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Sovereignty, Resistance, and Resilience
Staying Medicine Among the O'odham People

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

History

by

Daniel L. Archuleta

December 2021

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The Thesis of Daniel L. Archuleta is approved:

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Committee Chairperson

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Introduction:

Anthropologist Donald Bahr wrote *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness* in 1974 with the help of his O'odham partner and "shaman" Juan Gregario. When I first encountered "staying sickness," I was reluctant to write about it. The idea of writing about the sickness of tribal members did not feel right. It was akin to going into a hospital and writing about patients, what they are experiencing, their diagnoses, what medications they were taking, and what the doctor was planning to do to help the individuals in this their most personal and vulnerable state. Medicine has to do with the most intimate aspects of a person's body and mind. Although I chose to omit writing about personal details of individuals and their diagnoses and specific ceremonies and healing techniques, anthropologists like Donald Bahr and David Kozak recorded that information in their writings. I am more concerned with what it means to believe in a complex theory of healing, sickness, and power. The research led me to rethink what staying sickness was and rename it "staying medicine." As staying sickness focuses on illness, what is most important is the healing or medicinal aspects that govern the community. Staying medicine is a more accurate term for what the O'odham described as an interconnected world where everything has power able to harm a person if they do not adhere to the proper way of being (O'odham *himdag*) in their environment. Staying medicine has been viewed negatively by some scholars, but this medicine way is a gift handed to the O'odham to train them to view the desert environment for what it truly is: alive. Every animal, rock mountain, and weather phenomenon is imbued with great power that must be respected. The O'odham did not live in fear of these spirits but learned to live in

balance with these things in a harmonious fashion by utilizing staying medicine. A balance that took a tremendous amount of self-discipline to achieve, going against the myth that Indians were somehow "one with nature" this author's research has revealed that this balance tribal members achieved was only attained through the adherence of traditional technologies that took a great deal of self-control to achieve and was, at times, threatened by both internal and external forces. Staying medicine was the contributing factor in achieving this balance and has evolved over time. If an O'odham chose not to adhere to staying medicine, it could mean a sickness could befall the individual, their family, and possibly the whole community if not addressed.

The Prologue takes a small look at how spiritual warfare against the O'odham is manifesting today through the construction of the border wall along the US and Mexico. The chapter examines how the O'odham continue their struggle for sovereignty and how this intersects with their *himdag*. The border represents an opportunity to examine settler psychology more deeply. It puts staying medicine (arguably a theory of sickness meant to combat mental health issues in O'odham communities) in contrast with settler mental health through Mbembe's concept of necropolitics.

Taking this point of view, one can see a sickness spreading throughout the earth. Staying medicine is an Indigenous technology concerned with tribal health. Centering staying medicine and other Native concepts refutes Native history as simply the history of settler, Native relations-that Native American history began with contact and is simply a series of Indian versus white events. I present in the coming pages an attempt to examine the "internal change in Indian communities" rather than an "us versus them"

history.[1] Although one must explain and analyze this contact, utilizing staying medicine as the starting point centers Indigenous ways of knowing and does not take settler history/narratives as the unquestioned truth. Instead, it accepts O'odham histories as truth. It leaves open the possibility of the great unknown and that history is cyclical, that medicine people once wielded great power, that the earth and all of its relations (animal, plant, rocks) are animate and possess a power or strength upon themselves that can affect human beings and alter the course of history.

Chapter two explores what staying medicine is and some examples of specific types of "sicknesses" that anthropologists had documented. Of particular interest is devil sickness (*jiawul mumkidag)*. There is a heavy focus on ghosts and what they mean to the O'odham and their role in healing. One should come away with a better understanding of O'odham history and the spiritual struggles between them and the colonizers. The priests and makai (medicine people) struggled over what ghosts the O'odham would ultimately believe.

Chapter three is an exploration of dizziness. This chapter reveals how, traditionally, the O'odham viewed drugs, gender, and sexuality tied to notions of dizziness and the spiritual realm and how the ghosts of colonization linger in settler institutions. How these ghosts work to demonize and stigmatize O'odham notions of drugs and sexuality, two links that traditionally connected the O'odham to the spirit

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[1] Donald Lee Fixico, *Call for Change: The Medicine Way of American Indian History, Ethos, & Reality,* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 54.

realm. Here, we move away from the Spaniards and Jesuits and focus on the turn of the 20th century and a new empire. The United States takes the baton from the Catholic priests in an attempt to stamp out O'odham ceremonies and traditional values and replace them with a settler morality done through the implementation of secular and religious boarding schools, outlawing the use of alcohol (a vital ingredient in one of the essential O'odham ceremonies), and the enforcement of hetero-patriarchal institutions like marriage and how this was all a part of how the Tohono O'odham regained a small part of their homeland. Inside, this chapter explores another sickness governed by staying medicine, whore, or prostitute sickness. One should take away that these terms were all imposed as the O'odham had no concept of "whores." Anthropologists coined these terms revealing their own biases of women. O'odham women with multiple partners had to be whores to these western scholars instead of their cultural purpose, fulfilling a spiritual role in the community. Tribal members celebrated these women, but settlers stigmatized them. What is apparent is that the idea of drinking, drunkenness, and sexuality, historically, had been associated with the spirit realm and served a valuable function during ceremonies. By shifting the focus from Christian notions of drunkenness to traditional O'odham notions of drunkenness, the hope is to redefine and reimagine what drinking and drunkenness mean in this cultural context. When the cultural foundations of these dizzying mental states get revealed, one hopes that we can reevaluate the stigmas, and in tying these dizzy states back to O'odham *himdag*, perhaps people might think twice about abusing these states, as there are stories and lessons handed down that deal with these issues. Some of which get examined in this chapter. Ultimately, the United

States government interfering in these so-called Indian "vices" really amounts to a form of spiritual warfare, one that continues to this day.

Prologue:

The Tohono O'odham are the original caretakers of what is now Southern Arizona, and they believed everything had animacy and agency. Everything has its power or *gewkdag*, governed by staying medicine: plants, animals, rocks, and mountains. For many Indigenous peoples, objects also had this power or spirit imbued within them, forged by their creator's intent. Contemporary Tohono O'odham are fighting against a militarized border. The wall is a physical manifestation of the settlers' anxiety of being colonized—the border wall's creator's motivation: xenophobia, hatred, and fear. A form of what philosopher Achille Mbembe calls the "anxiety of annihilation." Something created out of fear and hatred is an inherently dangerous object and has the potential to cause sickness. The construction of the border wall and other technologies associated with border "security" are destroying the O'odham way of life and enacting violence upon the animals, plants, and lands that have sustained the O'odham from time immemorial. Its presence is a form of visual and physical violence upon the landscape, its construction an attack on the O'odham people's psychic infrastructure. Using staying medicine as a way to analyze border militarization revealed a deep-seated sickness fueled by violence. Aspects of staying medicine may hold the keys to a sustainable and healthy existence in the desert for all.

For Achille Mbembe, the anxiety of annihilation is a driving factor behind democracies now embracing their dark side or "nocturnal body." The colonizers, "[w]anting not to remember anything any longer, least of all their own crimes and misdeeds, they dream up bad objects that return to haunt them and they then seek

violently to rid themselves of."[2] This irrational fear is the driving force behind the need to build walls and justifies the violence inflicted on people and the land.

Trump and his supporters have been called a death cult because of this drive towards annihilation, but for the O'odham, death is not the end, not something to be feared, merely the next stage of life. So, death is not considered an act against life but another aspect of it. These people chanting "build the wall!," should more accurately be labeled a *mumkidag cult. Mumkidag* is the word for sickness in the O'odham language. The O'odham differentiate between mental sickness, *ka:cim mumkidag* (staying sickness), and sicknesses caused by viruses/bacteria, *oimmedam mumkidag* (traveling sickness). The affliction the *mumkidag cult* suffers from is a *ko'ito mumkidag* or a devouring sickness. The cult seeks the end through a violent purification of the land, where "drain the swamp" is interpreted as "everything should be cleansed. They are convinced that they can be saved only in a violent struggle to restore their masculinity, the loss of which they…attribute to the weaker among them, to the weak they do not want to become." This cult's sickness is spreading.

In his book, *Land of Open Graves,* Jason De León, borrowing from Giorgio Agamben, argues that spaces like the Arizona-Mexico border exist in a "state of exception."[3] For De León, a state of exception is "the process whereby sovereign

[2] Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 2.
[3] De León borrows this term from Giorgio Agamben's book *State of Exception*. I am focusing on De León's interpretation because he is specifically looking at the same part of the Sonora Desert that I am analyzing.

authorities declare emergencies in order to suspend the legal protections afforded to individuals while simultaneously unleashing the power of the state upon them."[4] De León's book is focused on the migrant experience, as they move through this state of exception, and how the state wields the desert as a weapon. A perverse act, given that the Sonoran Desert had been a source of life and sustained the O'odham from time immemorial. *The Land of Open Grave's* most glaring omission is that of the Tohono O'odham and their experience, as they exist in a constant state of exception. The militarization of the US-Mexico border on O'odham land disproportionally harms the O'odham, both spiritually and physically. The wall's construction is the logical conclusion of the frontier's closing, and the paranoid settler now turns inward.

The rhetoric surrounding border security, both from Republicans and Democrats, is that we must increase militarization. The debate one hears coming from Washington is whether the US should invest in a virtual or physical border wall. "Democrats have promoted 'smart' technology as a more effective and cheaper alternative to the $15 billion concrete-and-steel version Trump is racing to install."[5] Both options revealed the perceived need for a strong southern border. The need for a strong border is evidence of an empire in decline and is "symptomatic of defensive reactions to an increasingly unstable economy of inclusion/exclusion and inside/outside."[6] Alternatively, as Greg Grandin puts it, "obsession with fortification against what is outside is symptomatic of

[4] Jason De León, *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail,* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 68.
[5] Nick Miroff, "Tech firm to build virtual border wall," *The Herald* (Jasper Indiana) July 3, 2020.
[6] Gabriel Giorgi & Karen Pinkus, "Zones of Exception: Biopolitical Territories in the Neoliberal Era," *Diacritics*, Vol. 36, No. 2, (Summer, 2006), 99.

trouble that exists inside."[7] Either virtual or physical, the wall is violence upon the land and the people inhabiting it and is an irrational solution to an imaginary problem.

Nevertheless, separation is what settler colonialism is all about and stemmed from the anxiety of annihilation. For Mbembe, walls of separation are part of the "fantasy of extermination," rooted in fear, "partly a consequence of the annihilation anxiety felt by settlers themselves. Numerically inferior but endowed with powerful means of destruction, the settlers lived in fear of being surrounded on all sides by bad objects that threatened their survival and were liable to take away their existence."[8] The border wall is thus a projection of this settler fear. An attempt to feel safe and secure, in which any type of violence is justified to achieve this security.

The calls for a "secure" border echoed from both political parties is due to the money generated from the military-industrial complex and because "under the logic of security, [one] can normalize and make acceptable any form of violence."[9] Capitalism and settler anxiety create a symbiotic relationship through which violence and money feed off one another. This normalization of violence is especially the case for the O'odham living in the Sonoran Desert. As Jason De León writes, the "Sonoran Desert is remote, sparsely populated, and largely out of the American public's view. This space can be policed in ways that would be deemed violent, cruel, or irrational in most other contexts."[10] This irrationality stems from the deep-seated irreconcilable guilt of

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[7] Greg Grandin, *The End of the Myth: From the Frontier to the Border Wall in the Mind of America,* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2019), 148.
[8] Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, 46.
[9]Giorgi, & Pinkus, "Zones of Exception," 100.
[10] De León, *The Land of Open Graves*, 28.

colonizing and murdering the Indigenous peoples in what is now the United States. The 1924 Immigration Act, which created the United States Border Patrol, was justified at the time because an open border policy equaled "race suicide."[11] Clare Booth Luce, the wife of the magazine magnate Henry Luce, wrote in a letter to her husband in the 1940s, "America will survive as a nation," only by preserving its "racial and cultural homogeneity."[12] Luce would later serve as Eisenhower's ambassador to Italy and Brazil. As one can see, the wall's construction along the border has historical roots in the hatred and fear of miscegenation and the "impure." Of course, who gets counted as "white" or included in the settler project changes over time. Today it would seem those exceptionally patriotic and committed to the myth of "western civilization" are acceptable. As Mbembe points out, this is a myth shared by Nazism, fascism, and colonialism: "these three formations shared the same myth about the absolute superiority of so-called Western culture, understood as the culture of race—the white race."[13] Even for the brown faces chanting "build the wall," it is understood they too are committed to this culture of the white race. If it is true that the US is now "a country that increasingly defines itself by what it hates," then the border wall becomes a monument dedicated to this hatred.[14]

Racism and hatred revealed a sickness, a pathogen whose genesis is in the body of the colonizer. Moreover, like a virus, which infected those who come into close contact,

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[11] Grandin, *The End of the Myth*, 162.
[12] Ibid, 194.
[13] Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, 121.
[14] Grandin, *The End of the Myth*, 248.

it slowly destroys the host internally. The blood of the Indigenous, spilt in colonial wars, "generated all sorts of pathologies and constitutes a favorable terrain for hatching mental disorders."[15] The genocide, rape, destruction of land and animals have caused deep sickness inside the settler. Long repressed, the immune system can no longer fight it off, and the settler lashes out violently in his final death throes. The *mumkidag* cult, led by a "desire to destroy" and devour. A type of cannibalistic sickness that Indigenous historian Jack Forbes called the *wetiko* psychosis.[16] The consuming of land and life for profit or preemptively eating a perceived enemy keeps the living-dead-body animate. In the name of security, they are tearing up O'odham land with the bulldozers' jagged metal teeth to protect the dying body politic. The destruction of O'odham land and life is no accident. The Indigenous of the US are anxiety-inducing specters that haunt an anxious empire, a reminder of their failed conquests, the products of their genocide.

The United States Mexico border symbolizes the *cult of mumkidag*, which imprisons the O'odham in a constant state of exception. Because the wall stemmed from fear and hatred, its construction destroyed life. The Real ID Act of 2005 "allows the secretary of homeland security to exempt the wall from environmental assessments or legal challenges because of national security."[17] As a result, the Trump administration ignored laws protecting animals, water, and wildlife. The Real ID Act was the result of

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[15] Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, 128.
[16] Wetiko is a Cree term which refers to an "evil person or spirit who terrorizes other creatures by means of terrible acts of evil." Forbes uses this term to describe the sickness that drives imperialism and exploitation, in his book *Columbus and Other Cannibals: The Wetiko Disease of Exploitation, Imperialism, and Terrorism.*
[17] Jeffrey P. Cohn, "The Environmental Impacts of a Border Fence," *BioScience*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (January 2007), 96.

the attack on 9/11 and the fears associated with terrorism. Settler fears that Al Qaeda was to come and implement sharia law. Again, this is settler projection, lingering guilt from the forced conversion and assimilation of Native Americans, and the terrorism used to achieve this end. Because Homeland Security can waive laws that protect the environment, we have seen the destruction of saguaro cactus and even Native burial grounds.

