she is armed with knowledge of both worlds: the Native American, and the white world where she met Marvin. As Maggie, she is the one close to her ancestors' land, she is an activist threatening the established order and she represents the spirituality that emanates from the Earth and the care for the land

as ecologist; in fact, her findings are the real reason for Marvin and Bud's imprisonment.

Although it represents strong Native American leaders and activists, the film lost a great opportunity to review the siege of Wounded Knee from an Indian point of view to offer the audience a piece of History. Therefore, once again, the Indian characters and the Indian setting are being used as backdrop elements and as a kind of framework for the white hero's story. In fact, apart from Bud and Anna, there are not any other Native American activists or people in the film.

4.2.2.3. The Teenage Drama Indian

The characters in *Sunchaser* are defined by their differences from the very beginning. Michael Reynolds is depicted around his possessions: a Porsche, a multimillion-dollar house and money. On the contrary, Blue is depicted as a criminal: his language and attitude, his bullet-scars all over his body, bloody coughs which anticipate his cancer, but who cherishes his memories of the time he lived in the Navajo Reservation. As we have said, they represent two completely different worldviews and approaches to life. Reynold's life is strict, rigid, with no space for feelings, regrets or affection. On the contrary, Blue is a straightforward boy who has had a harsh upbringing but whose memories of the only time he was happy dwell in his mind and heart. Blue speaks in a foreign language according to Reynolds because when Blue speaks about spirituality and healing, he cannot rationalize it in his scientific mind, especially something as distant to him as Native American people and their spirituality.

In fact, Reynolds is ignorant of Native American presence or history in current America. An example of this is when he meets Blue's friends near the

Shiprock Navajo Reservation and he is trying to ask for their help, he reproduces a Tonto- like conversation, receiving "what are you trying to say, man?" ("Sunchaser" 01:33:32-35) as an answer. However, this is not the last case of ignorance about real Indians. The role these Indians play is, on the one hand, to offer an opposing view to Reynolds' civilization traits (car) against their use of the horses. We think this image is also another part of the use of the Western landscape in a film although it cannot be categorized as a pure Western. Therefore, the Western mythology as the defining moment of someone's identity is still engraved in American pop culture and in Hollywood.

Reynolds also brought up the image of the isolated and primitive Indian when he meets the medicine man's granddaughter. She tells him that she has seen him on 'Good Morning America'. Reynolds asks, amazed, if she has a TV. Since it is a remote place the answer should not have any effect, however, the woman takes it as an offense, replying that she got the channel via smoke signals. This commentary would be left as such, but I really believe here that we have assumptions of both about each other. On the one hand, he assumes she does not have a TV or she does not know what one is. On the other hand, she expects that commentary from white people because she believes Reynolds cannot conceive that real Indians exist in modern society.

As Kilpatrick says, Blue is not a stereotyped character and, indeed, the focus of the film is to deconstruct stereotypes ("Celluloid Indians" 163-164). He is a contemporary urban Indian trying to survive in the city in a harsh environment. Although he is presented as a kind of gangster and as a violent person, we learn how that violence was justified as he killed an abusive stepfather. This violent and criminal records contrast with his memories of the reservation, the book he holds as his most precious possession and his belief in Skyhorse's

power as medicine man in order to overcome his cancer. We partially agree with Kilpatrick, yet, the end of the film transforms Blue into a sidekick fulfilling the role of the wise old chief. Although Blue has supposedly been in contact with Skyhorse, who sent him the book, after arriving to the reservation, Reynolds and the audience discover that Skyhorse lost contact with Blue when he abandoned the reservation as an eight-year-old child and that Blue stole the book from jail. Upon Blue's worsening state, this is the final moment for Reynolds to believe, and he does. He takes Reynolds to the Sacred Mountain with Skyhorse's granddaughter help, who advises Reynolds not to go if he is not prepared to listen. They arrive at the Sacred Mountain and Skyhorse performs a ceremony. Before leaving the place, Reynolds thanks Blue for saving his life and gives him his brother's ring as a proof of their friendship and brotherhood. Afterwards, we assume he goes back to civilization, to the city, with renewed faith and wisdom.

In the sense of guiding the white hero into the spiritual awakening and/or rebirth, Blue plays the role of the wise old chief, like One Stab in *Legends of the Fall,* or Grandpa Sam in *Thunderheart*. The process of this spiritual rebirth is done through an appropriation of native spirituality. The exchange of the ring not only means a feeling of brotherhood but also an exchange of material value for a spiritual life. As Sam Pack claimed in reviewing *Thunderheart*, "it commodifies spirituality. The message conveyed is that one can purchase native wisdom by giving something of material value in exchange" (102).

Blue fulfills the role of the wise elder, a Noble and desexualized Indian figure who is based on the idea of the Indian culture as mystical and whom the New Age movement has taken as a role model for its tenets. Although we could presuppose it is a positive depiction, in fact, it is negative as he is powerless because he is the representative, in fact, the last representative of a doomed

civilization. Indeed, Blue is a doomed human being, not only he has a terminal cancer, but also he is alone in the world. Everything he longs for in the reservation is gone or does not apply to him. Skyhorse and her granddaughter are as unknown to him as spirituality to Reynolds. Yet, he seems to represent the character S. Elizabeth Bird describes as the wise elder, who represents "the way wisdom can be incorporated peacefully into the modern world" (71). His role in the film is to heal the emotional and spiritual side of Reynolds. The spiritual rebirth using Native wisdom is not achieved by a Native but by a white man. Therefore, again we see the appropriation of Native spirituality because the focus of the story is not Blue's story, but that of Michael Reynolds. In fact, the other Native American characters in the film, Skyhorse, the medicine man, and his granddaughter are just background characters to support Blue and Reynolds' storylines. Skyhorse is the key element to set off the trip for both characters, and his granddaughter gives them the final clue to find the Sacred Mountain. However, they are not developed characters and their individualities are not depicted.

As we stated in the setting discussion of *North*, it is rare to see Native American depictions outside the nations that inhabited the Great Plains. Therefore, the inclusion of Inuit in the possible families North could have chosen to live is an extraordinary event. In the 1920s and 1930s the USA was under the influence of the success of *Nanook of the North* (1922) and later 'spin-offs' of Eskimo life and documentaries, which showed a kind of a new frontier, as the coldness and harsh conditions of the area prevented their violent colonization, but also a new type of the Other. The Eskimos shown on the documentaries were good-humored, pleasing, smiling and peaceful. (Huhndorf 102). Yet, Eskimos were regarded as "the last embodiments of Western ideals and the Arctic as a

place that could cleanse and even redeem a fallen, 'overcivilized' European world" (Huhndorf 100) but "masters of their own destinies" (Huhndorf 102).