The Tohono O'odham, Akimel O'odham, and the Hia Ceḍ O'odham fighting against border wall construction are struggling to protect the land and a way of life that the United States had failed to destroy. The O'odham land defender's mission is urgent as "Customs and Border Protection waived more than three dozen federal laws to speed up border wall construction in Arizona. Among them are several cultural and archeological laws meant to preserve Native American sites and artifacts."[18] One of the border wall's victims is the saguaro cactus, which the O'odham consider relatives, and are now being devoured by black smoke spewing bulldozers. Many stories tell us that the saguaro was once living children, transformed into the saguaro due to neglect. The children, still wanting to be of use to their people, produced the *bahidaj* (saguaro fruit) for the rainmaking ceremony. The bulldozers, a tool of the settler," used on the ground as weapons of war and intimidation."[19] Another tool used in these states of exception, the border guard. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) white and green SUVs darting through the reservation, always on the move against an unseen enemy, now used to quell

[18] Rafael Carranza, "Protestors block border wall assembly site," *Arizona Republic* (Phoenix, Arizona), August 30, 2020
[19] Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, 82.

O'odham land defenders. They moved in, arrested and beat, set up checkpoints, and closed off ceremonial sites, all in the name of "border security." The same violence on O'odham land is also perpetrated in other border zones marked as states of exception, "kicking over vegetable stands or closing borders at a whim; bones broken; shootings and fatalities— a certain kind of madness."[20] Whereby, borders "are the name used to describe the organized violence that underpin both contemporary capitalism and the new world order in general…dead spaces of non-connection which deny the very idea of a shared humanity."[21] The idea of a shared humanity or relationality to all human and non-human beings is something the settler failed to recognize. The border wall and the violence attributed to it revealed a kind of evil. For the O'odham, "evil is anything that violates the balance or reciprocity that binds all creation. Evil is a state of being, not a being itself."[22]

The murder of the saguaro revealed the state's total disregard for other-than-human life and O'odham *himdag* (way/cultural path). The saguaro destruction ignored the *gewkdag* inherent in them and puts the O'odham at risk both physically and spiritually. O'odham scholar Reuben Naranjo shares how the O'odham worldview operated:

> [the] O'odham belief system grounds us in the universe by reminding us that our relationships to everything around us are infinite and enduring. In

[20] Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, 91.
[21] Ibid, 99.
[22] Daniel T. Reff, "Sympathy for the Devil: Devil Sickness and Lore Among the Tohono O'odham," *Journal of the Southwest* 50, no. 4 (December 1, 2008), 368.

> O'odham, all creatures…humans plants, and animals— are ephemeral, while the earth and sky are permanent. Animals and plants were first to occupy the land, prior to humans, and therefore we respect our relationship to them through ritual kinship.[23]

The Saguaro fruit or *bahidaj* is an essential aspect of the O'odham rain-making ceremony. This ceremony is responsible for bringing the rain. During the ceremony, the O'odham get "beautifully drunk" from the *nawai* or wine made from the *bahidaj*. As one O'odham elder argued, if they "gave up the making [of *nawai*], it would mean starvation for their wives and children, as it would never rain again."[24] As displayed, the settler government cannot understand the O'odham's relationality with every aspect of the desert. If one kills the saguaro, they destroy the *bahidaj*, which means no wine, no ceremony, which inevitably means no rain, and without rain, there is no life. For the O'odham, this same connection exists between every aspect of the desert. This "balance, also known as *himdag*, provides O'odham rules and directions to maintain our relationship with the earth, life and medicine."[25] The bulldozers destroyed the land, the living and teared at the *jeweḍ ka:cim* (staying earth). The *jeweḍ ka:cim* is the O'odham homeland, and a source of power for the O'odham peoples. "The staying earth is more

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[23] Reuben Vasquez Naranjo Jr., "Hua A'Aga: Basket Stories From The Field, The Tohono O'Odham Community Of A:L Pi'Ichkiñ (Pitiquito), Sonora Mexico," PhD dissertation (Tucson: University of Arizona, 2011), 42.
[24] Peter McMillan Booth, "Saguaro Wine Defenders of the Tohono O'odham Land and Way-of-Life," *The Journal of Arizona Historical Society*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (winter, 2005), 381.
[25] Reuben Vasquez Naranjo Jr., "Hua A'Aga: Basket Stories From The Field," 43.

than physical geography, plant life, or precipitation patterns…the staying earth is both sacred and profane and delineates the perceptual and physical boundaries of the universe."[26] The bulldozing and construction is an act of spiritual warfare meant to annihilate the O'odham's psychic infrastructure.

In the end, whether it be a physical wall, a monument to settler fear, and anxiety of themselves getting colonized. A digital wall with more integrated fix towers (IFT) dotting the O'odham landscape would be equally horrifying. The virtual wall then becomes a monument to a neoliberal techno-fascist future, where modern-day panoptic towers monitor individuals' movements across time and space, also known as "widespread, persistent surveillance."[27] Both options stemmed from the hatred and fear of the unresolved trauma of the past. The IFTs also connect the O'odham to another colonizing power, Israel. As the Israeli company, Elbit Systems boasts their IFTs are "field proven" on Palestinians. The Palestinians, like the O'odham, live in a persistent state of exception. A connection Mbembe makes as well, arguing that the "most accomplished form of necropower is the contemporary colonial occupation of Palestine."[28]

In *Necropolitics,* Achille Mbembe argued that modern democracies consist of the "solar body" and the "nocturnal body." The solar body represented democracy, and the nocturnal body its colonial parent. As democracies declined or are in times of great stress,

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[26] David Kozak and David Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs: Tohono O'odham Poetics,* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), 3.
[27] Will Parrish, "The US Border Patrol and an Israeli Military Contractor are Putting a Native American Reservation Under 'Persistent Surveillance," *The Intercept*, August 25, 2019.
[28] Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, 80.

they reverted to the nocturnal body, rooted in the "colonial policy of terror." What is revealed is a long succession of violence, hatred, and fear in the colonial and then democratic world. Where states of exception increasingly become states of persistence, as is the case for the O'odham. The fight against the wall and the militarization of the border is an ongoing struggle against colonial violence, of which the Indigenous had always been a part. The border is where settler power is concentrated, its fear projected. The surveillance technologies produced there are then used in the subjugation of the population at large. Anyone deemed an enemy of the state, of which we see changes over time— Natives, Jews, disabled, Chinese, Japanese, Muslims, migrants, ANTIFA, and Black Lives Matter. As seen during the recent racial uprisings, the border patrol dispatched drones to spy on protestors, and those kidnapped off the street by unmarked vehicles were part of the border patrols' Border Patrol Tactical Unit or BORTAC.[29]

"[T]he drive to destruction…once turned toward the outside or projected, can be turned anew toward the inside or introjected."[30] This drive to destruction stemmed from fear, the fear of becoming a victim. In the *mumkidag cult's* mind exist multiple logical contradictions: fear of being colonized while being colonizers, fear of being the victim, yet a deep yearning to become a victim. Deeply embedded in the settler mythology is a series of these contradictions: "It is not okay for them not to be like us. But it is also not okay for them to become like us…Consequently, a situation of madness is created."[31]

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[29] Karl Jacoby, "Border Patrol's brute power spreads to cities," *Los Angeles Times*, July 23, 2020.
[30] Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, 121.
[31] Ibid, 138.

The *mumkidag cult* wants to be the victim. Because if they are victims, anything they do is justified. There will remain an essence of innocence in the vilest destruction of land and life because it is all done to secure the nation. The sickness is spreading; although there are elections and the leadership gets shuffled, the cult will persist. The chants may change; the targets of annihilation may shift, but the sickness is the same. The virus has mutated.

In contrast, the O'odham are not victims; they are survivors. O'odham himdag and staying medicine are the cure to this disease, the instructions handed down at creation explain how to care for the desert. Staying medicine binds the mind, body, spirit, and land into one cohesive, holistic worldview. A return to animism and a return of land to the Tohono O'odham is the only future for the region.

Chapter 1:

The Owl and The Makai
O'odham Ghosts in the Shadow of Empire

Ghosts are real. Not just the ghosts produced through genocide and settler colonialism, but ghosts of Indigenous ancestors and relatives. They are real. This chapter attempts to explore the sickness caused by these ghosts and the healing possibilities of these same spirits. Ghosts hand down the healing power to dreamers and seekers through Indigenous traditions such as songs and ceremonies. For thousands of years, the O'odham Indians of southern Arizona and northern Mexico experimented and perfected various traditions designed to guide their peoples into a more prosperous future. Epistemologies were time-tested, handed down from creation, and offered the method by which the O'odham people dealt with the earth. Teaching the proper way to interact with people, places, plants, animals, rocks, and ghosts. Indigenous scholars can critique the present using these traditions, what Tongva scholar Charles Sepulveda calls "tradition as theory."[32] The O'odham by no means created a utopia, but their teachings laid the foundations for realizing and maintaining a healthy existence. This history is not a story of the need, or want, to return to an idyllic past. This story is the reclamation of a tribal

[32] In "Our Sacred Waters: Theorizing *Kuuyam* as a Decolonial Possibility," Charles Sepulveda uses the Tongva term *Kuuyam*, a traditional term for guest, as an intervention against the brutal treatment the Santa Ana River. Sepulveda argues that if settlers were given the title *Kuuyam,* it would shift how they perceive and carry themselves on Indian land. Sepulveda, argues that this centers Indigenous ways of being by forcing the colonizers to recognize the Native presence on the land in which they currently reside, understanding that the river is animate and deserves respect, not to be suffocated with concrete and pollutants.

history tied to health and medicine through man's interaction with the universe. This work attempts to re-center Native American history with a focus on Indigenous epistemologies as a means to re-situate the present and thus reshape the future, creating a world more fruitful for everyone. It is an attempt to lift the ghostly veil of western hegemony, invisible yet powerful. The O'odham people had long understood the knowledge held by these ghosts.

The O'odham have occupied the Sonoran Desert, in what is now northern Mexico and central Arizona, from time immemorial. The O'odham Nation, comprised of the Akimel O'odham (River People), Tohono O'odham (Desert People), and the Hia Ceḍ O'odham (Sand People), were once referred to with derision as the Pima and Papago and their lands as the Alta Pimería and Papaguería, respectively.[33] The O'odham say I'itoi (Elder Brother) brought them from the underworld to conquer his enemies, the Hohokam, or in O'odham *Huhughim* (to perish/disappear). After the downfall of the Hohokam, I'itoi gave the O'odham the choice of where they wanted to live. The heroes of the battle, the Akimel O'odham, got the first choice. They chose to live near the Gila River and the Tohono O'odham, being hunters and agriculturalists, chose to live in the desert.

There was some debate about the "Hohokam-O'odham continuum," but the O'odham have a long oral tradition of this being the case.[34] The O'odham have always

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[33] The Papago and Pima names are derogatory to the O'odham, so I will refer to all three of the O'odham Nations collectively as the O'odham people in this writing. The O'odham are diverse and their lands stretched well into northern Mexico, it is sometimes difficult to identify which specific group the person is associated with. Therefore, I will be using O'odham to identify all the various groups and name the specific O'odham tribe when available.
[34] See Bahr et. al., *Short Swift Time of Gods on Earth* and "Prehistory Traditions of O'odham" by Teague (1993) for a more in-depth exploration of the prehistory of the O'odham. The specifics of

occupied the Sonora desert. A desert that nourished and sustained the Tohono O'odham and the Akimel O'odham and facilitated their songs and traditions, which offer Indigenous sources into the history of the people within the Sonora Desert. Specifically, *ka:cim kulani,* or staying medicine, offers a pathway of understanding the people in terms of their medicine ways.[35]

The creator gave the O'odham *ka:cim kulani*, and it guided how the O'odham interacted with the ghosts/spirits on their land. The O'odham identified two forms of sickness, staying and traveling. Traveling sickness, or *oimeḍam mumkidag*, refers to any virus or bacterial infection that is a traveling contagion. Thus, smallpox, measles, mumps, influenza, or tuberculosis constitutes a traveling sickness. Any person can contract an infectious disease. Staying sickness, connected to the *Jeweḍ Ka:cim* (staying earth), only infected the O'odham people. There are a set of cultural commandments called O'odham *himdag*, given at the time of creation. These were, as O'odham shaman Juan Gregario puts it, "intended to make our society… 'stay proper' and be an 'assistance' to the life of individuals. The Piman (Akimel O'odham) way is dangerous if improperly used; proper

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this Hohokam-O'odham history and connection is not so important for the purposes of this article, but Teague's piece is especially enlightening in that she compares O'odham oral tradition to the archeological record. She shows how oral tradition has proven to be more accurate than previously believed. This strengthens my own argument that songs are technologies meant to preserve complex histories accurately through the ages.

[35] I have renamed staying sickness with staying medicine as I believe this is a more accurate description of how these teachings were intended to be understood by the people. Although anthropologists and their O'odham partners referred to this complex theory of sickness/healing staying sickness I believe the term sickness imbues this theory with negative connotations. Throughout this chapter I may use both terms interchangeably as I will be quoting texts from which the term staying sickness is the norm.

use requires knowledge and remembrance."[36] Staying sickness did not travel and was not an infectious disease-born pathogen. An O'odham that contracted *ka:cim mumkidag* transgressed a being's *gewkdag*, or strength, governed by staying medicine.

Staying medicine exists today among O'odham people and can be viewed as an overarching philosophy in which all things are animate and have a *gewkdag* (spirit-strength/way).[37] Certain animals, natural phenomena, and objects contain a strength that can cause sickness in an O'odham person. These sicknesses can materialize physically if not healed and may even cause death if allowed to reach the heart of the infected. Bahr has identified about forty of these sickness-causing agents and remedies.[38] Some of the sickness-causing agents include owl, coyote, lizard, and the devil. Everything in the environment of the O'odham is connected and has a power or spirit. Thus, an O'odham person could contract lizard sickness, not necessarily by directly contacting a lizard but by transgressing the lizard's gewkdag. For example, killing an insect, the lizard eats, destroys the lizard's habitat, and so forth. The healing song for jimsonweed sickness includes mentioning a lizard because the O'odham people view the lizard as an "accessory in the jimsonweed complex."[39] Sickness can be "in the act itself, either disrespect, killing accidently, improper bathing, or handling or disposing remains, even ridiculing an animal or watching it die slowly, feathers from dangerous birds must be

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[36] Donald M. Bahr, Gregorio, Juan., Alvarez, Albert., and Lopez, David I. *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness (Ká:cim Múmkidag)* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), 43.
[37] Bahr et. al., *Piman Shamanism*, 37
[38] Bahr et. al., *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness* gives a complete list of the agents of harm, how they are contracted and the possibly remedies. pages 283-298.
[39] Donald M. Bahr and Richard Haefer, "Song in Piman Curing," *Ethnomusicology* 22, no. 1 (January 1, 1978), 101

ritually purified by a *makai* before being handled."[40] All part of a "pervasive pattern regulating human behavior toward the natural world…Because of the animal's strength or way, there is a moral relationship between the animal and an individual O'odham."[41]

Staying sickness is one facet of O'odham *himdag*. O'odham *himdag* was the reason the O'odham lived a prosperous and fulfilling life pre-invasion. O'odham *himdag* (cultural path/way) was comprised of native beliefs and how one interacted with the ghosts associated with the *wigita* (ceremony for world renewal), *gohimeli* (rain dance), *dahiwa k i:* (sit and drink) "as well as individual rites of power acquisition, including salt pilgrimages, eagle killing, warfare exploits (scalping enemies), the shamanic arts of diagnosis and cure, and sorcery."[42] The O'odham lived well before the European invasion. The O'odham attained a balance by utilizing the teachings of I'itoi to mitigate the darker side of human nature. Following O'odham himdag led to a surplus of both goods and freedom for the O'odham people. The first European to explore the O'odham land was Fray Marcos de Niza in 1539. De Niza described the region as prosperous, with complex irrigation systems and agriculture. When visiting the Akimel O'odham, he wrote, "I came upon a village verdant with vegetation and irrigated…They were very well dressed…and wore double string of turquoises around their necks."[43] They also had an abundance of food and resources because, "They brought me [De Niza] a big pile of

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[40] Amadea Rea, *Wings in the Desert: A Folk Ornithology of the Northern Pimans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 47.
[41] Rea, *Wings in the Desert*, 47.
[42] David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez, *Devil Sickness and devil Songs: Tohono O'odham poetics* (Washington D.C: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), 67.
[43] Marcos and Bonaventure. *His Own Personal Narrative of Arizona Discovered* (Topowa, Arizona, 1940), 4.

venison, rabbit and quail with corn and pine nuts. They also offered me many turquoises, buffalo hides, some very beautiful artefacts and other things."[44] De Niza then assessed the land the O'odham occupied; he said, "The valley itself is so well stocked with provisions that more than three hundred horsemen could subsist there. It is all under irrigation and presents the appearance of one immense garden. The rancherias are but one quarter to one half league distant from each other."[45] The beauty and abundance of the O'odham land are evident. However, what is even more evident is that the devil, angels, and demons came with the arrival of the Spaniards.

In 1687, when the first Jesuit priests entered the O'odham Nation, they recognized the power of the ghosts, or spiritual beings, that occupied the landscape. The missionaries wished to strip the O'odham of their ghosts and replace them with angels and demons. One of these missionaries, Philip Segesser, thought the O'odham were ignorant beasts. In a letter to his brother in 1732, Segesser stated, "I find myself in a country where no reasoning person is to be found for many miles, but heathens aplenty and without number, who, if the Christian faith did not command otherwise, could be taken for unreasoning cattle instead of men."[46] Another Jesuit, Father Ignaz Pfefferkorn, writing from the early eighteenth-century, noted something similar when attempting to describe the O'odham as a people, "[i]magine a person who possess all customary qualities which

[44] De Niza, *His Own Personal*, 4.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Philipp Segesser and Raymond H Thompson, *A Jesuit Missionary in Eighteenth-Century Sonora The Family Correspondence of Philipp Segesser* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2014) 149.

make one disgusting, base, and contemptible…such is the true picture of a Sonoran."[47] These passages highlighted the contempt many of these men of God had for the Indians that surrounded them. They by no means thought of the O'odham as human, yet they feared the *makai* (O'odham medicine men/women). However, these priests also captured, in ink, some of the best qualities characterized by O'odham people. Teachings that had been handed down from creation to help guide the O'odham into the future.

Found in the archive are O'odham qualities such as kindness, respect, and health. Acting in accordance with protocols assured the ghosts would look after the O'odham in both life and death. Juan Mateo Manje, the soldier who often accompanied Father Eusebio Francisco Kino in his exploration of the *Papaguería* and *Pimeria Alta*, wrote that the O'odham "are liberals, even if they are poor. No one who arrives at their settlements and houses, be he relative or stranger, will suffer."[48] Hospitality is a tradition still kept alive on the reservation today. This hospitality results from the set of beliefs ingrained from creation to treat all things with respect and dignity or befall a sickness on oneself, or possibly the entire community. The apparent outcome of living a life this way is that there is nothing to fear, no guilt, nothing to regret when death approaches. Ignaz Pfefferkorn witnessed this first hand, for when an O'odham dies "no person can be more quiet, tranquil and unmoved at his departure from life."[49] Pfefferkorn noted the behavior

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[47] Ignaz Pfefferkorn, *Sonora: A Description of the Province* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), 166.

[48] Juan Mateo Manje, Fernández del Castillo, Francisco, and Karns, Harry J. *Unknown Arizona and Sonora, 1693-1721; from the Francisco Fernández Del Castillo Version of Luz de Tierra Incógnita.* (Tucson: Arizona Silhouettes, 1954),243.

[49] Pfefferkorn, *Sonora: A Description of the Province* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), 221.

of the O'odham and reported, that when an O'odham dies "he does not complain about his pains; he does not sob; he shows not the least sign of fear; and he views his end with serenity."[50] Pfefferkorn witnessed something truly "serene" and "tranquil," when life is lived in accordance to the spirit realm death is only another step closer to that place. Within the O'odham world the people believed that when one dies "[t]he souls of the dead went east, escorted by their ancestors, who came for the dying man in the shape of owls."[51] What Pfefferkorn witnessed was this process deeply engrained into the O'odham culture. The spirit of ancestors among the O'odham greeted and guided the deceased into the afterlife.

Pfefferkorn also noted in amazement the health of pregnant O'odham women. Because pregnant O'odham are cared for by the spirits watching over their babies. "From pregnancy to the last days before birth, the Sonora woman have not the least anxiety about their unborn. They avoid neither danger nor heavy exertions yet rarely does an unlucky birth occur. The birth of a dead or deformed child is extremely rare."[52] The healthy diet and strict restrictions placed on the father and pregnant woman created serenity for the pregnant woman. According to Tribal norms, prospective fathers and mothers had dietary regulations and circumspect what they could witness. Norms are put in place by the creator to ensure a baby's healthy birth. These restrictions were critical in mitigating stress on the pregnant woman, which studies have recently shown do have

[50] Pfefferkorn, *Sonora: A Description of the Province*, 172.
[51] Amadea M. Rea, *Wings in the Desert: A Folk Ornithology of the Northern Pimans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007),178
[52] Pfefferkorn, *Sonora: A Description of the Province* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989) 187.

consequences for the fetus. As psychologist Mary E. Coussons-Read wrote, “epigenetic studies have shown that stressful prenatal events experienced by mothers, such as abuse by one’s intimate partner, poverty, and food insecurity, have enduring effects on their infants’ physiology, and that prenatal and early-childhood stress can set the stage for lasting psychological and health challenges.”[53] Coussons-Read pointed out that “interventions” need to be developed “to reduce maternal stress, alleviative the maladaptive biological changes that may be associated with it, and, ultimately, improve birth outcomes.”[54] As will be further argued, O'odham traditions and staying medicine are such interventions. In tribal societies, the people depended on a healthy birthrate. The future of the tribe's existence depended upon it. Breaking any of these restrictions for the O'odham could result in specific sicknesses imbued onto the child, making the mother and father sick, and lay dormant, manifesting later in its life. The O'odham people emerged from the desert with their ways of knowing that protected their health and social cohesion and appeared unimaginable to Europeans. The O'odham had preserved these cultural ways, in part, by the work of the O'odham *makai,* or medicine people. These men and women contributed to O'odham “intellectual life both as principal heroic type celebrated in popular song and poetry and as the main source for critical reflection on

[53] Mary E. Coussons-Read, “The Psychoneuroimmunology of Stress in Pregnancy,” *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 21, No. 5 (2012), 326.

[54] Mary E. Coussons-Read, “The Psychoneuroimmunology of Stress in Pregnancy,” Current Directions in Psychological Science, Vol. 21, No. 5 (October 2012), 327.

social issues."[55]

In her book, Papago Indian Religion, anthropologist Ruth Underhill described the makai as "primarily a diviner and prophet. He 'saw' the date of the first summer storm, the outcome of games, the whereabouts of the enemy, or the cause of disease."[56] Catholics and other missionaries often addressed the makai when referring to O'odham people. In some sense, the *makai* and the missionaries were fighting over which ghosts or spirits held sway over the O'odham consciousness. As Juan Antonio Balthasar, Padre Visatador to the Sonora frontier, noted, "There are many and powerful medicine men here and they slay one another. The missionaries who have resided here have become bewitched and it was necessary to withdraw them before they should die."[57] The priests often did not understand what they witnessed but understood the potential power sufficiently to know they had to eliminate them because they challenged the power of the church. For certain *makai* had the power to heal or harm individuals.

Ignaz Pfefferkorn described an O'odham *makai* showing the villagers objects which the villagers and Spaniards both feared. Pfefferkorn described how the *makai* bragged that they "have received from *muhaptura* [murderer] the power to make everybody sick or well, to plague people with all kinds of misfortune, and even to kill them in the most horrible manner at will."[58] To give weight to their bragging the *makai*

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[55] Donald Bahr, "Pima and Papago Medicine and Philosophy," in *Handbook of North American Indians* vol. 10, (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 193.
[56] Ruth Underhill, *Papago Indian Religion*, (New York: AMS Press, 1969), 263.
[57] Peter Masten Dunne and Juan Antonio Baltasar, Juan *Antonio Balthasar, Padre Visitador to the Sonora Frontier, 1744-1745; Two Original Reports* (Tucson: Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society, 1957),78.
[58] Pfefferkorn, *Sonora: A Description of the Province, 227*

showed people different kinds of “pebbles, sand, herbs, the bark of trees, pieces of wood marked with different figures, hair, feathers, coals, and more such stuff.”[59] Pfefferkorn witnessed objects imbued with great power for O’odham people, which made no sense to Pfefferkorn. The *makai* were correct. These natural objects indeed had the power to sicken or heal, a reality for O’odham people. Ethnobiologist and ornithologist Amadea Rea had worked in the O’odham community for over thirty years, and he recalled the contents of a medicine box belonging to ritual healer Frank Jim: “There were mammal parts such as badger foot, Mule Deer tail, feathers of certain birds, small carved objects, twisted twigs, rattlesnake rattles, shells, even some stones.”[60] Rea’s description of these sacred and powerful objects appeared similar to those found in Pfefferkorn’s description over 270 years before Rea provided his account. Imbued in these objects was a ghostly power. Although Pfefferkorn dismissed the *makai* as “imposters,” his fellow Jesuit experienced otherwise.

In a letter to his brother dated May 7, 1734, Jesuit priest Philip Segesser described his “painful and even dangerous illness.”[61] For five months, he suffered from an illness in which he was admittedly “not far from death.”[62] Many O’odham people attributed Segesser’s illness to an old *hechicero* or medicine man. Today, there is no way to diagnose Segesser’s illness through his writings, but one possibility is that it may have

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[59] Ibid.
[60] Amadeo M Rea, *Folk Mammalogy of the Northern Pimans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998), 34.
[61] Segesser, *A Jesuit Missionary in Eighteenth-Century Sonora The Family Correspondence of Philipp Segesser* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2014) 163.
[62] Ibid.

had a ghostly origin, although this would be an O'odham interpretation of illness considerably. *Cukuḍ mumkidag* or owl/ghost sickness[63] "Owl-ghost may be involved in sorcery as well as the more conventional forms…of staying sickness. This sickness may be caused when a bad shaman…supposedly plants a disease-causing agent (such as human bone or owl feather) around the persons house."[64] The symptoms of *cukuḍ mumkidag* included sleepiness, dizziness, heart palpitations, and a steady prolonged loss of "flesh."[65] Eventually, the man responsible for Segesser's sickness turned himself in, and the authorities brought him before Segesser at the mission of Los Santos Reyes de Cucurpe in the *Pimería Alta*. Segesser related what happened next to his brother: "this old Indian acknowledged freely without evasion that he wanted to kill me."[66] When asked for what reason, "he gave his answer that the devil had commanded him to do it."[67] The *makai* was imprisoned and Segesser "had a very restless evening, according to this account, in the middle of the night; "I [Segesser] felt a blow on the heart and an exceedingly bitter thing coming out of my mouth."[68] An object came out of Segesser's mouth, and it was the size of a pea. Segesser attributed this to "remote causality." Segesser's health improved from that night forth. Segesser admitted to his brother, "Even today I cannot understand how it was possible that the wizard cast out of his mouth what

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[63] In the O'odham language, *cukuḍ* can refer to an owl or ghost, and *mumkidag* means sickness.
[64] Rea, *Wings in the Desert: A Folk Ornithology of the Northern Pimans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 181. This had to be how Segesser contracted his sickness because non-O'odham cannot contract staying sickness, it had to be the work of a Makai.
[65] Rea, Wings, 181.
[66] Segesser, *A Jesuit Missionary,* 164.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Segesser, *A Jesuit Missionary*, 164.

he had magically put into my body…be that as it may; from that point on I improved."[69] Although the priests had written off the *makai* as imposters, powerless, Segesser admitted the shaman had caused and cured the sickness. No doubt, the *makai* displayed his power as a means of demonstrating his ability. Further, the *makai* used the incident as a warning to the newcomers to respect O'odham ceremonial life.

There are two interesting facets of Segesser's seemingly miraculous experience. One, that the Indian admitted that the devil commanded him to kill Segesser. Two, the reference to "the blow on the heart," that Segesser felt. First, the blow to the heart Ignaz Pfefferkorn had documented elsewhere, as Pfefferkorn described, "They [ritual healers] apply a tube [made from a feather] to the afflicted part of the patient. Through this tube they will either blow with all their might, asserting that they will dispose the evil with this blast, or they suck the air in, saying that they have pulled the sickness out of the body in this way."[70] Donald Bahr addressed this action by shaman in his work with the O'odham shaman Juan Gregario. Bahr witnessed the act of "blowing to persuade a spirit [or ghost] to stop causing sickness or to introduce breath into the patient's body, thus curing sickness."[71] Gregario explained to Bahr that the shamans appealed to ghosts to stop causing the sickness. Captain Juan Mateo Manje had his own encounter with shamanistic healing. In 1701 he wrote, "The Indians esteem those who cure the sick either by smoking or by blowing, especially who have been injured by witchcraft."[72]

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[69] Ibid, 165.
[70] Pfefferkorn, *Sonora: A Description,* 221.
[71] Donald M. Bahr, Gregorio, Juan., Alvarez, Albert., and Lopez, David I. *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness (Ká:cim Múmkidag)* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), 221
[72] Manje, *Unknown Arizona and Sonora,* 245.