That happy and peaceful image is the one shown in *North*. Although not given even a name, the Alaskan father and mother seem to embody all the previous features we have commented. Even the narrator focuses on the fact that their isolation prevents them from any distraction, therefore, it is not difficult to build a loving family even in the harsh conditions of the area. They are also shown as fishermen, as they catch the fish within their own dining-room, which is equipped with all the necessary elements in a house. Happiness and harmony are disrupted and destroyed when they leave Grandpa sailing off in the port heading to his death, as it is the tradition.

Visually, the negative part of the movie is having two non-native actors playing Inuit and Eskimo characters. The over-makeup Kathy Bates wears is incomprehensible as it mocks Inuit people. We wonder if there were not native actors available for these roles. Graham Greene, the Alaskan father, plays gracefully his part breaking down the image of Kicking Bird in *Dances with Wolves*. However, it is pity he just had a small role within the film. Thus, it is very difficult to categorize him as a specific Native American type. Therefore, we are inclined to think that he is shown as part of the Alaskan culture and the most significant feature of the Alaska region is the Inuit tribe.

In *Skipped Parts*, the Native American character is Hank, the Blackfoot, who falls for Lydia. Hank represents the 1990s image of Native American males depicted as a mixture of beauty, masculinity and virility while tender, loving and vulnerable males (Bird "Gendered" 68; Van Lent 214). Either in the past or nowadays they have become the object of desire as if they were commodities. In addition, we need to consider that they are sexualized or desexualized depending

on the relationship with whites. As we are analyzing current Native American characters, the 'Fearless Warrior' Van Lent states in his article "Her Beautiful Savage" cannot be reproduced in films that are set in contemporary times, however, some of the features such as boldness, bravery, impetuous and nudity are retained (212-213). In the film, Lydia becomes attracted immediately to Hank because he represents an exotic character: he does not own a TV; he looks like a cowboy, and almost the most important: her father cannot stand Indians. Thus, Hank becomes a commodity for Lydia, one more 'thing' she can take and throw away as she wishes; in fact, when Sam asks her why there is an Indian in their kitchen, her simple answer was that she is trying something new.

Although Lydia does not seem to be a person who judges people according to the color of the skin, at times she reproduces some concepts about Native Americans that place Hank in the past. First, she explained Sam that she went to the forest and that Hank is preparing supper, something that helped his tribe through winters, which turns to be just macaroni and cheese. After one of their rows and later reconciliation, they are shown on the bathtub with reindeer heads in the bathroom as if he was a hunter, something that it is not explicitly said in the film. In a more sexual tone, Lydia calls herself a 'squaw' ready for his red-skinned. Then, Hank is depicted as both the Noble Savage and the sexual commodity for Lydia as she told him when they break up. However, he is shown as loving, tender, responsible and a family person who is trying to follow tribal traditions in current times. For example, he explains that he should have given Lydia a horse as a gift but instead he gives her a bike. He is also close to Nature and he shows respect for people. In a kind of speech in the film he says that people believe in things like beauty, like the nobility of humans, yet, people in cities cannot believe in nobility because they see no sight of it. Lydia's response is a sign

again of the preconceived ideas about Native Americans of the time the film depicts ("I just love it when it talks like Chief Joseph" "Skipped Parts" 00:55:06-09"). Although they are quite different characters, they can resume their romance on screen, which is a novelty. The only consequence of their romance is apparently the cut of Lydia's father funds. As dysfunctional as they are, they continue to live together with Sam, Maurey and their baby daughter and the only female friend Lydia makes in Wyoming.

In *Transamerica*, we go back to the current America where we find Graham Greene playing the role of Calvin, a Navajo Indian and rodeo champion who offers Bree and Toby the final ride to Bree's parents' house. He seems to be a practical man used to comments about his non-Native American name and about the apparent contradiction of being Indian and wearing a cowboy hat, as Toby does. Calvin's reply cannot be more practical and straightforward, diluting the image of the feather-bonnet Indian: "It keeps the sun out of my eyes better than a headband and two eagle feathers" ("Transamerica" 01:01:20-23). In addition, Calvin gives a new Indian meaning to the cowboy hat: the warrior. Then, it seems that he can fight against appearance and traditional stereotypes, yet the cowboy hat links again the image of Native American to the 'Cowboys and Indians' past concept.

A different concept is used in *Tiger Eyes*. There are two Native American characters in the movie. On the one hand, Russell Means, the great AIM activist converted into actor, who plays a small but significant part as Wolf's dying father. Ironically, Means was already ill, and this was one of the last films in which he participated. In this film, once again Russell Means plays the role of Willie, a terminally cancer patient who offers Davey the life lesson she needs: to celebrate and enjoy life. For Davey, life meant swimming, which she dropped after her

father's death as she relates the activity with her previous life of happiness. Means' role ranges between a New Age advocate and the wise elder offering wisdom and knowledge to the white audience. He is a middle-aged, somber, desexualized and wise male. His stay at the hospital and his readiness for his next adventure as he says makes him the doomed Indian of this archetype. As Elizabeth Bird claims he represents "the way the wisdom of the lost race can be incorporated peacefully into the modern world" (71). This mixture of New Age tenets and wise elder imagery is reinforced by the ceremony Davey and Wolf attend, in which Davey receives the New Age tenets to face her father's death and the inner struggle she is dealing with. A medicine man proclaims that:

> No one is left to feel alone in the universe. It is vital as we are social beings who depend on one another. Relatives as strong as blood. The welfare of the group sometimes hinges on one individual. If that person feels disconnected, he or she may fail. The medicine wheel represents your connection to the four directions and the hoop of life. The feather represents the earth life like your hair it grows, it represents your wisdom, the connection of the past ("Tiger Eyes" 00:57:52- 00:59:06).

As we see, the ceremony they attend seems more suitable for Davey than for Wolf, although he is going to leave soon to start his studies to become a physicist. In fact, Wolf gives Davey the feather that was on his head during the ceremony, reminding her the connection between all the past and all the future, as it was said in the ceremony. This act makes Davey finally face her father's death and bury his blood-soaked clothes in the cave connecting her past, her present and her future. Davey and her family go back to Atlantic City and starts swimming again, enjoying her life, as she did before her father's death.

Wolf's character seems to be an improvement over the sexualized archetype described by Van Lent and Bird in their respective articles. On the one hand, he is depicted as a strong and sensible man although he is as mysterious for Davey as Davey is mysterious for him. He does not give much information about himself, apart from telling the origin of his family in the cave when he was climbing and resting with Davey. The way he is depicted does not focus on his body or his sexuality. Wolf is very different from Wind-in-His-Hair character in *Dances with Wolves,* or Hank from *Skipped Parts*. Wolf is tender, loving and vulnerable, which represent some of the features Van Lent and Bird established for the depiction of the 1990s Native American males, yet, he is not portrayed as the sexual object or commodity of the white woman. The most important information about him we find out from his ailing father, who Davey meets by chance at the hospital: he has a scholarship in order to be a physicist, but the name of the university is not given. Therefore, his portrayal is an update of a current Native American male in current United States.

On the other hand, as in previous films, Wolf is used as a commodity for the recovery of Davey at an emotional level. He is the first person she meets, he is a total stranger for her, but he is the only who does not ask questions about her past or her future. He is just part of the present. Yet, he is just the resource or the tool by which she overcomes her father's death; in other words, through her conversations with Wolf and his care, Davey can start her spiritual rebirth in order to go on with her life in Atlantic City. Thus, once again, the Native American character, in this case both Native characters, become a commodity for the white protagonist. Because of their advice, emotional support and wisdom, Davey can go back to civilization, Atlantic City, taking her new spiritual wisdom with her. As in previous films where the Native American character disappears and the white

protagonist can go back to his/her previous life with a renewed sense of life, this time the formula is fulfilled: Willie dies, we assume Wolf goes to university, and Davey goes back to Atlantic City where she is able to swim again.

All this process and change in Davey's life is symbolized by the gift of the feather. Throughout this research we have seen how the feather has been commodified as the symbol for Native Americanness, Native American presence or absence and the passing of the wisdom. We saw them in the ornaments of Dunbar in *Dances with Wolves*; in *Pontiac Moon* when soldier Ernest Iron Plume gives a feather to Andy Bellamy as a kind of telephone with the spirits. Thus, the sacred symbol of the feather has become a commodity following New Age tenets and philosophy; i.e., the feather becomes the symbol of the spiritual appropriation.

Among all the films we have analyzed so far, the film that reverses all the notions and ideas we have seen so far is *Expiration Date*. The protagonist of the film is Charlie Silvercloud III, a city Native American who wants to complete all his pending tasks during his supposedly last eight days before his 25th birthday. The reason why he buys a casket for his own funeral or says goodbye to all his friends is that he is afraid of being the next person to fulfill the family curse of being killed by a milk truck the day of his 25th birthday, like his father and grandfather were. Although the story is framed around the Native American tradition of storytelling, Charlie could pass as any other citizen in a big city although there are significant key events to relate him to Native Americans. As we said, the first thing is that Charlie's story is framed around an old man telling the story of Charlie's father to a young boy who wants to live in the reservation. Charlie's father left the community behind and gave up dancing like this young boy wants to do. He also tells the story when the creator made the Earth spinning

100 mph and if it did not, we would all fall off so it is good to keep dancing. This story is repeated at the end of the film making the boy stay in the reservation.

The second mark of Nativeness comes from the outside, from Bessie, the white girl Charlie meets at the cemetery when he is buying his burial spot. Bessie is rather skeptical about Charlie being a real Native American, and her language and questions reflect previous stereotypes of Native Americans and probably the influence of New Age tenets. Thus, she starts doing a kind of a dance and chant thinking Charlie would recognize it as a Native dance to avoid the evil spirit. When he seems puzzled, she keeps on asking him whether his people are supposed to be up in the air. Charlie, in his nerdy looks, leaves but he is followed by Bessie, who seems to have her own stalker, a milk truck, which complicates more her relationship with Charlie.

The last event which marks the Nativeness of the story is a powwow dancing in which Charlie's mother participates. As it was told at the beginning of the story, Charlie's father gave up dancing, but his mother participates as a 'witness' as a way to keep Charlie's father alive. Then, the dancing is part of her and part of Charlie, as she says. However, although beautifully shot, mixing authentic Native music and dancing, and reflecting the emotional and spiritual side of the dancing, the fact that a white person is introducing the importance of the powwow and her question "Are you having fun?" ("Expiration Date" 00:57:40-42) diminishes this emotional and spiritual power of the dancing. Although the effect is to make Charlie remember his father and his roots, at the beginning he looks like a complete stranger within the place they are doing the powwow dancing. Fortunately, he is swept away by the power of the music and beautiful images. Yet, as Sam Pack claims, this process of appropriation of Indian identity is done through an appropriation of native spirituality. Consequently, "it

commodifies spirituality" (Pack 102) conveying the message that one can acquire Native identity and wisdom by just attending some ceremonies as in the case of Charlie's mother or reading some New Age books or relying on preconceptions like Bessie. All in all, it is a positive film, as it portrays a current Native American character in contemporary America. In the end, the Native American framework serves to give a purpose to the story.

A quite different character is Jacob in the franchise *Twilight*. Jacob is depicted as the Noble Man and the Fearless Warrior that Van Lent described in his article "Her Beautiful Savage" (212-213), the latter after his physical and psychological transformation into a wolf. On the one hand, he is gentle, trusting and loyal to his people. On the other hand, after his transformation, he becomes a fearless warrior and he is shown as courageous, bold, at times angered, brave and possessing physical determination and strength. In fact, his physical transformation is a continuum with his change in personality, from being a kind of pusillanimous teenager to a warrior, determined and being aware of his new strength. Van Lent also talks about the physical appeal of Native American males to white women (214). In this sense, it is clearly shown with the physical transformation. Jacob goes from wearing clothes covering his whole body, and long hair, to showing off his muscled-body, short hair and wearing short denim jeans. As in the past males were wearing a breechclout, in contemporary society the trademark is jeans.

According to LeValdo-Gayton, Jacob is portrayed according to three stereotypes (250-251). Firstly, he is depicted as the traditional Noble Man and sidekick of the white protagonist, in this case, Bella. He is just the device by which Bella does not feel alone when Edward abandons her. Through him, Bella knows about the treaty between the vampires and the Quileute nation and she is also

able to soften the sadness and the loneliness she goes through when the Cullen left La Push. Therefore, Jacob's individuality is reduced to a simple object in Bella's hands. His nobility even makes him consider sacrificing himself to save Bella, but this offer confirms him as the traditional sidekick figure whose role is to accompany Bella in her adventures in the fantastic world of vampires and wolves.

The second stereotype of Jacob as the Native American sexualized figure reinforces the features we commented before from Van Lent. This depiction is gradually developed in the series. Although he is completely covered by clothes at the beginning, Bella's accident with the motorbike in the second installment of the film shows Jacob for the first time as a sexual object. He takes off his shirt to cover Bella's wound and her comment admiring about his beauty cannot be more expressive. After that, the pair becomes estranged by some days until Bella discovers him completely transformed into a sexy hunk: short hair, half-naked and showing off his muscles, tattooed and friends with the previously despised Sam and his band. In fact, in the love triangle among Bella, Edward and Jacob, the latter is who shows a closer physical contact with Bella, emphasizing his sexual desire (Siegel 91).

The third and last stereotype is the traditional image of Native Americans as Savages. The stereotype is also enhanced by Jacob regarding Sam and his band before transforming himself. The first time we see Sam and his band it was through Jacob's eyes and words. He claims that Sam and his sect believe themselves as the people who run the place. After his transformation and closeness to Sam, Jacob reinforces the idea of relating Native American to a bad quality or negative connotation, and especially to violence. He says to Bella that he used to be a good boy but now he is not anymore. It seems after being aware

of his power and his destiny, he relates his features as Native Americans to violence and no control over his emotions and feelings. This idea of violence is also reinforced with the story of Sam and Emily, his fiancée, who got hurt and wounded when Sam lost control of his emotions and partially destroyed her face.