Before his sickness and cure, Segesser had witnessed a similar act of blowing medicine, saying, "The devil puts a horrid substance in their mouth or stomach, which these servants of the devil later on…blow into the bodies of those they wish to hurt by means of little tubes made of feathers. They then die a few days later in great pain…I have seen all this with my own eyes and have assisted many on their deathbeds."[73] Just two years later, a shaman saved Segesser with this same type of medicine ways, medicine which he attributed to the devil.[74] Segesser reported a shapeshifting devil operating within the O'odham community that "killed more than forty in my [Segesser's] mission last winter."[75]

According to accounts, the devil previously commanded Segesser's death. Pfefferkorn wrote that the O'odham knew of the devil and called him *muhaptura* (murderer).[76] *Muhaptura* is a derivative of O'odham words. The intransitive verb *mu:,* means to die, be paralyzed or faint.[77] However, contemporary O'odham people use the term *jiawul* for the devil, which is a cognate of diablo, of course, influenced by the Spanish and Catholic church. Significantly, the concept of a malevolent god or spirit named *muhaptura* existed prior to the arrival of Spanish missionaries, and the devil continued to play an essential role in disease causations within O'odham society. What

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[73] Segesser, *A Jesuit Missionary*, 152.
[74] Segesser describes many more priests coming down with mysterious illnesses, he mentions Johan Grafzhofer. Grafzhofer was rumored to be killed by poison, but no substantial proof was given.
[75] Segesser, *A Jesuit Missionary,* 152.
[76] Pfefferkorn, *Sonora: A Description*, 226.
[77] David L Kozak and David I. Lopez, *Devil Sickness and devil Songs: Tohono O'odham poetics* (Washington D.C: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), 91.

Pfefferkorn described was likely a specific type of spirit with which the O'odham *makai* communicated. *Muhaptura* was not the Christian devil but a spirit that visited when humans were closest to a "death" or unconscious state. The spirit visit always happened on the spirit's time. Contemporary O'odham believed these ghosts are usually dead O'odham that demonstrated remarkable power in life, which granted them a different kind of burial. Jesuit Ignaz Pfefferkorn described one such O'odham burial, saying "[t]he body [was] lowered into the grave in an upright position…covered with a roof…a vessel full of pinole, a jug of water, weapons and whatever else the dead person had used in his life were placed in a pit beside the body."[78] The burial described by Pfefferkorn was not a traditional burial. In *The Pima Indians,* Frank Russell explained that during a typical burial "relatives cover the face of the corpse and bind the body in a bundle, with the legs drawn up [fetal position]…Now a round hole is dug to a depth of 5 or 6 feet, then a small chamber is scooped out to the west side… with the head to the south. Billets of wood are then placed so as to lean against the roof over the body, so that in filling in the grave no earth falls upon it."[79] Russell also noted that "Medicine-men are buried in a sitting position, and in several instances, have been buried in isolated places which have acquired special sacredness."[80] The people ritually burned the personal property and home of the deceased. Only a *makai* would be buried with his or her personal items. Ethnohistorian, Daniel T. Reff explained, "If an O'odham man or woman demonstrated an unusual ability to see and communicate with forces and beings that seemingly inhabit

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[78] Pfefferkorn, *Sonora: A Description,* 223.
[79] Frank Russell, *The Pima Indians*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975), 193.
[80] Russell, *The Pima Indians*, 153.

a parallel universe," the O'odham ritually buried these people in the sitting position and "at various times of the year…O'odham would visit the deceased, bringing gifts and sustenance and requesting advice and help with important undertakings."[81] One can only speculate as to why this particular ghost wanted Segesser dead, but in the end, the *makai* possibly spared his life. However, from the beginning of their interactions, the priests violently opposed the work of the *makai*.

The *makai* worked to keep the spiritual core of O'odham *himdag* (culture or way of being) intact during the times of significant change brought by the Spanish, Mexican and American rule. The O'odham took parts of the Catholic religion, that which was valuable and relevant to O'odham existence while fighting to discard the most destructive elements of the European cosmology. Although Indigenous spiritual leaders "might argue that the Catholic religion was false… they recognized that the symbols and ceremonies of the religion were imbued with power."[82] The *makai* and priest dealt in the realm of the spiritual power, a language mutually intelligible by both. If the priests had not been hell-bent on colonization and conversion, seeing the devil in every song and ceremony, a peaceful exchange of spiritual ideas could had been the result. The Catholic priests did not embrace shamanism and viewed the *makai* as a threat to the church and the presence of missionaries. Through colonization, Europeans outlawed and limited O'odham access

[81] Daniel T. Reff, "Sympathy for the Devil: Devil Sickness and Lore Among the Tohono O'odham," *Journal of the Southwest* 50, no. 4 (December 1, 2008), 367.
[82] Robert Cristian Perez, "Indian Rebellions in Northwestern New Spain a Comparative Analysis, 1695-1750's" (University of California, Riverside, Ph.D. Dissertation in History, 2003), 88-89.

to medicines “certain plants…beverages…and practices…were labeled as barbaric and satanic,” which resulted in the loss of access to the spirit world.”[83]

It was not barbarism or Satan from which O’odham spiritual power stemmed. Instead, the power flowed from the *jeweḍ ka:cim* or staying earth. “Staying earth is more than physical geography…The staying earth is both sacred and profane and delineates the perceptual and physical boundaries of the universe.”[84] This is the power the *makai* wielded, the energy that pervaded the O’odham land from creation. “Power is impersonal, a great unknown force pervading earth.”[85] O’odham people had always known that songs, ceremony, and dreams offered medicine ways to commune with this power.

For the O’odham, dreams held special significance. The Creator imagined all things in the beginning. So, the spirit or way is rooted in the past, handed down through songs and dreams.[86] The O’odham often dreamt songs, given by ghosts, because “ghosts speak in the language of dreams.”[87] Also, they love and are attracted to songs about them. Many diverse Native American groups that occupy this continent have differing belief systems and creation stories, given to them by their Creator, including their own "Original Instructions" about being human and acting according to tribal mores.

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[83] Perez, “Indian Rebellions,” 67-68.
[84] Rebecca Crocker, “Healing on the Edge: The Construction of Medicine on the Jesuit Frontier of Northern New Spain.” *Journal of the Southwest* 56, no. 2 (July 1, 2014), 300.
[85] Ruth Underhill, *Singing for Power: The Song Magic of the Papago Indians of Southern Arizona* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993), 13.
[86] Kozak; Lopez, *Devil Sickness and devil Songs: Tohono O’odham poetics, 9.*
[87] Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters Haunting and the Sociological Imagination,* (University of Minnesota Press ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 127.

However, what all Native Americans do have in common is that every song, every tradition, and ceremony has a specific purpose linked to creation and that unknown power pervading the earth. As Apache scholar and historian, Robert Perez said, "The laws, history, scientific knowledge and religious texts of the people were encoded in a complex web of song and dance."[88] The priests worked hard to eradicate Native ceremonies, customs and language to place a barrier between the O'odham and their creation legacy. Priests attempted an assassination of a culture.

After the Spanish Crown expelled the Jesuits in 1767, the Franciscan order soon took their place. The Franciscans remained in the missions initially during the Mexican period until 1822. In 1846, the United States invaded California and the Southwest, claiming hegemony over the Southwest and the first peoples of southern Arizona. During these transition periods, ceremonies became even more critical to the O'odham because "Ceremonies allowed people to access a whole differently level of reality. In this sacred state, the spiritual leaders would attempt to rally resistance against the sickness of the Spanish system."[89] These transition periods led to an accumulation of ghosts, for the Odham could not always follow proper burial protocols in these trying times. Whenever a new empire laid claim to O'odham lands, the modus operandi was always the same: attacking O'odham spirituality and the makai that defended it. The ramifications of this spiritual warfare continued into the twentieth-century, with a new handmaid, the racial-capitalist nation state.

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[88] Perez, "Indian Rebellions," 147.
[89] Ibid, 89.

History is not a linear process. Moreover, the O'odham concept of time is not linear, and the past always exerts itself on the present. In a letter written on December 11, 1916, from Father Bonaventure Oblasser, at the Mission San Xavier del Bac, addressed to the Superintendent of the Sells Indian Agency, Jewell D. Martin, the correspondence demonstrated the coordination of church and state working together to indoctrinate O'odham children, to baptize them in the intoxicating waters of nationalism. Americanism is a new religion and a tool used to strip the *makai* of their spiritual power. In the letter, the most significant impediment towards this goal: "Our main trouble consists in the opposition of the medicine men, esp. Pinto of Cababi, Tapio of Novia & Palsisk of San Luis. These men are violently opposed to schools & in fact to all Government policies, as past records show."[90] These three men, now ghosts to history, their story of resistance never heard. The outcome of the continued persecution of O'odham healers and medicine men/women: communication with that ghostly realm declined. However, the ghosts continued to speak, now through the archive.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the United States entered the picture, wishing to erase the ghosts of the O'odham forever and replace them with science, cold and sterile. The 1854 Gadsden purchase officially put some members of the O'odham nation under the flag of the United States of America. The dawn of the twentieth century ushered in a time of boarding schools, tuberculosis, and technology. These new settlers further erased the belief in ghosts, and a sharp decline in the stories of influential spiritual leaders, exercising their great power dwindled. The United States used science as means to render

[90] National Archives at Riverside, RG75, Box 10, Education: Catholic Mission Day Schools.

all that falls outside the empirical as superstition. Ignoring the fact that Native peoples have always had science, only not separated from the spiritual and the land, this knowledge got hijacked by Government educators, medical doctors, and Christian missionaries and then used as a tool against Native ways of knowing. One can imagine a possible future where Native epistemologies and Western technology fused working in sync: yet another possibility, a ghost of time.

Brenda Leibowitz correctly pointed out the "varieties of harm generated by Western enlightenment knowledge, which affects the colonized and oppressed as well as the colonizers and privileged."[91] One of Leibowitz's ideas to countering this violence, is alternative approaches to knowledge. An "ecology of knowledges" recognized various forms of knowledge existing side by side, without a hierarchy of value.[92] Recognizing Indigenous ways of knowing, incorporating stories, land, animals, and ghosts as sources of knowledge. A liberating act, what Native Hawaiian scholar Manu Aluli Meyer called "Other-intellectualism."[93] Or the rejection of western intellectualism, which postulated all knowledge comes from empirical sources.[94] Those that are colonized must train themselves to think "outside the Western epistemology as it is not possible to think from the cannon of Western philosophy, even when part of the canon is critical to modernity. To do so means to reproduce the blind epistemic ethnocentrism that makes difficult, if

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[91] Brenda Leibowitz, "Power, knowledge and Learning: Dehegemonising Colonial Knowledge." *Alternation 24*(2) (2017), 99.
[92] Leibowitz, "Power, knowledge and Learning," 109.
[93] Manu Aluli Meyer, "Acultural Assumptions of Empiricism: A Native Hawaiian Critique. *Canadian Journal of Native Education 25*(2) (2001), 190.
[94] Meyer, "Acultural Assumptions of Empiricism," 190.

not impossible, any political philosophy of inclusion.”’[95] Even though O’odham himdag is not about returning to a “pure” idealized past, so too, “other-intellectualism” is not about returning to a time before colonization. Instead, it is about embracing various ways of knowing/being in this world to creating a better future. Traditional knowledge is a tool, just as reason, objectivity and science have been used as tools to “help, heal, and kill.”[96] This ethnogenesis of O’odham culture will reclaim the ghosts that haunt the American empire and help the people put the pieces of their culture back together again.

Focusing on certain O’odham traditions pertaining to warfare will help clarify how ghosts healed and created a cohesive community through mental health. O’odham traditions resulted in coming to terms with the ghosts created by war. The O’odham never took acts of war lightly. When the O’odham went to war, leaders planned the conflict, and every person willingly accepted the need and participation. The level of self-control O’odham warriors displayed in battle resulted from training, tradition, and a worldview passed down through countless generations. Although each step in the process of battle had its purpose, the end result was healing. When an O’odham killed an enemy, the warrior left the battlefield immediately or risked getting a sickness. The sickness, possibly a form of post-traumatic stress disorder, that is part of taking life can completely consume and destroy one’s community.

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[95] Leibowitz, “Power, knowledge and Learning,” 112.

[96] Meyer, “Acultural Assumptions of Empiricism: A Native Hawaiian Critique,” *Canadian Journal of Native Education 25*(2) (2001), 189.

The O'odham had an elaborate system in place to stop such sicknesses, which involved the enemy ghosts and dreams. Killing an enemy "put a man in touch with supernatural power which could destroy him unless he fasted and dreamed in order to learn to handle it."[97] Again, dreams are very important to the O'odham. Dreams are a "natural and normal means of communication with the spirit world, and as being caused by Darkness or Night," during dreams the soul wandered away.[98] After a battle, the O'odham warriors burned war booty, and the warrior only took a scalp or trophy. Upon return to the village, warriors that "killed an enemy or been wounded by him had to go through long ordeal of purification."[99] Community members separated the warrior and his family not to contaminate others until a *makai* exorcised the enemy's power from them. Then, the warrior and his family fasted and dreamed, which aided in the healing.[100] The warrior that had killed an enemy in battle fasted and dreamed of drawing down or eliminating their post-traumatic stress syndrome, a sickness that had the potential to spread to the entire community. O'odham people believed "such things were thought to be akin to the madness of war and the warrior who had power over such madness could cure them."[101] So, victory over an enemy resulted in the "acquisition of power, not for war, but for curing."[102] The end result of purification during a warrior's separation or

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[97] Ruth Underhill, *Social Organization of the Papago Indians,* (New York: AMS Press, 1969), 136.
[98] Russel, *The Pima Indians*, 253.
[99] Underhill, *Social Organization*, 128.
[100] Psychoanalyst are now experimenting with dreams as a means to heal emotional disorders. See Vine Deloria's, *The Metaphysics of Modern Existence*.
[101] Underhill, *Social Organization*, 138.
[102] Ibid, 128.

isolation after battle resulted in the ritual adoption of the enemy ghost into the tribe. The O'odham believed the enemy's scalp had great power, and those who did not treat it as a relative, giving it food and offerings, could be harmed. If not treated correctly, scalp sickness resulted, a specific type of staying sickness, which manifested and caused insanity.[103] This process of war, dreaming, purification, and adoption of the enemy spirit was an arduous process experienced by the entire family of the warrior. The O'odham took violence, war, and healing seriously, for the ghosts of the enemy had animacy and agency in the afterlife, deserved respect, and could cause illness. Following proper tribal protocols ensured that the mental health of the tribe was protected. Post-traumatic stress could be a terrible byproduct of war, yet the O'odham had a prescribed process to deal with this problem, which ensured the health and cohesion of the entire community. In addition, these protocols prevented the spread of staying sickness.

When an O'odham became infected by one or more of these staying sicknesses, a family calls for a *makai* to diagnose and treat the sickness.[104] Once the *makai* identified the specific type of sickness, the *makai* attempted to cure the patient by blowing, as described by Segesser and Pfefferkorn earlier. Also, *makai* used fetishes associated with the specific illness during the initial curing session. When the strength of a dangerous spirit became too great, "[t]he strength is considered to be under control of a spirit who

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[103] Rea, *Wings in the Desert*, 182.

[104] The O'odham believe that one can contract more than one of these sicknesses. They get layered, one upon the other. It is even possible to contract a sickness while in the mother's womb. An example of this is cow sickness, if a parent of an unborn baby looks at a cow being slaughtered for fiesta, the unborn baby is susceptible to the sickness. The child could be born and fail to show any signs of sickness until older.

will lift it only upon hearing a 'blowing' song."[105] Only the ghost had the power to lift the sickness from the patient. The makai knew medicine songs and rituals that influenced the spirit to give up their strength causing the illness. The makai then called a ritual healer that intervened to address the specific illness. Ritual healers used potent songs to initiate curing, and multiple singers involved in the healing ceremony amplified the potency of the treatment. The ghost became the most critical part of a healing ceremony, not the patient. In the O'odham world, the ghost or spirit holds the key to a successful outcome. The ritual healers directed the set of curing songs to ghosts, not the patient. Songs, then, formed a fundamental part of the healing process, and healing occurred.[106]

There are multiple theories regarding the way songs cured the patient. Anthropologist David Kozak, believed that through song an "allegorical connection [is] made between shaman and patient."[107] According to Kozak, during the curing song the "patient is invited to live or experience vicariously what the shaman or curer experiences, in his or her shamanic dream-journeys. Through the vicarious experience, an abreaction is induced in the patient, thereby effecting cure."[108] This scenario is unlikely. Patients rarely understand all the song sets, one because songs are very long, sometimes lasting all night, and two, healing songs are ancient, passed down from time immemorial and, the O'odham language used in the songs are archaic. Some words and phrases found in

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[105] Bahr and Haefer, "Song in Piman Curing," 91.
[106] I am not going into detail about the specifics of curing song sets and the ritual that surrounds them. This is a very private experience and both Donald Bahr and David Kozak have documented these sessions at length in their respective books. My purpose is to get to the meaning/purpose of these traditions and their material outcomes.
[107] Kozak; Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*, 5.
[108] Ibid.

healing songs are no longer part of the O'odham language used today, thus rendering large parts of the songs intelligible to the patient. Bahr recognized this issue, saying, "Piman song is almost another language for these people, as its differences from the spoken form are almost enough to render songs incomprehensible on first hearing."[109] Bahr then explained the curing effects of song through a western scientific lens. He speculated that the song's "long range effect is to initiate the patient into a lasting relation with the 'way' of the 'dangerous object,' a process analogous to depth psychology's emphasis on making the patient aware of a hitherto unknown influence on his behavior."[110] For Bahr, the long-range goal of shamanistic song and ceremony was not necessarily to rid the sickness and return the patient to before the sickness, "good as new again," but to transform the patient into a different person altogether.[111] The ceremony sought to change the patient forever, thereby addressing the physical or mental symptoms which would clear up after a successful curing session. The healing ceremony ultimately removed the strength causing the illness and taught the patient to recognize and avoid one's transgression. Unfortunately, Bahr's and Kozak's analyses ignored the ghosts involved in disease causation.

When witnessing a ritual curing, Bahr admitted that O'odhams "rationalize" the source of the cure. Bahr stated that curing songs "do not succeed because of potency vested in the curers but because spiritual causal agent responds to curer's actions and rids

[109] Bahr; Haefer, "Song in Piman Curing," 119.
[110] Ibid, 120.
[111] Ibid.

the patient of his symptoms…Maximal curing involves landscape of the spirits."[112] This ghostly landscape is what the O'odham believed to be the cause and cure, in that the *gewkdag* transgressed is the spirit of the object and the curer healed by tapping into the spirit realm of the *jewed ka:cim*. There is no abreaction between healer and patient, and there is no "unknown influence" trapped in their subconscious. Anthropologist Rebecca Crocker more aptly described the relationship between health and spirituality amongst Indians, "The maintenance of bodily health among Native societies of the [Spanish] northwestern frontier was deeply intertwined with spirituality and the interconnectedness of all people to each other and their spiritual and physical environments."[113] Crocker also stated, "Theorists of modern medicine and science, though thought to be purely scientific and thus rational and neutral, is indeed culturally constructed."[114] Thus, removing the ghostly element from O'odham health does not accurately portray the true meaning of the causes and cures involved in staying medicine.

One specific type of staying sickness is *Jiawul mumkidag* or devil sickness. *Jiawul mumkidag* is associated with cattle ranching and rodeos. Some scholars recognized *Jiawul mumkidag* as one of the more recent forms of staying sickness. Jesuit invaders introduced cattle and horses to the O'odham in the seventeenth-century century. By the mid to late-nineteenth century, cattle ranching and rodeos became an integral part of O'odham life. The O'odham community currently holds annual rodeos in Sells,

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[112] Bahr et. al., *Piman Shamanism,* 219.
[113] Crocker, "Healing on the Edge," 307.
[114] Ibid, 305.

Arizona, and a national Indian rodeo competition is held annually in Las Vegas, in which many O'odham attend.

Kozak theorized that *jiawul mumkidag* emerged with the arrival of capitalism in the nineteenth century. However, this is an oversimplification, as the O’odham were well aware of the effects of capital accumulation on society and the environment. For “if one reads the archeological literature pertaining to the O'odham homeland (northwestern Mexico and south-central and southwestern Arizona) several centuries before Columbus, one is immediately struck by the relative complexity of native life, which included social stratification differential access to ‘wealth’ (e.g., turquoise, cotton, residences).”[115] Knowledge about wealth and social stratification were passed down since the time of the Hohokam and possibly longer. As stated earlier, for the O’odham, everything was imagined by the creator initially. The spirit or way is rooted in the past, handed down through songs and dreams.[116] While consulting with Kozak, O’odham John Lewis said, “airplanes were imagined by the creator in the beginning, although never built by the O’odham.”[117] Still Kozak failed to recognize the fact that the “devils have always resided alongside all other spirits.”[118] A more accurate evaluation of devil sickness comes from historian Daniel Reff, in that the “O’odham devil way evolved prior to European contact and subsequently was reworked to deal with colonial-period realities.”[119]

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[115] Reff, “Sympathy for the Devil,” 359.
[116] Kozak; Lopez, *Devil Sickness*, 9.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid, 8.
[119] Reff, “Sympathy for the Devil,” 358.

An O'odham person contracted jiawul mumkidag when s/he transgressed the cowboy or devil way. The improper slaughtering of cattle, not sharing money or food for fiestas with the tribe could result in devil sickness. The O'odham believed these "devils" were cowboys who lived in the mountains. O'odham cowboys in the form of ghosts caused the sickness, and they also cured the sickness. The O'odham already had a word for ghost (*cukud*), but the devils are seen as another ghost type and given the title devil. The title devil could have originated from how these ghosts were communicated with and interacted with living O'odham. O'odham ghosts traditionally traveled east after death to live, although they could return to visit family. These cowboy devils are more likely associated with the makai that the O'odham buried in a seated position, that would then be visited, given offerings, and asked for advice.[120] As discussed earlier, Segesser encountered a devil that wanted him dead. Though, this is hard to confirm since priests usually perceived any spiritual communication between Indians and the ghostly realm as devil worship.

Jiawul mumkidag was given to the O'odham to stop the "destruction/mismanagement of the environment."[121] Cattle ranching had the potential to be the most environmentally destructive activity practiced on O'odham land. With the European invaders came disease and a style of warfare never experienced by the O'odham people. For the O'odham, this became the hell the priests were preaching about, where the devil is king. The O'odham also witnessed the arrival of European animals like

[120] Ibid, 367
[121] Ibid, 364

cattle, pigs, and horses, which destroyed Indigenous food and water sources cultivated and maintained for thousands of years. In the desert, water is an essential resource. Although the O'odham, like many other tribes, eventually incorporated these same animals into their culture, they were aware of the possible risk involved in their maintenance and economy. Therefore, O'odham devil way may have been given this title due to its potential to destroy both the environment and society, like experienced by the Hohokam before. As Kozak pointed out, the O'odham may have perceived the Jesuit Priests as "king devils" or cattle barons.[122] The only other reference for this potentially destructive way was the Hohokam.

Before contact with Europeans, the O'odham experienced the destructive elements of Hohokam society. The Hohokam had a "social conflict between priests and populace…described in oral tradition [that] was regarded as unacceptable…conflict was identified with the increasing power and abuse of power, of the priests."[123] And the "people of the Southwest chose to abandon further development of the social and economic hierarchy associated with large scale agriculture."[124] The devil had the most potential for evil, manifested by the increased power for some and the environmental destruction from large-scale agriculture. For O'odham, "evil is anything that violates the balance or reciprocity that binds all creation. Evil is a state of being, not a being itself."[125] Therefore, ghosts are not inherently evil. The response against this current evil was the

[122] Kozak; Lopez, *Devil Sickness,* 96.
[123] Lynn S. Teague, "Prehistory and the Traditions of the O'odham and Hopi," *KIVA* 58, no. 4 (January 1, 1993), 451.
[124] Teague, "Prehistory and the Traditions of the O'odham and Hopi," 451.
[125] Reff, "Sympathy for the Devil," 368.

same as in the past. The response to religious hierarchy in O'odham "prehistory" was the "preservation of cultural values centered on social harmony achieved by minimizing social and economic equality."[126] This was achieved through the use and expansion of staying medicine.

In the end, *jiawul kulani* is an ancient tradition meant to combat greed. Or, as Reff so eloquently puts it, "the great achievement of the Tohono O'odham is that they have succeeded at controlling greed where many others have failed."[127] O'odham devils know that greed had the power to consume all and the potential to destroy entire nations. Therefore, it is the devil's task to keep the O'odham cowboys in line. Nevertheless, it is also critical to point out the reality of the situation. As Inéz Talamantez, Apache scholar of Native religion, stated, "These beliefs and practices are a revelation of the origins and everyday experiences of the peoples who, today, consciously maintain much of their ancestors' spiritual, philosophical and psychological values. So, deep are the roots of the behavioral complex underlying human ritual that, at times, not even the ritual specialists comprehend it in totality."[128] O'odham staying medicine is part of a larger tradition of taking in new knowledge and technologies, incorporating what is valuable into O'odham himdag, and discarding the rest. What is real is the ghosts that are always at the center of O'odham knowledge creation, which one cannot untangle from O'odham history itself.

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[126] Teague, "Prehistory and the Traditions of the O'odham and Hopi," 436.
[127] Reff, "Sympathy," 369.
[128] Inés M. Talamantez, "Dance and Ritual in the Study of Native American Religious Traditions." *American Indian Quarterly* 6, no. 3/4 (October 1, 1982), 338.

In a letter to his brother, In May 1734, Father Segesser described a peculiar character who was known to attend O'odham ceremonies and dances. "My headman, the most respected man in the mission, has told me that a person who is clothed like the Spaniards is almost always present at these dances. He talks with them in their language, but they do not know whence he comes."[129] This man was known to foment resistance against the Catholic order. No one knew the man's name, but he spoke the O'odham language- a specter of rebellion. Part of *the jiawul mumkidag* complex is fancy clothes. The O'odham believed the devil dressed in fancy clothes like a Mexican cowboy.[130] One can only speculate who the mysterious man was, but to be sure, communication with the ghostly realm can be an act of rebellion.

So far, the overarching theme explored is O'odham communion with ghosts. Ghosts as causes and curers of sickness, ghosts as sources of knowledge and resistance. The O'odham understood that after death the "soul on its journey must pass through a gap, which is very dangerous…Beyond the gap is the town where the dead live, just as people on earth do."[131] Because of its difficulty to access, dead O'odham relatives would help guide the soul to the town. Once in this town, the "dead can leave…at any time to fly back in a moment in the forms of owls and they come to call the relatives whom they wish to have as companions."[132] An O'odham worldview accepted and embraced the act of haunting as a fundamental and functional part of tribal society.

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[129] Segesser, *A Jesuit Missionary,* 164.
[130] Sturtevant, *Handbook of North American Indians,* vol. 10, 198.
[131] Rea, *Wings in the Desert*, 178.
[132] Ibid.

In a Catholic worldview, all ghosts that communed with the O'odham were perceived as devils and hindered their spiritual domination. In the "modern" world, communication with ghosts is non-scientific superstition. Communion with the ghostly can be an act of rebellion against western empiricism. A threat to the existing order, which demands that what one can know about the universe must be experienced through the five senses. Sociologist Avery Gordon, in his book Ghostly Matters, argued "that haunting can galvanize the middle class, can wrench it from its particular kind of stupor, can shift its investments away from private world of family and work…a profane illumination, is what is required to tear such a veil."[133] Ghosts gave one the ability to acknowledge the invisible. For Native peoples the invisible noose of colonialism is always felt, but never seen. Settler colonialism "is an ongoing horror made invisible by its persistence."[134] The Native American experience is one where the settler, "whose memory becomes history, and whose ideology becomes reason," wills into being Native peoples' reality.[135] Re-centering the importance of ghosts offered an alternative view of history outside the settler versus Indian paradigm.