The other Native characters of the film are Sam's band, but they are depicted *en masse*. They are not developed characters and they are just in the film to provide a background story or a frame to the love triangle of the franchise. Then, there is not a hint of individuality except when Bella accuses them of doing something bad to Jacob and slaps Paul. That is the first time we witness the transformation of Jacob into a wolf. Probably Sam and Harry Clearwater are the Native American characters with most screen time in the franchise. Sam's role is important as he is the representative of the Quileute culture. He is the leader of the pack that protects Bella from the 'bad' vampires. On the other hand, Harry is just Charlie's sidekick, resembling Jacob's role with Bella. Harry appears briefly in the franchise as he dies of a heart attack just after covering the wolf's prints in the woods. The fact that Taylor Lautner, a non-native actor, plays the role of a Native American character diminishes the importance that Native American culture is apparently given in the franchise. Although he has allegedly Native American blood, it was never checked and proved; thus, it retakes again the old tradition of casting non-whites into native protagonist roles, especially since there are native actors in the cast of the film.

Other characters who are absent from the film are Native American females. The only female presence we see are Emily, Sam's fiancée, whose role is to accentuate the savage side of Native Americans; Leah Clearwater as the only female werewolf in the pack; and Sue, Charlie's girlfriend in the last sequel of the film, who has a brief screen time in the film. Thus, it seems the future of the

Quileute is guaranteed, but they are out of the picture and action of the film. They are just mere backdrop elements in the film.

4.2.2.4. The Mystic Indian/The Wise Old Chief

One of the best examples of the purchasing and appropriation of Native culture and spirituality can be seen in *The Doors* (1991), directed by Oliver Stone. Morrison seems to have been attracted to Navajo culture since an early age, when he witnessed an accident where a group of Navajos where injured, and one of them, the elder, apparently died. From then on, we see the Indian influence in Jim's life and the images of a Navajo elder in different scenes throughout the film. For instance, several times in the movie, while on stage singing and dancing, images of Jim dancing are mixed with images of Indians dancing. In addition, the Indian figure appears as a ghost in Andy Warhol's party or in a press conference. Moreover, we see how the religious and sacred act of smoking peyote to achieve having a vision and to contact the spirits is misinterpreted by Oliver Stone as a mere act of disconnecting from real problems for Jim. We, as the audience, identify with Jim especially because the movie and the character are embedded within the hippy life of the 1960s. However, there is one disassociation point between Jim and the audience because we see how his addiction has gone too far. In the movie, this disassociation takes place on stage too, when we see the old Navajo[33] lifted into the air and distancing himself from Morrison. It seems that Native American culture and people are linked to the spiritual side of life. However, in this film and in the next one, there is a change in the archetype as

[33] He appears throughout the movie to emphasize when Jim is taken to another level of his psyche because of smoking peyote.

the native wise elders are not spreading wisdom among white people, but they are just tools by which the real nature of the white protagonist is shown.

Another Navajo elder also appears in the desert in *Natural Born Killers* (1994). In this case, the Navajo elder gives shelter for the night to Mallory and Mickey in their escape from justice leaving a trace of dead bodies and kidnappings. The first time they met the Navajo elder, they speak to him in Tonto-language style, so he can understand. Warren Red Cloud, the Navajo, only speaks in his language. His only role, apart from giving them shelter and food, is to foresee their devilish acts. He sees through them as when talking about Mallory, Red Cloud affirms, in his native language, she suffers from sad sickness and she is lost in a world of ghosts. When he is telling the story of the snake and the woman, Red Cloud performs a kind of ceremony that makes Mickey have visions about his abusing father when he was a child. The visions become so powerful that Mickey kills Red Cloud fulfilling the Indians' vision of seeing the demon twenty years before. Once again, there is an unjustified appropriation of Native spirituality with no apparent purpose for Native Americans. Therefore, Native American spirituality and ceremonies are appropriated for the benefit of the white people. It is true that, in this case, the purpose is not to acquire any Indian identity either to acquire some native wisdom, but to confirm their roles as criminals. As in the previous film, the Native American elder fills some of the features of this archetype Elizabeth Bird stated ("Gendered" 71): he is a desexualized male, isolated from the rest of his nation (in fact, they are always shown in an isolated place in the desert) which makes him a doomed Indian.

This figure is also reproduced in the *Free Willy* Saga in the character of Randolph Johnson, who is just a vehicle by which Jesse acquires some Native knowledge to make Willy jump off to freedom at the end of the first installment.

In addition, Randolph represents the traditional image of Native Americans as protectors of the natural world and animals, which is especially emphasized with the topics of the dangers of oil spill and illegal hunting in the second and third instalments respectively. August Schellenberg reprises this similar role as protector of animals in *Eight Below* (2006), where he plays Mindo, the character who raised the dogs that are trapped in Antarctica and who gives Jerry the final push to go back to Antarctica to find the sled dogs.

This connection of Native Americans to the protection of Nature from pollution derived from oil spills is also found in *On Deadly Ground* (1994), where Steven Seagal goes to live with Eskimos for a time to heal his wounds from an explosion in a refinery. Seagal's character, Forrest Taft, fulfills the role of the white savior character in film, mimicking the characters of Dunbar in *Dances with Wolves*, Ghost in *Pathfinder*, Levoi in *Thunderheart* or Sloan and Gates in *Last of the Dogmen*. As Hughey pointed out, these white savior films are those in which a character from the white race rescues a member of a lower class or racially inferior class from a tragic fate (8) engraving in the audience a white paternalistic attitude towards the Other, being racially or culturally different and stating that the Other culture or race does not have enough resources, skills or attitude to do it by themselves (18). Thus, Hughey establishes seven denominators of the white savior film: Crossing the Color and Culture Line; His Saving Grace; White Suffering; The Savior, the Bad White and the Natives; The Color of Meritocracy; White Civility, Black Savagery; and, "Based on a True Story": Racialized Historiography (28-71). Due to the sabotage he suffered in the refinery and his rescue by the Alaskan Natives, he can cross borders to enter in an unfamiliar terrain and becomes to admire the Other, denigrating his own white race (Crossing the Color and Culture Line). Knowing that the criminals sent

by Michael Jennings, CEO of Aegis Oil, are close, thus, threatening the peaceful Alaskan Native village he must leave (His saving Grace) although he is not able to avoid Silook's death. In addition, he is the only one, as he has the resources and the knowledge, able to destroy the refinery, the cause of the conflict between the Natives and Jennings. Of course, his contact with Natives is going to change his worldview and his priorities as his previous life was empty (White suffering). Moreover, Taft's acts and behavior are completely changed and opposite to other whites, the bad whites led by Jennings, whose role is to show the racism, bigotry and corruption of the race. On the other side, we have the Natives whose harmony and peace attracts the hero to follow them especially after being induced into a vision quest to rediscover himself and to become the protector of the Natives (The Savior, the Bad White and the Natives). Thus, his commitment with the Natives is expressed when at the end of the film he delivers a speech at the Alaska State Capitol on behalf of the Indians on how production companies are polluting and destroying the ecosystem. In that way, he appropriates the voice of the Alaskan Natives that were portrayed at the beginning of the film, Masu and her people (The Color of Meritocracy). Of course, if he is going to protect them and speak out for them, the Natives must be shown in a positive and noble light in order to be worth fighting for in white society (White Civility, Black Savagery), yet the savages are not Indians but unscrupulous whites. Although it is not based on a true story, the point of view chosen (white) and the events the film narrates, the danger of pollution from oil, emphasize the relevance of the story, validating what has been fictionalized in the film ("Based on a True Story": Racialized Historiography).

We stated at the beginning that one of the most significant features of the depiction of Native Americans is the way they are referred to, i.e., the language

used to refer to them, as it reflects the way society sees them. Thus, in *On Deadly Ground*, the first minutes of the film are full of derogatory language towards a Native American:

> Big Mike: I got Tonto with his fish breath busting my balls. Don't touch me. Cochise, you got some money? Take this, animal (...)
>
> Native American: buy a drink?
>
> Big Mike: Listen to me you yellow snow eating, welfare collecting, redskin piece of shit, Get the fuck out of here!
>
> Oil worker: Wanna smoke, too? Dances with Whiskey! You know, (...) Pocahontas is still available. Geronimo! Cochise! ("On Deadly Ground" 00:08:40-00:12:13).

At this point, Forrest, who has been witnessing all the insults and language as the rest of the customers, steps up to fight the white racists so that he saves the old Native man and gives him a ride home. The importance of this scene is two-fold. On the one hand, we see how the microcosm of the bar reflects American society, as nobody does anything to protect the Indian from the racist, derogatory and later attack by the oil worker. On the other hand, Taft's intervention in saving the Indian gives the audience the clue of his status as hero in the film, as this first intervention saving the Indian will be mirrored towards the end of the film when he aids the Natives to stop the oil spill in the refinery next to their tribal lands and his speech in favor of environmental protection at the Alaska State Capitol.

The Alaskan Natives are somehow divided into two stereotypes. On the one hand, the Natives associated with the city as environmental protestors like Masu, who seems to be depicted as the Queen figure, as she is militant, she is connected to the Earth and she seems to threaten the established order, as Maggie Eagle Bear in *Thunderheart* (Marubbio "Killing" 205). However, her character is not

well-developed, apart from her first images protesting against Jennings and being the translator to Taft when Silook speaks, her role is disposable as it happens at the end of the film. Therefore, she embodies the new image of the 1990s as the environmental protectors from the New Age movement and the new image of Native American females. Yet, her only connection to the white hero makes her a secondary role, as a kind of tool by which Taft is connected to the Native Americans.

On the other hand, Silook is the representation of the wise and mystic old chief, who sacrifices himself in favor of his community but especially the white protagonist. He is the spiritual leader of the village and through which Taft can have a vision quest and become an advocate of Native plights, using Taft's resources that are not less than violence. As Silook thinks Taft is the bear of his visions, he prepares Taft for the vision quest. Thus, the character of Silook is the blending of two stereotypes: the old wise chief and the spiritual healer. One of the reasons is that in Native culture, the elderly are greatly considered and their decisions and opinions are respected because of their experience in life. The other reason may be the lack of knowledgeable, young, Indians in traditional ways. Indeed, Silook and the old woman in the vision authorize the hero to tell the white society they have little time left and that Taft should go and teach society to fear the bear, which is the destruction of Nature. Thus, the Indians are not the sidekick; this relationship resembles more the idea of the Indian as a parent (Simmon 28), as Silook and the woman in the vision are both teachers and counselors.

Moreover, Silook, as we said in the previous analysis of film, fulfills also the role of the new mystical American Indian of the 1990s. This figure is the clear embodiment of how native wisdom can be added to current society (Bird

"Gendered" 71). In fact, Taft abandons the native village with more wisdom, we assume, to use in the white world. In fact, instead of the Native Americans, he is the voice who speaks out about the danger of pollution, as he is authorized by the Native Americans themselves. It seems that Taft assumes the role of Dunbar to speak for those who will listen. Once again, it is a pity that the film focuses on Taft's skills and resources and his change of heart, as the woman in the vision tells him, and not on the problems Native Americans face in terms of land issues and pollution, or corruption. Throughout the movie, the issue of land claim is subtly tackled, but completely forgotten at the end. Thus, the audience is left in their comfort zone of not addressing the reality of the state of Native American land. Their struggle becomes invisible and the national guilt is diluted through the white hero, a white savior character, who has achieved his moral and ethical duty of helping the others.

Other archetype that is repeated in this film is the presence of a feather as a symbol for Native Americans and their spirituality and wisdom, as in *Pontiac Moon* or *Tiger Eyes*. The other big archetype is the appropriation and commodification of the Native American spirituality and their ceremonies. It is Taft who goes through a vision quest, similarly to Levoi in *Thunderheart*, to acquire new knowledge and wisdom. The consequence of this acquisition of knowledge is not only the authorization from Native Americans to speak out on their behalf but also, quite contradictorily, to use violence to destroy corruption even it means the murder of people.

4.2.2.5. The Ordinary Indian

As we said when we analyzed the setting in *Lone Star* (1996), the setting is the intermingling among different races. The director, John Sayles, gives each race a special moment of protagonist resembling the importance of their own histories in the history of the town. Thus, the Native American character of Wesley Birdsong has a small but quite significant role. Wesley owns a souvenir shop in the middle of nowhere, as he says, as he abandoned the reservation because he could not take politics within. As we mentioned, although he has a small role and at times he seems to be rambling; for instance, he provides Sam Deeds with key information: Buddy Deeds' love affair (Sultze 272). In addition to this, the film also approaches the controversial topic of mixed racing. As the town in the frontier symbolizes the common history of different races, it is natural that some members of the town have a unique heritage from different races. For instance, Otis Payne shares history with Native Americans and African American as he publicly displays at his nightclub.

In our both Alaskan films, *Mystery Alaska* and *Unnatural*, the Native American characters play different roles. In *Mystery Alaska*, both Native brothers are part of the hockey team and their Native heritage is not addressed at any point. However, in *Unnatural* the Native heritage is addressed by Buffalo, the Native character played by Graham Greene, who tells the story of the Man-eater, and the two Eskimos working in the station, who are passive when the photographer speaks out about having a real Eskimo in the photoshoot to add some exoticism in the pictures. Yet, although present throughout the film, they are not developed characters, just as the photographer wants some exotic tone in

his photographs: the Native characters in the film add an exotic element in the film.