Native America is filled with the ghosts of slavery and genocide, a history in which "something more" than material forces were at play in the level of "brutal degradations of life and the most acute violations of human destiny."[136] Ghosts can act as a real praxis for change once society "stops fleeing from the recognition of the something

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[133] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 134.
[134] Eve Tuck and C. Ree, "A Glossary of Haunting," *Handbook of Autoethnography,* edited by Stacey Holman Jones, Tony E. Adams, and Carolyn Ellis, (2013), 642.
[135] Ibid, 642.
[136] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters,* 193.

more."[137] A project is needed that acknowledges these ghosts, that communes with them, to create a better future. Therefore, "to fight for the oppressed past is to make this past come alive as the lever for the work of the present: obliterating the sources and conditions that link the violence of what seems finished with the present, ending this history and setting in its place a different future."[138]

A future without ghosts is a bleak one. *I'itoi,* the spiritual Elder Brother to the O'odham, handed down a prophecy that is worth quoting at length here,

And you will not be the ones to kill the staying earth,
I will leave it to them,
and they will do it.
And these will kill the staying earth,
And even if you don't know anything,
And you will just be feeling fine,
and you will see it
when it happens.[139]

The creator gave the O'odham staying medicine at creation, not as a punishment, but as a gift. Staying medicine is a gift that ensured O'odham health and longevity. A tool that made real the fact that everything has animacy and the spiritual directly affects one's material reality. Staying sickness and other O'odham traditions explored have all evolved and adjusted over time as new knowledge and technologies were taken by the community and improved upon, showing the resiliency of a people. O'odham history highlights how staying medicine and other traditions can act as guidance into the future, out from the shadow of another dying empire. An attempt to rebuke and reject Juan Mateo Manje's opinion that O'odham ways, "do not deserve the name of history."[140] It is essential to say

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[137] Ibid, 206
[138] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 66.
[139] "Elder-Brother Shaman's Prophecy," collected by George Herzog from the Gila River Pimas in the 1920s, from Bahr et. al., *Piman Shamanism*, 5.
[140] Manje, *Unknown Arizona and Sonora,* 246.

that not every O'odham believes in staying medicine, the community is diverse, but these and other Native traditions should be explored more thoroughly as an objective means of knowledge production. Native peoples must take back their histories to re-situate the present and thus reshape the future in their own image. Re-introduce the ghost into history to create a better future for all. The author now proposes a project that promotes an ecology of Indigenous epistemologies, working in concert with one another as a decolonizing practice. Every Tribal Nation has traditions that have the power to alter the current course of history and heal the sickness that has taken hold of us all.

Staying medicine is concerned with ghosts and the way humans interact with the spirit world. What cannot be ignored are the lingering ghosts of colonization that live inside settler institutions and the ways Indigenous people interact with them, and how they continue to shape modern notions of sex and sexuality. Staying medicine encapsulates all of O'odham beliefs, including those that some would consider profane.

Next will be an exploration of an O'odham erotic that illuminated the ghosts of settler institutions and how staying medicine has been misinterpreted by scholars and other institutions that helped to stigmatize sex and drug use of O'odham people as a means of control. The next step in the spiritual war waged by Jesuits, then Franciscans, and now the BIA and Presbyterians.

Chapter 2:

Drunken and Dizzy
Toward an O'odham Erotic of Sex, Drugs and Ceremony

Cherokee Two-Spirit scholar Qwo-Li Driskill defined a sovereign erotic as "a return to and/or continuance of the complex realities of gender and sexuality that are ever-present in both the human and more-than-human world, but erased and hidden by colonial cultures."[141] The Tohono O'odham had a complex mental/spiritual state called *nodagig*. It is defined as a sort of "drunken dizziness." Through sex, drugs and ceremony the O'odham accessed this state in order to experience a world invisible to the eye. Through certain ceremonies, where sex and drugs intersected, *nodagig* was achieved.[142] *Nodagig* is the vehicle towards a sovereign erotic, both sacred and profane it signified the release from the imposed moral order of the settler and his institutions.[143] Through the

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[141] Qwo-Li Driskill,"Stolen From Our Bodies: First Nations Two-Spirits/Queers and the Journey to a Sovereign Erotic." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 16, no. 2 (2004), 56-57.

[142] The author is aware that some contemporary Tohono O'odham taking part in such ceremonies would take offense to the notion that sexual acts occurred during these same ceremonies. Therefore, the author is simply using the anthropological records that described what these scholars recorded "traditionally," in the past, to rethink how one's sexuality and spirituality are linked. It is understood that this introduced the colonial gaze in problematic ways. Therefore, the author refrained from speaking about specific ceremonies or ceremonial protocols.

[143] For more on how gender and sexuality is used by Indigenous scholars to critique colonialism see: *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature* and *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature* edited by Qwo-Li Driskill et. al.; Mark Rifkin's *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination* and *The Erotics of Sovereignty: Queer Native Writing in the Era of Self-Determination*; Also, *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*, edited by Sue-Ellen Jacobs

use of boarding schools, the church, and academia the settler colonized O'odham lands and bodies. These institutions attacked O'odham notions of sex and sexuality, redefined *nodagig*, imposed western notions of the nuclear family, and demonized alcohol and drug use. The consequence is of communal detriment because "[o]ur relationships with the erotic impact our larger communities, just as our communities impact our sense of the erotic. A Sovereign Erotic relates our bodies to our nations, traditions and histories."[144] Colonization is the concentrated effort by the government to assimilate the Tohono O'odham and control the most intimate aspects of a human being: the mind and body. By retelling and reinterpreting O'odham stories anthropologists categorized and gave meaning to the stories they catalogued.

In "Echoes of Mythical Creation: Snakes, Sex, Voice," anthropologist David Kozak and his Tohono O'odham collaborator David Lopez explored O'odham stories about sex and related trickster characters. The story illustrated the relationship the Tohono O'odham had to the more-than-human world and how this relationship is ignored by academics. Davis Kozak's informant, David Lopez, shared a personal story with Kozak about his sister, Daisy, and her encounter with a black snake trickster. Daisy encountered a black snake trickster in the form of a handsome man.[145] In one encounter, Daisy was sleeping under a *watto* (ramada) and suddenly jumped up screaming. When

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et. al.; and "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy," by Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill.

[144] Driskill, Stolen from Our Bodies, 52
[145] David Kozak and David Lopez. "Echoes of Mythical Creation: Snakes, Sex, Voice," *Wicazo Sa Review* 10, no. 1 (April 1, 1994), 54

Daisy's mom asked, "what's the matter?" She said, "a handsome man comes to me," and he attempted to go under her dress and between her legs.[146] This type of encounter happened so often that Daisy was afraid to sleep.

Lopez described another night that he heard his sister moaning sensually, "uh, uh, uh, uh," and he shook her until she awakened. Once awake, Daisy said, "that man came around again."[147] The situation got so bad that Daisy and her family sought a *ma:kai* (medicine woman/man). After the family consulted a *ma:kai*, the shaman explained, "snake comes to her like *cu:k wa:mat* (black snake), comes to her cause mostly she's single, you know, never, don't want to have a boyfriend or, so, that's a black snake that say, 'I'll be the husband or boyfriend.' Appeared, and probably live somewhere around here."[148] The O'odham *ma:kai* diagnosed Daisy with *cu:k wa:mat mumkidag* (black snake sickness). The *ma:kai* diagnosed such sicknesses because Tohono O'odham *ma:kai* have "intimate cultural, and therefore ritual, kinship with the spirits and the animal world in order to address health and spiritual imbalances within the individual community."[149] The balance achieved through the concept of O'odham *himdag*. This "*himdag*, provided and continued to provide O'odham rules and directions to maintain an intimate relationship with the earth, life, and medicine."[150]

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[146] David Kozak and David Lopez. "Echoes of Mythical Creation: Snakes, Sex, Voice," 54.
[147] Kozak and Lopez, "Echoes of Mythical Creation," 54.
[148] Kozak, "Echoes of Mythical Creation," 54.
[149] Reuben Vasquez Naranjo Jr., "Hua A'Aga: Basket Stories From The Field, The Tohono O'Odham Community Of A:L Pi'Ichkiñ (Pitiquito), Sonora Mexico," Phd dissertation (Tucson: University of Arizona, 2011), 44.
[150] Naranjo, "HUA A'AGA," 43.

After Daisy was diagnosed with *cu:k wa:mat,* she is finally healed, with the help of her brother David Lopez, the narrator of the story. Daisy was sitting on her bed when all of a sudden, she felt something like a "dizziness" coming on. Lopez asked, "you tired?" Daisy responded, "no, I think something is coming to me, I feel dizzy."[151] This type of *nodagig* ("immoral" dizziness") is more a euphoric state of being, which some have associated with drunkenness. After Lopez heard Daisy's response, he jumps up and says, "OH SHIT." Lopez runs for the *ma:kai* and is confronted with a *cu:k wa:mat* (black snake) sticking out of a hole. In the end, Lopez shot the snake, killing it, and thus, releasing its hold over his sister. After the snake's death, Daisy reported, "I don't have no dizziness anymore since you killed that damn nasty old thing."[152] Coyote, the O'odham trickster, created reptiles, and they, like Coyote, had the power to shape-shift. Snakes in O'odham culture have agency and took the form of a person's sexual desire. Displayed in the story is the importance of the more-than-human world in Tohono O'odham sexuality, the story conveyed the idea this world had animacy and a power invisible to the eye, but always present and must be respected. The story also displayed the relationship between dizziness, sexuality and the supernatural realm, through the black snake.

David Kozak attempted to analyze Lopez's story from a western, empirical lens. In doing so, he failed to comprehend the O'odham worldview and their notions of sexuality. Kozak called the story "Freudian" due to the "snake as phallic symbol," and an

[151] The O'odham word Lopez uses for dizziness is *nodagig*. This is important and will be explored in more detail later. Lopez refers to this dizziness as an "immoral" state probably because of its association with alcohol and sex.
[152] Kozak and Lopez, "Echoes of Mythical Creation," 55.

example “of how a ‘traditional culture’ uses ideological factors (theory of sickness) in the realm of social organization and behavioral culture.”[153] Kozak theorized that since Daisy was “defiantly” single, she went against the O’odham "procreative role for women.” Kozak further argued that a “[p]sychoanalytic theory might posit that she [Daisy] was rejecting her normative role and was paying the price with ‘black snake sickness’ a dissociative phenomenon whereby the sufferer legitimizes his/her resistance toward social imperatives by adopting this sick role: The snake is blamed for the sufferer’s anti-social behavior, not the sick person.”[154] Further, Kozak’s anthropologist colleague posited that black snake sickness is “distress due to neocolonialism,” linked to socio-economic deprivation.[155] Later, Kozak “decided to forego any such excursion in the realm of monologic discourse, of a Freudian, culture bound syndrome, or deprivation sort.”[156] In the end, Kozak refused to commit to any analytic theory, yet his and his colleagues’ hypotheses revealed their inability to think outside the realm of western science and take into account an O’odham worldview.

Kozak failed to give the black snake agency in its relationship with Daisy. Daisy was single and desired a sexual partner; black snake recognized this and took advantage of the situation. Black snake sickness resulted not from Daisy’s failure to marry or have children, because “a[n] [O’odham] women’s virtue does not hinge on her marital

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[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Kozak and Lopez, "Echoes of Mythical Creation,” 55.
[156] Ibid.

relations, but on her diligence in feeding the family and keeping danger away."[157] Moreover, Daisy's failure to have children would not have manifested itself as this type of sickness, as most O'odham recognize childless women played an essential role in the community. Many Tohono O'odham elders admitted these single, childless women "help us with work" and "they take care of us when we are old."[158]

Maria Chona, a Tohono O'odham elder, explained in her autobiography, "if we thought too much about any boy before we were married, that boy would seem to come and make love to us. But it would not be he, it would only be a snake."[159] Daisy fantasized too much about a boy or girl, and the black snake came and fulfilled her desires. Daisy's sickness resulted from the snake's sexual power. Kozak failed to realize that David Lopez's story about his sister is not a cautionary tale told to keep O'odham people in line but a lived event that he and his family experienced. Kozak's interpretation of Lopez's story reinforced the view that "openly sexual [Indigenous] women were assumed to be weak and vulnerable- the potential victims of seducers."[160] This robbed Daisy of her sexual power, a power already eroded by colonization and redefined Daisy's feeling of *nodagig* to mean "immoral dizziness," also robbing it of its psycho/spiritual importance.

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[157] Ruth Underhill, *Singing for Power: The Song Magic of the Papago Indians of Southern Arizona* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993), 137.
[158] Alice Joseph, Rosamond Spicer, Jane Chesky, *The Desert People* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949), 51.
[159] Ruth Underhill, *The Autobiography of a Papago Woman* (Menasha: American Anthropological Association, 1936), 27.
[160] Andrae M. Marak, and Laura Tuennerman, *At the Border of Empires: the Tohono O'odham, Gender, and Assimilation, 1880–1934,* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013) 62.

Kozak, in his exploration of Tohono O'odham traditions, was writing in the footsteps of Donald Bahr. As an anthropologist, Bahr wrote extensively on O'odham *ka:cim mumkidag* (staying sickness) and related curing songs.[161] One such sickness was "whore sickness." Both men and women contracted this illness by "succumbing to temptation in dreams."[162] Bahr gave these spiritual women, thought to be the source of the sickness, the title "Women of Darkness." The "term darkness, *s-cúhugam*, is analogous to the English uncanny, supernatural, or spiritual."[163] Although this is a correct translation, these forces are ghostly and a real phenomenon, it is essential to note that Bahr's collaborator, an O'odham named Juan Gregorio, never used the term "women of darkness." Gregorio only referred to them as women, who are products of *s-cúhugam* (the supernatural/spiritual).[164] In adding the word darkness Bahr imbued these women with witch-like attributes. Bahr further stated "it is possible that these women are identical with or related to whores."[165] Bahr translated *cé:cpa'owi* to whores, whereas the literal meaning is the Pleiades constellation or immoral women. "Whores" are also associated with curing songs related to Gila monsters and black lizards, bringing us back to Daisy

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[161] The O'odham identified two forms of sickness, staying and traveling. Traveling sickness, or *oimeḍam mumkidag*, simply refers to any virus or bacterial infection that is a traveling contagion. Thus, smallpox, measles, mumps, influenza or tuberculosis constitutes a traveling sickness. Any person can contract an infectious disease. Staying sickness is connected to the *jeweḍ ka:cim* (staying earth), and only infects O'odham people. Staying sickness did not travel and was not an infectious disease born pathogen. An O'odham that contracted *ka:cim mumkidag* transgressed an object's *gewkdag,* or strength, governed by staying sickness.
[162] Donald M. Bahr, Juan Gregorio, Albert. Alvarez, and David I. Lopez, *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness (Ká:cim Múmkidag)*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), 298.
[163] Donald M. Bahr, Juan Gregorio, Albert. Alvarez, and David I. Lopez, *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness (Ká:cim Múmkidag)*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), 253.
[164] Bahr, *Piman Shamanism*, 319.
[165] Ibid.

and her black snake problem. Somehow, powerful spiritual women got conflated with colonial concepts of whores and darkness, no mere accident. The *nodagig* (dizziness) Daisy experienced in Lopez's story is what linked the sexual to the spiritual and why the word got associated with whores.

Exploring the term *nodagig,* as perceived through the colonial gaze, associated with "immoral" dizziness, illustrated the relationship between "women of darkness," drunkenness, promiscuity, and O'odham spirituality. The O'odham rain-making ceremony commemorated the origin of *I'itoi* opening the clouds and bringing forth rain. During certain ceremonies, O'odham consumed a fermented wine made from *bahidaj* (saguaro cactus fruit). In the past, the ceremony lasted until the liquor was exhausted, which amounted to about twenty-four hours of drinking, dancing, and singing.[166] "The idea is that the "saturation of the body with liquor typifies and produces the saturation of the earth with rain. Every act of the procedure is accompanied with ceremonial singing or oratory describing rain and growth,"[167]

Tohono O'odham participants in the in this ceremony are encouraged to get "beautifully drunk," because "drunken and dizzy are, in the Papago[168] [Tohono O'odham] language sacred and poetic words, for the trance of drunkenness is akin to the trance of vision,"[169] which is the same dizziness reported by Daisy with her interaction

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[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid, 41.
[168] Papago is a derogatory name given to the Tribe by outsiders, which probably meant bean eaters. The Tribe changed their name to Tohono O'odham, which literally translates to The Desert People.
[169] Underhill, *Singing for Power*, 40.

with the black snake. Lopez may have referred to this dizzy state as "immoral," because as outside liquor became available to the O'odham, drinking in excess was frowned upon outside of ceremony. As Maria Chona described, "[s]o our men began to learn to drink whiskey. It was not a thing that you must drink only once a year like our cactus cider. You could drink it any time, with no singing and no speeches, and it did not bring rain. Men grew crazy when they drank that whiskey and they had visions."[170] Illustrating that the spiritual state of drinking during ceremony was different than social drinking introduced by settlers.

Along with its association with drinking, this state of *nodagig* was also associated with sex. During the ceremony

> certain unmarried women wandered about alone from feast to feast, living with any man who wanted them. Such behavior may have been an old institution in that area…The Pima [Akimel O'odham] sang of their lure and even considered that they brought special blessing. For the Papago man, free at this time of license, they constituted one of the high lights of the feast, and many songs celebrate them.[171]

Ruth Underhill called these women "light women who filled the roll of courtesans or prostitutes."[172] Again this definition is from a colonial, western point of view. Where any woman who is sexually active with multiple partners got labeled as a prostitute and whore. The Tohono O'odham did not initially have this stigma attached to sex. It was introduced first by Catholic missionaries but more forcefully imposed by the white

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[170] Underhill, *Autobiography of A Papago Woman*, 51.
[171] Ibid, 65-66.
[172] Ibid, 300.

American colonizers and the newly introduced Presbyterians. The Tohono O'odham people celebrated the lives of light women in songs sung in their honor:

The heart of the light woman
Comes out of her.
Far yonder it is running about.
All through the long night it is running,
Giving her light.

The little playful women!
The little playful women!
Whence got they dizziness?
Therewith they made my heart drunk.
The little playful women!
When they are dizzy,
Surely they will take me.

Dizzy women
Are seizing my heart;
Westward they are leading me.
Ah, but I like it!
One on each side, they are leading me.

A dizzy man seizes me
Yonder he leads me.
In my way darkness falls
I know not [what I do].[173]

Songs like these evoked dizziness and celebrated these wandering women's "light." Ignoring these women's spiritual role during certain ceremonies dimmed these women's light and normalized colonial moral concepts that stigmatized sex and drugs.

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[173] Underhill, *Papago Indian Religion*, 66.

"Wandering women" traced their origin to oral histories about the creation of the Pleiades constellation. The Pleiades in the O'odham language is *cé:cpa'owi*. It is the same word Bahr translated to whores. In the O'odham story, "The Pleiades (Homeless Women) Appear," the Pleiades constellation's genesis was told. The story detailed how *I'itoi* created the puberty ceremony and gave it to the O'odham people. The puberty ceremony is the first celebration the O'odham women received, and it was so loved that "some women did only that all the time."[174] Some women neglected familial duties to take part in social dances associated with the ceremony. This became a problem for the women, in that it "wrecked their homes and no one wanted them. People called them 'homeless women,' because they ran around and had no home. They wandered everywhere in the country and finally went to a powerful medicine women."[175] The medicine women agreed to cure the women of their homeless condition. The *ma:kai* (medicine person) said to these homeless women, "[a]lright, I'll do it. I'm going to put you out in plain sight of all. Every evening, your relatives will see you and tell their daughters why you are called the Homeless Women (the Pleiades). In this way women will know what a good home is. Even though a puberty celebration is enjoyable, no one should go around just doing that."[176] The *ma:kai* then sprinkled the women with water and turned them into stone. "Then she took them and threw them eastward, and they landed where they are now."[177] Underhill's "light women," were possibly given this

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[174] Dean Saxton, and Lucille. Saxton, *Legends and Lore of the Papago and Pima Indians*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1973) 24.
[175] Saxtons, *Legends and Lore*, 24-25.
[176] Ibid, 25.
[177] Saxtons, *Legends and Lore*, 25.

name due to the brightness of the stars in the Pleiades constellation. The eastern direction also connoted the sun, sunrise. These are the same spiritual women deemed "women of darkness" by Bahr and his colleagues.[178] Also, Juan Dolores, the O'odham who told the Homeless Women story, used the word *checpa'awi* when referencing the homeless women, the same word Bahr translated into whore. Again, Bahr's informant Gregorio never used the term "women of darkness," nor did he use the term *cecpi'awi* in his description of the spiritual women. Gregorio only used the word women. One can infer then that for Gregorio, all women possessed such power, or *gewkdag,* able to cause harm if not acting responsibly. Underhill's point to call them women of light is accurate in that the women offered *nodagig* to their partners, thus they illuminated the darkness, and made the spiritual realm visible.

The homeless women story is not about hindering women's sexuality but is merely a cautionary tale against partying too hard. "Wandering" in the story is associated with the sexual relationships the "light women" engaged. The same wandering that Underhill reported on during the ceremony she observed. The medicine woman admonished the wandering women not for their sexual promiscuity but for their neglect of communal responsibilities, which is harmful to their families and the tribe. *Nodagig* is an essential state needed to access the spirit realm, but like anything if doing it to excess

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[178] I believe Underhill's translation is closer to how the O'odham viewed these women. Bahr uses Gregorio's word *s-cúhugam* to name them women of darkness. Gregorio explained that the songs the women sing are emitted from the "*s-cúhugamk,*" which Bahr translates as darkness. Although Bahr admits this word has more to do with the "uncanny, supernatural, or spiritual." The O'odham word for black is *s-cuk*, but I believe this deals with the fact that the spiritual world is unseen or invisible, for the most part. The dizziness is one way to experience this realm.

led to neglecting family it became harmful to the community. A powerful medicine woman in the story is also crucial because the story reflected the fluid gender roles found in traditional Tohono O'odham society. Women had always held a powerful place in O'odham cosmology, yet through colonization, this power diminished, as *nodagig* and female sexuality are systematically stigmatized and conflated with western notions of immorality.

With the arrival of American settlers on O'odham land, there was a concerted effort by the United States government to assimilate the O'odham and rid them of perceived vice and illicit behavior. Thus, the United States further stigmatized notions of *nodagig* and its original association with spiritual and sexual power. In her autobiography, Maria Chona described these sexually powerful women of light:

> there were women who went alone to those dances [ceremonies], the wild women, who did not work and who went about painted everyday. Corn ears were painted on their breasts and birds and butterflies, each breast different for the men to see. And a women's breast, in that dance, comes just where a man's hand can reach it.
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> I began to dream of those wild women. They can haunt you…They make men and women crazy, sometimes so that they run out and die…I was not bad enough for that, but sometimes, when I sat alone at my basketry, it would seem to me that I saw a boy and girl making love that made me wild.[179]

These women of light potentially killed or caused illness, as Chona explained. Maria also admitted she often dreamt of these women and became aroused. She never admitted

[179] Underhill, *Autobiography of a Papago Woman*, 30.

shame about such feelings. However, as both religious and federal boarding schools got established in the Tohono O'odham Nation, ceremonies and celebrations like those described were outlawed and demonized.

How Tohono O'odham viewed sex, drugs, and spirituality have thus far been explored. Now, explored is the history of assimilation. As Indians internalized the settler's values *nodagig* became stigmatized. The ramifications of religious and federal boarding schools are documented by the 1941 Indian Education Research Project. The project worked jointly with the Committee on Human Development of the University of Chicago and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to "investigate, analyze, and compare the development of personality in five American Indian tribes in the context of the total environment setting…for implications in regard to Indian administration."[180] The project's ultimate goal was to "attempt a systematic evaluation of the whole Indian administrative program with the special reference to the effect of the new Indian service policy on the Indians as individuals."[181] One of the outcomes of the study among Tohono O'odham people included a monograph, *The Desert People,* a multidisciplinary study of the Tohono O'odham peoples. Written by two anthropologists, Rosamond Spicer and Jane Chesky and one medical doctor Alice Joseph, the monograph offered a snapshot of the Tohono O'odham Nation after more than forty years of sustained contact with the new settlers.[182]

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[180] Alice Joseph, Rosamond Spicer, Jane Chesky, The Desert People, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949), vii.
[181] Joseph; Spicer; Chesky, *The Desert People*, vii.
[182] In 1874, the United States and the people of the Tohono O'odham nation formed a formal relationship via executive order, which resulted in the Tohono O'odham people securing for

The Desert People offered a glimpse into the many ways the colonizers re-shaped O'odham ways of being. First, a new set of imposed morals: "Most white aliens have demonstrated either openly or by implication a firm assurance that their values are the only right and decent ones, the sole ways to happiness."[183] The influence of the new settlers cannot be underestimated because "with the establishment of permanent Christian missions in *Papaguería* [Spanish word for Tohono O'odham territory and the creation of the Papago Reservation, the Papago have been exposed to alien forces more constant and powerful than any they had previously encountered."[184] Although some O'odham had adopted a form of Catholicism, known as Sonoran Catholicism, most O'odham had little contact with organized religion. It was not until 1912, when Presbyterian's established their first missions in Sells, Arizona, that the Tohono O'odham got introduced to a new stricter form of Protestantism. Henceforth, "the clergy have included within their sphere of influence such matters of morality as had previously been the concern of the Papago family."[185] When the colonizers arrived, their priority was O'odham sexuality and alcohol use, as documented the two things that connected the O'odham to the spirit realm. "Light women" and *nodagig,* intertwined through ceremony, where sexual relations occurred, not governed by Christian morality.

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themselves a small portion of their former homelands, but only a small amount of O'odham actually lived on the San Xavier reservation. Most Tohono O'odham lived to the East. It wasn't until 1916 when another reservation was created and a BIA headquarters placed in Sells, Arizona. This really marks the first time most O'odham lived with white settlers. Settlers who began to impose their laws and values.

[183]Joseph et. al., *Desert People*, 231.

[184] Ibid.

[185] Ibid, 233.

Tohono O'odham sexuality became a concern of both the church and state. Traditionally, O'odham men and women engaged in "many sexual relations outside of marriage, which may evoke gossip or criticism but do not cause the social ostracism of either party."[186] Traditionally, children conceived through these relations had no stigma attached to Tohono O'odham. However, Christians launched "criticism of their parents" as well as the "clergy and the more ardent church members."[187] Criticism and ostracism from social groups are powerful tools against unwanted behavior for the O'odham, let alone the shame suffered by the children, products of an "immoral act." Pre-contact, the Tohono O'odham had no such notions related to sex. An O'odham couple would start living together, and when/if they wanted to end the relationship, they did. There was "no spousal relationship but only relationship of convenience."[188] Women were not barred from leadership roles and could become *makai* (medicine person) if called. Like most Indians, the Tohono O'odham, "generally defined gender in terms of occupational propensity, and behavior rather than sexual choices or biology."[189] The O'odham viewed being Two-Spirit or a woman of light as a gift, given by the creator. Therefore, "[t]he 'light women' and the [two-spirit person]…were relatively rare but socially tolerated deviations from the normal pattern of fatherhood and motherhood."[190] Formalized marriages, weaponized by the state, forced these spiritual women to accept settler ideas about gender and sexuality, disrupting the power, which connected them to the *Jewed*

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[186] Joseph et al., *Desert People*, 49.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ballinger, "Coyote, He/She was going There: Sex and Gender in Trickster Stories," 108.
[189] Ballinger, 104.
[190] Joseph et at, Desert People, 227.

Ka:cim (Staying Earth). For the Tohono O'odham the *Jewed Ka:cim* is more than a physical geography or homeland, but a place "where deities and spirits continue to reside."[191] Attacking O'odham sexuality disrupted the communication with these deities and spirits that happened via *nodagig*.

In 1916 s Superintendent Henry McQuigg issued a circular letter to all O'odham, which mandated that the O'odham be married "in accordance with the laws of the State of Arizona."[192] McQuigg stated that "[m]arriage by 'Indian custom' is not a proper form in this enlightened period," and he strongly deplored marriage by "Indian custom… It is expected that the more progressive Indians will set a good example by contracting marriage according to the best white man's way."[193] Outrage at forms of O'odham marriage stemmed from the Louis Adams case, in which an O'odham man charged with adultery escaped conviction, in 1916. The court had trouble trying the case as O'odham marriage was never a legal matter. McQuigg wanted formalized legal marriages by the O'odham so that he could more easily crack down on adultery among the Tohono O'odham. McQuigg's decision also normalized western marriage, which reinforced the "Euramerican history of presenting the nuclear family form as an inevitable corollary of human reproduction… and anything associated with it to be cast as self-evident and outside the bounds of political struggle, as a kind of ontological given."[194] As religious

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[191] Crocker, "Healing on the Edge: The Construction of Medicine on the Jesuit Frontier of Northern New Spain," 300.
[192] "Affinities Put Under Ban in Papago Tribe," *Arizona Daily Star*, February 22, 1916.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Mark Rifkin, *Erotics of Sovereignty: Queer Native Writing in the Era of Self-Determination*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012) 46.

scholar, Ann Burlein argued in *Lift the High Cross*, although the "government still prohibits certain acts as unlawful…its primary way of exercising power is through promoting norms, practices, and identifications."[195] Burlein thus connected the state's power to that of the nuclear family, where "'the family' is no mere metaphor but a crucial technology by which modern power is produced and exercised."[196] Relationships in O'odham society were now an issue of the state's concern and now subjected to legal punishment. Thus, another tool meant to dismantle O'odham *himdag* and the psycho-sexual relations between O'odham men and women. This project of control began with the children, forced to attend both religious and secular boarding schools.