Another exotic element seems to be Johnna, the Cheyenne woman hired to take care of the Weston family before and after the disappearance of Beverly Weston, the head of the family in *August*. Although there are two female archetypes in the 1990s, as M. Elise Marubbio describes in her book, the Princess type and the Sexualized Maiden, Johnna breaks with these two figures, as she plays an insignificant role within the film. There is only one instance in which she is shown combative and militant as the Mother Queen when she faces Karen's fiancé when he was trying to molest Barbara's teenage daughter. In *The New York Times* review of the film, Johnna is described as a stereotyped character: a wise, patient and self-effacing Other. However, we believe the character is not so developed as to be able to be depicted as a stereotype. She is just a silent character even when Barbara and his mother argue about which terms 'Indian', 'Injun' or 'Native American' are more politically correct.

Although the character of Pike, the gay Native American character in *Big Eden* seems to be a breakthrough role in a film for white audience, the characters does not escape from archetypes. On the one hand, his shyness and his beauty make him the archetype of the sexy American Indian male. Pike represents the 1990s image of Native American males depicted as a mixture of beauty, masculinity and virility while tender, loving and vulnerable males (Bird 68; Van Lent 214). In addition, as Hafen points out Pike is a "generic Indian" (180); he is an isolated Indian with no tribe and no connection with any other tribal nation, as the wise old stereotype Elizabeth points out. On the other hand, the pro-gay town seems to be an idealistic haven (Hafen 180) for gay people as all

townspeople, especially the elders, who may be traditionally opposed to open sexuality, play their own tricks to bring together Pike and Henry.

4.2.2.6. The Fantasy/Horror Indian

In *Deep Rising* and *Mystery Men*, the Native identity of the characters is hidden and there is not a hint to a Native American background story or plot line. The reason to include these films in our study is to show that Native actors can be hired in major productions, Wes Studi's presence in *Mystery Men* and *Deep Rising* as he was in *Heat,* for example, paved the way for younger actors like Adam Beach or the Spears brothers. Although they are usually assigned to native roles, it is more important to have believable performances in all types of films. We strongly believe that the next step will be having more Native Americans as ordinary actors and characters within the plot and storylines of the films.

Man Thing is the exception in this group. Resembling the use of Native legends of mythical figures as in *Bone Tomahawk* or *The Burrowers*, *Man Thing*, uses a Native American legend of Dark Waters to justify the bloody consequences of desecrating sacred Native land. Two Native American characters appear in the movie. On the one hand, we have Rene Larogue, a mixed-blood who inhabits the swamp without giving a clear idea of why and how he is living there. It seems he is protecting the swamp and its spirit from being desecrated by the oil tycoon. He apparently represents the Savage Indian whose only language is violence to protect the land and the people. In fact, at the end of the movie, he sacrifices himself killing the creature and sinking a ship with him. On the other hand, we find Pete, a shaman and the representative of the Noble Man. He is the only character who explains the police officers and the audience the legend: "the

swamp is full of magic; our most powerful guardian lives in the swamp, it protects what our ancestors called 'the nexus of all realities'; the guardian of the swamp has become very angry from the black spill, so it seeks blood" (01:00:35-01:01:21).

As we have seen in this section, there is a whole range of Native American characters portrayed in films set after 1930. Although there are some changes in comparison to Native Americans represented in films set in an earlier period, their portrayals are undermined in most cases by the dependence on the appearance of white characters in their lives. It is also true that there is a difference in the portrayal of Native American characters between big productions and small or independent films. Big productions usually play with the mythical image of the traditional Indian in the desert teaching the white. On the contrary, in small productions, although provided with less screen time, the Indian tends to be away from the desert and to be a realistic character.

Conclusions

As we have seen throughout our analysis of the films, the image of Native Americans has not changed much in the last twenty-five years. The tenets of Multiculturalism, the features of Revisionism and the subsequent legislation issued and the wide acceptance of mainstream society of 'other' stories and histories have not been transferred to the film industry completely, i.e., the sociological and political changes in society have not been reflected in the most accessible and democratic form of entertainment, the cinema.

1992 seemed to be the definite year for the minorities, especially Native Americans, who wanted the society to finally face the contradictory celebrations of the arrival of Columbus to American soil. As we saw, 1992 brought along debates over the suitability of the celebration considering the devastating effects on Native Americans, which consequently had an impact of the visual industry. As a summary, we could say that during the years around 1992 the number of productions revisiting the first moments of white civilization in the new land, the encounter between two civilizations, the wars for the land and the final triumph of white culture over Natives flooded not only multiplex cinemas but also family TV sets. It is true that Native Americans had more screen presence than ever before, yet, their role was reduced to mere companions to white characters and their stories or pleas were just background information to develop the plot of the film.

At the beginning of our dissertation, we mentioned the 2002 report published by the Native American Journalists Association in the United States. That report claimed that the three main topics related to Native Americans in mainstream newspapers between 1999 and 2001 were related to casino gaming, the controversy over the mascot sport teams and news about the reservation. In fact, the 2003 report focused on the dispute between Indians and the college and

official sports teams using derogatory Native American terms and cultural symbols. Curiously enough, if we have a quick look at the list of films analyzed in this dissertation, none of the movies focused on the topics, their issues and/or the solutions. The characters go through reservations as part of the setting of the main action; Native American owners of casinos show up as the main (white) characters go through the parlors; however, problems faced by Native Americans within reservations, the controversy over the casino gaming within Native American population and American society in general and the use of pejorative language and symbols from Native American culture are completely abandoned and forgotten in the consumption world of the film industry.

In our analysis of Native Americans in the Western genre, we analyzed films that dealt either with the early contacts between two civilizations, the relationship during the 'official' years of the era of the Frontier, in which Native American population was rapidly decreasing, or once the white civilization has already triumphed over Indians and Indians are an extinct feature in society. Our period of analysis (1990-2015) was heavily influenced by the tenets of Revisionism. The goal of revisionism was not only to produce new images that are more in agreement with current society and times but also to incorporate a new language and a new view regarding the myth of the frontier and the conquest of the American continent and its early inhabitants. Thus, it tries to bring a new light, a new perspective, a more truthful account to a period of history that has re-enacted over and over throughout film history and that has been proclaimed as the definite moment in the formation of current America and of the American character.

However, by using the same language and the same images, filmmakers have converted Native Americans into another product of white imagination,

who, although embedded with more positive traits than the early samples of the twentieth century, is still defined according to white standards. Therefore, the image and the language used is still the one employed by the 'superior' civilization.

Starting with the titles that in most cases refer to the white protagonists rather than to Native Americans, Native Americans are still reduced and marginalized on screen to a mere 'sidekick' for the white protagonist. When we studied the Western formula and the presence of Native Americans in the film, we commented on three aspects to understand the construction of identity and the importance of the role of Native Americans in that identity. The three concepts or processes are the 'Going Indian' myth, the 'mystique of cultural appropriation' and the 'illusion of cultural divestment'. In these processes, the white character learns from the Native American character how to survive in the wilderness, or on the frontier, and once he has mastered the place and the people, and has acquired a new identity, he must abandon the Indian ways -as they are considered lower social behavior- to go back to white society. This white character seems a messenger of white society and he is probably the first to come to Indian territory and his presence announces Native American tragedy.

Even if the white character does not go through a learning process the Native American characters appear as the father figure, the protector or the teacher of the white character. In fact, the friendship between both figures is possible since it is an individual white figure who usually penetrates tribal life. This figure represents the figure of the Noble Indian who is aligned to the views of the white characters, accepts his doomed destiny even if it means the complete destruction of his culture by white civilization, and acknowledges the white character as his heir. As the Noble Indian is close to the white character, the

audience can see some insights of Native culture. Yet, we are offered that insight just because the white character is introduced to that culture. In none of the films analyzed, Native culture and life are introduced on its own because the main protagonist is a white character; therefore, Native culture and life are present through his eyes and his interpretation in comparison to white culture. Obviously, to expose the white character to the definite experience throughout his learning process, he must endure the dangers and the perils not only of the setting but also the Savage Indian, another inhabitant of the land whose only purpose seems to interrupt the idyllic life of the white character among the Noble Indian. The Savage Indian is not usually a developed character in the plot; at times, he is not even given a name. This figure parallels the figure of the 'bad whites' as they are necessary to justify the status of the white hero as the savior and, at the same time, to eliminate the guilt of current society in the process of extinction and mistreatment of Native Americans in the past as they are not characters whom we identify with as their main features are greed, brutality, violent, lack of remorse and uncivilization.

One of the features that both Noble and Savage Indian share is that, apart from the main Indian character, the rest of the members of the tribes are portrayed *en masse*, as background elements just to show that there were Native Americans in American soil but as they are not important figures, the scarce character development diminishes their role in these films. Thus, Native American culture is diminished and portrayed as non-existent as both Noble and Savage Indian are left behind at the end of the film. Once the white character has acquired a new self, he needs to get rid of Indian traits to come back to white society. Once integrated in white society, he is supposed to spread Native

American culture and speak on behalf of Indians. Meanwhile, Native Americans are left behind facing one common destiny: extinction.

Thus, the revisionist movement fails in presenting a different portrayal of Native Americans. This movement fails in two arguments: on the one hand, the Indian is depicted as vanished and a historical icon, only living in the remote wilderness isolated from the rest of the world; and, on the other hand, Native Americans never do the revising because they are erased from History according to films, thus, requiring someone else to tell their story, the white hero.

As we have commented before, Native Americans are presented as historical artifacts. We are not usually introduced to a whole culture but just the remaining of a tribe who are unsuccessfully resisting the progression of the white man. Apart from this, filmmakers introduce Indians in the movies as frozen in time and space. The period is always the same, late nineteenth century when the encounters between Indians and individual white settlers were peacefully enough to be able to create a bond between the vanishing race and the lonely pioneer. Thus, this special bond is possible just because the Indians are disappearing, and the white presence is minimal, once groups are introduced, especially white society, the bond is destroyed with fatal results for the Indians. Consequently, the special bond between both races, although just represented by individuals, marks the fate of Indians, i.e., disappearance.

Continuing with our explanation of the first failure of the revisionist movement, it is also necessary to say that although the films try to present as accurately as possible Native American way of life, they show it only when the hero encounters the Indians. The variety of languages existing within American Indian culture, the variety of costumes and customs among the distinct and various communities existing in the American continent are erased from the

films. Thus, according to films, our knowledge from Indians comes just because the white intruder initiates a relationship and because he tells the story of the Indians. Before the contact, if we rely on films, Native Americans did not have any history worthy enough to inform the audience about. In fact, the number of films portraying the first meetings between both cultures are scarce and always from a white point of view and built out of fantasy, changing facts to make the story more attractive to current audiences.

As we said before, if films portray characters living in the past, the audience has no sense of guilt since we do not relate to those experiences. The film and white hero help to build distance between History and current society. Indeed, during the plot in the film, the audience identifies more with the hero than with the real victims of the story, especially because the story told in the film is the white hero's story not Native Americans'. Moreover, if the movies produced, although in the twentieth century, only portray characters living in the past and vanished from American history, it is natural that people cannot view Indians in present day society, making them invisible. In fact, the way of portraying Indians, exclusively with feathers and bonnets, disassociates present day Native Americans and their fights in terms of socio-economical and judiciary terms with the audience. Thus, society does not recognize Native Americans as living entities within American society. This is also a consequence not only of the way Native Americans are portrayed but also of the place where they are portrayed. In the American imagination, Native Americans seem to inhabit only in the Frontier. That mythical place where the foundation of the American character and identity as country emerged is a place that no longer exists physically. There are not battles for survival in the wilderness or in the desert as the whole country has been 'civilized'. Therefore, if the frontier does not longer exist, their natural

inhabitants do not exist either, making Native Americans out of place and out of time. Outside that period and that place, Native Americans do not exist for the audience, so their current struggles and pleas are not recognizable for American society in general.

Since Native Americans disappeared, vanished or they do not have enough skills as they are presented as primitive, the only one able to tell their story is the white man who has cohabited with the natives long enough to divulge their knowledge and their truth, as we have said. Thus, Native Americans are denied their own voice to tell their own History, i.e., they are not able to do the revision themselves. Therefore, their dependence on white characters parallels their dependence on the film industry and white filmmakers' willingness to set the record straight about Native Americans. Technically, there has been some advancement in terms of screen presence of Native Americans in Westerns. At times, they share as much screen time as the white protagonist, which for some critics would be a mark of progress in Indian portrayal. Yet, screen presence does not mean accuracy in portrayals, presence of historical facts, or the chance of hearing Native Americans' voice or point of view of History, with its laments, disgraces and mistreatments, which American society must listen to and accept as part of their common past. Some progression has been made in terms of listening to Native American characters speaking their own languages, hiring real Native American actors and Native American consultants to portray cultural traditions as accurately as possible.

If in our first part of the dissertation we focused on the Western and its formal features to analyze the figure of Native Americans and their relationship with the white hero and the setting in the second part where we focused on films set after 1930, we find a wide range of genres such as comedy, romance, action,

adventure, war and even fantasy/science-fiction films. We have not focused on the formal aspects of each genre as they are not important, as in the Western were, to define the role of Native American in relation to the plot and the white hero.

After analyzing the portrayal of Native Americans in all these genres, their image does not change a bit. On the one hand, we also find films that reproduce the Native Americans of feather and bonnets with the dual Noble/Savage image. Therefore, although they are given as much screen time as the white protagonist, their frozen image and ahistorical figure lessens the idea of integrating Native Americans in current American. Indeed, this image reinforces (a) the idea of the white savior as Native American figures and the plot around them serve the white hero to confirm his status as hero; and, consequently, (b) the invisibility of Native Americans within the current society leading to the oblivion of their past and present struggles.

With the variety of genres and films analyzed it is very difficult to discern a specific pattern in their portrayal. However, we can conclude the multiple formats/genres in which a Native American character is portrayed give space for the reproduction of a wide variety of stereotypes such as the spiritual wise older, the protector of the environment or keeper of the Earth, the criminal, the sexy Native American, the representative of the authority as police officer or soldier and even as a figure linked to supernatural forces. Yet, all these stereotypes share some common features.

On the one hand, they usually appear in isolation from other Native Americans. Since the 1960s and 1970s Native Americans move from the reservation to the cities in search of new opportunities, groupings of Native Americans have been scarce, and the films seem to represent the isolation of those

characters, apart from pointing out their lack of continuity as there is no presence of Native American women and, consequently, their invisibility within society. On the other hand, the reservation serves as a background element of the story in the film. White and Indian characters may go through the Indian reservation as part of the plot, but white characters never stay there. Indeed, although we can see the problems the reservation is facing such as lack of resources, pollution, unresolved crimes and, especially, the controversial issue of the jurisdiction limits of tribal police and federal police, all those issues are considered background information and are left unresolved as the white hero leaves the reservation and the Indians living there stay as they were before. Even in films like in *The Twilight Saga*, *Thunderheart* or *Frozen River*, where the action takes place within the reservation, it is just the place where the characters move around.

This lack of continuity as a nation due to the lack of visible family or grouping is like the frozen Indian we saw in the first part of the dissertation. In Westerns, Native Americans are dead from the very beginning as their destiny can be understood from the first shots of the film as the white hero is usually the narrator. In this section of the dissertation, Native Americans are also frozen as they are isolated from their culture heritage as in *Flags of our Fathers*. A key element is the lack of leading female characters in the film. Even those female protagonists like in *Thunderheart* or *Frozen River* are either dead or isolated or they just serve as background elements in *The Twilight Saga*.

Yet, there are some examples of trying to make Native American visible within American society: Native Americans portrayed as police officers and soldiers/veterans. If they are representatives of the authority, they can be more recognizable and closer to American political structures. In the case of police officers within the reservation, the portrayal is problematic as it raises the

controversial issue of the jurisdiction within tribal lands. In fact, the problem is resolved as the federal police is the one triumphing over the tribal police, resembling the triumph of the white hero over the Indian. However, the portrayal of soldiers and veterans is completely different. On the one hand, it may serve as an homage to Native Americans' service at the great wars in the twentieth century, although the only film paying homage to Indian soldiers, *Windtalkers*, is another white-hero story pushing Native Americans into the background even if the title of the film refers to them. On the other hand, it may be the only possible way for filmmakers and the audience to see Native Americans in a positive light and integrated within society.

As we said, the wide range of genres in the second part of the dissertation gives space to a wider variety in the portrayal. Yet, another consequence of that variety is that the importance of Native Americans in some films may be smaller, i.e., less screen time, with some exceptions. However, they do appear more in contact with the general population, not as isolated figures in the wilderness. So, one question we should ask ourselves after our reviewing of the films is: Are those minor roles representative of the small percentage of Native American population within the country as we saw in the census? Do these characters need to comment explicitly on their racial heritage or, on the contrary, that racial heritage should be omitted like in Graham Greene's character in *Die Hard 3*?

We really think that Native characters are still devoted to represent a dead culture and linked to the Western genre. A fact to prove this is the recurrent actors appearing in films related to the Western where they are given prominent roles while in other films they are just subsidiary characters who appear in the film just to complete a specific role: provider of spiritual advice, helper to assist characters to get to their final destination or to obtain a specific item. None of the Native

American characters are represented on their own. Unfortunately, only one of the films analyzed in the second part has a Native American actor as the leading role (*Expiration Date*, 2006), and curiously enough, it is not a big-budget Hollywood film with very big box office results or critical acclaims. Yet, apart from its flaws, it is one of the most accurate portrayals of a Native American character we have analyzed in this dissertation.

In relation to this lack of Native American characters, consequently, invisibility, the 2018 study carried out by Professor Stacy L. Smith and the Media, Diversity & Social Change (MDSC) Initiative at University of Southern California's Annenberg School confirmed than less than 1% of the characters in the 800 top films from 2007 to 2017 have a Native American origin (8). Therefore, some of the questions we ask ourselves after completing this dissertation should be, how do Native American filmmakers portray their own people? What kind of stories do they present in their films or documentaries? In mainstream productions, what kind of films have recently been released? Does it matter if the portrayal is made for TV or for big screens?

With these questions in mind, we truly think that further research on the portrayal of Native Americans should take three paths. Firstly, we need to pay more attention to the visual work of Native America filmmakers such as Chris Eyre, Alanis Obomsawin, Sterlin Harjo or Sydney Freeland. These filmmakers are creating interesting films with Native American actors, languages and resources, which need to be analyzed and confronted with films created by non-Natives. It is necessary that audience, scholars and critics leave their comfort-zone and go beyond *Smoke Signals* (1992). At this point, we would like to clarify that being non-Native does not automatically equal the reproduction of stereotypes, but we think that society must be re-educated visually to accept different stories and

characters. Thus, part of our further research will be to establish a comparison, if any, between the Native characters portrayed by white mainstream filmmakers and those by Native filmmakers and how Native filmmakers fight back those stereotypes and portray real and current Native American characters and stories.

Secondly, our research is not a finished business. Film companies and producers continue releasing material including Native American characters or stories. Several films have been released after the completion of this dissertation such as *Hostiles* (2017), *Wind River* (2017), or *Woman Walks Ahead* (2018). Moreover, Native American roles are also included in mainstream TV shows like *Fear the Walking Dead* (2015-present) or *Outlander* (2014). Thus, this study will continue documenting the unreal and ahistorical portrayal to make society aware of the dangers of stereotyping cultures as it provokes misinformation, isolation and discrimination.

Consequently, our third path asks for the necessary collaboration of both races in creating visual works culturally and politically accurate with both races. We can find examples of this in the figures of Sherman Alexie and Chris Eyre who have teamed up with white filmmakers or producers to present works that contain visual and social real Native American characters. For instance, Robert Redford wrote and produced *Skinwalkers* (2002), a TV film directed by Chris Eyre that was featured in PBS *Mystery!* series. Sherman Alexie has adapted his novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* for a film that is still in development. *Winter in the Blood* (2013), which is based on Jim Welch's novel of the same name, was produced by Alexie but directed by white directors Alex Smith and Andrew J. Smith.

By being in charge their own image, Native American filmmakers and producers will be able to 're-educate' American society in two ways. First, they

will be able to speak in their own terms and present their own reality without any intermediary that could contaminate their message. Secondly, and because of the previous statement, they will be able to fight against distorted images and stereotypes that, unfortunately, are still engraved in American society.

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