Part three of *The Desert People*, "The Personality of the Papago Child," offered an in-depth look at Tohono O'odham children through a series of tests and polls conducted on them.[197] These polls reflected shifting attitudes about alcohol, spirituality, and where power and authority lay. Gleaned from these studies is the clear difference between Eastern and Western Tohono O'odham children. The Eastern O'odham, having lived in closer proximity to white settlers and a larger proportion of their children attended boarding schools, their views on spirituality and alcohol, reflected the morals imposed by the church and state. For example, the belief in animism among the Western

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[195] Ann Burlein, *Lift the High Cross: Where White Supremacy and the Christian Right Converge,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 190.
[196] Burlein, *Lift the High Cross*, 190.
[197] The data from the polls in the book are taken from Robert J. Havighurst's "Belief in Immanent Justice and Animism among Indian Children of the Southwest and Sioux," and "A Comparison of American Indian Children and White Children by Means of Emotional Response Test," and "The Comparison of Indian Children and White Children by Means of the Moral Ideology Test." Havighurst later compiled these studies in the book *American Indian and White Children; a Sociopsychological Investigation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955).

Tohono O'odham, aged nine to eleven, was ninety-two percent. The vast majority of Western O'odham children believed objects had animacy. Whereas, Eastern O'odham children of the same age group, the belief declined to only fifty-seven percent.[198] For both groups, animism declined as the children grew older but remained higher among the Western O'odham. The decline could be due to the inevitable contact O'odham children had with settler institutions as they grew older. As discussed earlier, Tohono O'odham believed that everything had animacy. Every animal, plant, land, natural forces, and even objects had a spirit or *gewkdag*. The study revealed that schools and churches indeed affected O'odham *himdag* over time.

The United States government actively indoctrinated tribal members against belief in traditional lifeways, but some tribal members kept aspects of himdag alive. Forty-five percent of all Tohono O'odham children listed animals as their primary source of fear.[199] O'odham children feared the *gewkdag* of an animal, not the animal itself. Furthermore, O'odham children would be closer to animals, thus more opportunities to transgress their *gewkdag*. This made sense because when asked, "what is the worst thing that can happen?" Thirty-eight percent of O'odham children responded with sickness, as opposed to white children, where sickness was only a concern for eleven percent.[200] For an O'odham child, sickness had more negative potential not just the individual but family and community and, for the most part, could be avoided through proper adherence to O'odham *himdag*. As was the case with Daisy and her encounter with black snake. Daisy

[198] Joseph et al, *The Desert People*, 209.
[199] Joseph et al., *Desert People*, 205.
[200] Ibid, 207.

suffered not for her sexuality but because the black snake had animacy and exerted its *gewkdag* in the human world.

Alcohol also affected the worldview of Tohono O'odham children. Alcohol consumption was one of the main concerns of the new Bureau of Indian affairs, as was reflected in the children's answers in the study. When the O'odham children were asked, "who is the principal persons associated with fear?" Thirty-six percent of O'odham girls responded with drunkards.[201] In contrast, only nine percent of white American girls responded the same. This seemed reasonable, being that the teacher figure now played a much more prominent role as disciplinarians, while "[i]n the East the father and grandparents seem to have lost much of their importance as disciplinarians for boys and girls."[202] Displayed here are girls getting trained to fear alcohol, or "drunkards." The training of O'odham women marked the beginning of women as guardians over Tohono O'odham men, who the United States government viewed as weak and open to temptation due to their consumption of alcohol. "All other problems—sexual exploits, physical altercations and abuse, and economic and personal irresponsibility, including gambling—were likely to result from alcohol use."[203] However, for the Tohono O'odham, alcohol played an essential role in *himdag* for its ceremonial purpose, bringing the rain. Now alcohol use came under attack, an attack that struck at the heart of O'odham spiritual and physical well-being. With boarding schools now the main source

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[201] Ibid, 224.
[202] Joseph et al. *The Desert People*, 225.
[203] Marak and Tuennerman, *At the Border of Empires, 36.*

of knowledge dissemination on the reservation the United States government used them to impose its hegemony.

Through boarding schools and field matrons, the Bureau of Indian Affairs assimilated O'odham women into the dominant society. The BIA introduced heteropatriarchy into the Tohono O'odham nation, which instilled a sense of hierarchy in an otherwise egalitarian society. According to historians Andrae Marak and Laura Tuennerman, "Tohono O'odham women were viewed as potentially reforming/redeeming influences within the household, if properly instructed and advised. There was hope that Tohono O'odham women could and would be moral guardians of their home."[204] The BIA focused on O'odham women so heavily because, as a feminist scholar, Andrea Smith argued, "Native women are bearers of a counter-imperial order and pose a supreme threat to the dominant culture."[205] The "training" of Tohono O'odham women was paramount to the destruction of the spiritual/sexual power found in O'odham *himdag,* viewed as a threat to the dominant patriarchal order in settler society. This process of imposed "sexuality, and the morality that circumscribed it, were at the base of colonial power relations" and Tohono O'odham women internalized the colonizer's values about sexuality and alcohol consumption.[206]

The United States government created the Tohono O'odham reservation in 1916. As Akimel O'odham ethnic studies scholar Fantasia Painter revealed in her article,

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[204] Marak and Tuennerman, *At the Border of Empires*, 35.
[205] Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 15.
[206] Marak and Tuennerman, *At the Border of Empires*, 53.

“Made for Your Benefit’: Prohibition, protection, and Refusal on Tohono O’odham, 1912-1933,” the reservation’s creation meant government officials now had more control over Indian alcohol use, happening in the heart of Tohono O’odham territory, what is now Sells, Arizona. The Tohono O’odham originally only had the San Xavier Reservation, located just outside Tucson. The superintendent found it hard to control the O’odham alcohol use in Sells from San Xavier. The superintendent fought to get a reservation created to exert more control over the O’odham spread out in the desert to the West and along the Mexico border. Cato Sells, the man responsible for the Tohono O’odham Reservation, then the new commissioner of Bureau of Indian Affairs, proclaimed in a speech in 1914:

> I believe that the greatest present menace to the American Indian is whisky. It does more to destroy his constitution and invite the ravages of disease than anything else. It does more to demoralize him as a man, and frequently as a woman. It does more to make him an easy prey to the unscrupulous than everything else combined. If I say nothing more to you to-night that leaves an impression, let it be this one thought: Let us save the American Indian from the curse of whisky.[207]

Immediately after the reservation’s creation, the BIA targeted Tohono O’odham women for a kind of moral re-education. “Bolstered by government institutions (schools, churches, courtrooms, and prisons) the BIA taught indigenous people about the sins of alcohol and at the same time threatened them with removal, death, and incarceration if they did not comply with the BIA’s vision for them.”[208] The BIA obsession with Indian

[207] Fantasia Painter,"Made for Your Benefit’: Prohibition, protection, and Refusal on Tohono O’odham, 1912-1933,” ISSI Graduate Fellows Working Paper Series, Department of Ethnic Studies University of California, Berkeley August 23, 2019, 1.
[208] Painter, “Made for Your Benefit,” 6-7.

morality displayed how "liquor, sex, race, and immorality were often conflated and irretrievably entangled."[209]

O'odham scholar Fantasia Painter correctly attributed the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the United States more generally, as acting in a paternalistic manner, fueled by anti-Indian racism, towards the Tohono O'odham. The BIA's motivations towards the Tohono O'odham, although paternalistic, also revealed a fear of the altered states sex and drugs offered Indians. In 1917, an officer named D.A. Jameson wrote a letter to the Chief Special Officer in charge of liquor suppression, H.A. Larsen. Inside the letter, Jamison described some of his daily duties, which seemed to be driving around to various villages and breaking any *ollas* (clay jars used for cooking or storing) he suspected the Indians used in the making of *nawai* (cactus wine). In one encounter, Jamison reported that he broke 53 ollas in Santa Rosa. According to Jamison, the Indians at Santa Rosa "were the worse bunch" on the Tohono O'odham Reservation, when it came to making "wine or tiswin."[210] The officer claimed to have "examined every one [of the ollas] carefully. The odor from every one I destroyed was very strong and they showed that they had been on the fire."[211] Jamison destroyed ollas that did not have any alcohol in them. He only needed evidence that they may have once been used to make wine. He destroyed them for their potential futures in bringing about *nodagig* (dizziness).[212]

[209] Ibid, 13.
[210] Letter from D.A. Jamison to Chief Special Officer H.A. Larsen, National Archives at Riverside, Law and Order folder, box 7, RG 75
[211] Ibid.
[212] Ibid.

For the O'odham, that do not perceive history as linear, this must-have brought back memories, a cycle repeating itself. One hundred and sixty-one years prior to Jamison's war on liquor, Jesuit missionary Ignaz Pfefferkorn executed a similar campaign against an ongoing ceremony. Pfefferkorn described the wine ceremony in his book *Sonora: A Description of the Province*. Pfefferkorn said the O'odham "would choose a place distant from the villages, where they would assemble at night and indulge without shame or fear, according to their custom, in excessive drinking and in the most scandalous debaucheries."[213] The Jesuit received information of one such gathering from an Indian spy, and he "proceeded to the meeting place…[where Pfefferkorn] saw illumination of pyres burning in a circle wherein stood a considerable number of large jugs [*ollas]* filled with pitahaya wine [*nawai*]. These jugs were constantly being visited, the entire company was making merry drinking and dancing, and all was bedlam."[214] Pfefferkorn then claimed: "I rode my horse swiftly into the circle, broke all the jugs with a staff, and spilled the entire supply of drink."[215] For the O'odham involved, they received a sharp reprimand from the missionary on the "ugliness of this un-Christian behavior," and they then" received their earned reward," a whipping by the village magistrate.[216] This paternalistic behavior by two different colonizers is the product of something more than racism. These acts revealed a kind of spiritual warfare against the O'odham because access to the medicine and spirit realm "declined as certain

[213] Ignaz Pfefferkorn, *Sonora: A Description of the Province,* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1990), 252.
[214] Pfefferkorn, *Sonora*, 252.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.

plants…beverages…and practices…were labeled as barbaric and satanic."[217] Another example of how

> [o]ppression is used by the 'settlers' to 'tame our 'wild' and 'savage' understandings of our Selves, to injure our traditional understandings of the world, to pit us against each other…so that the powers that be have less work to do in maintaining control over our homelands, our bodies, and our spirits.[218]

Alcohol prohibition is part of a far more sinister plot to sever Indigenous bodies from their concepts of personhood, tied to the land and the spirit. This history of violence, imprisonment, shame, and guilt are tactics to keep the O'odham policing themselves through the invisible shackles of an imposed morality.

In 1923, Superintendent Thomas F. McCormick reported, "[d]runkeness is about the most serious violation of the law on this reservation."[219] Though the Tohono O'odham have had a relationship with alcohol since time immemorial. Albeit drinking outside of a ceremonial context was not typical, but shaming, stigmatizing, and outlawing alcohol, added a level of guilt and risk for those Indians that enjoyed drinking responsibly. Not only that but making alcohol illegal hindered certain ceremonies and the spiritual connection to the earth needed to make rain. Theses ceremonies existed at the intersection of sex, alcohol, and spirituality, which the BIA actively wanted to stamp out. Since "sexuality, and morality that circumscribed it, were at the base of colonial

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[217] Robert Cristian Perez, "Indian Rebellions in Northwestern New Spain a Comparative Analysis, 1695-1750's" (University of California, Ph.D., in History, 2003), 67-68.
[218] Driskill," Stolen from Our Bodies: First Nations Two-Spirits/Queers and the Journey to a Sovereign Erotic." 57.
[219] Ibid Marak and Tuennerman, *At the Border of Empires*, 35.

power relations," this was the site of resistance for Tohono O'odham.[220] Tohono O'odham leaders fought against colonial hegemony and argued that if they "gave up the making [of *nawai*], it would mean starvation for their wives and children, as it would never rain again."[221] Despite the ongoing battle that some *makai* engaged in to keep the ceremony alive, others internalized the colonizers' values. In "1936, the BIA sanctioned Tohono O'odham government was established through the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), and just as national prohibition came to an end the Tohono O'odham began their own liquor suppression program."[222]

According to anthropologist David Kozak, some have now conflated *nodagig* with drinking, promiscuousness, and neglect of familial obligations due to this long history of colonization. David Kozak, unknowingly contributed to this conflation because his work has helped redefine and reinterpret important O'odham concepts about sex and spirituality. In "Swallow Dizziness, the Laughter of Carnival, and Kateri," Kozak likened O'odham *nodagig,* experienced in Swallow songs, to the laughter at European Carnival. Kozak argued that because this particular Swallow song and dance got performed during the Tekakwitha Conference held at San Xavier, its "insertion was a transformative and counter-hegemonic act."[223] Kozak concluded that Swallow songs are equated with dizziness and immorality because they are "social dance songs… which

[220] Ibid, 53.
[221] Peter Macmillan Booth,'" If We Gave Up The Making Of Nawait, It Would Mean Starvation': Saguaro Wine Defenders of Tohono O'odham Land and Way-of-Life." *The Journal of Arizona History* 46, no. 4 (December 1, 2005), 381.
[222] Painter, "Made for Your Benefit," 33.
[223] David Kozak, "Swallow Dizziness, the Laughter of Carnival, and Kateri," *Wicazo Sa Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, (Autumn, 1992), 1.

lend themselves to self-centered pleasures."[224] In the article, Kozak cited "O'odham moralists" who criticized these Swallow songs as "scandalous and reprehensible," as they view anyone that womanized or drank excessively as unable to fulfill familial obligations."[225] Kozak failed to identify these "O'odham moralists." These moralists, whether they be Catholic, Presbyterian, or Eastern or Western O'odham it is unknown.

Further, Kozak contradicted his argument later in the piece: "while Swallow songs do have an element of impropriety, we should not conclude that dizzy behavior (including drunkenness) is always frowned upon" for "these songs do serve a valued function."[226] These songs are vital as they are, at their core, about rain and fertility. Kozak admitted this, in part, because one of his O'odham informants, Camillus Lopez, reminded him: "It is through rain that life exists, and Lopez says that these songs serve as one way to secure it."[227] Some O'odham ceremonies, both personal and communal, have a rain component. What Kozak failed to realize is that the sacred and profane are not always applicable to Indians "whose understandings of spirituality and sacredness are not so neatly separated."[228] Comparing a complex mental state like *nodagig* to European "laughter" at Carnival is intellectually lazy, which only obscured and minimized this mental state's power and spiritual importance. Conflating a vital state, like *nodagig,* with immorality does harm, as it separated the intricate ways drugs, sex, and ceremony get interwoven, thus dimming the star-fire inside every Tohono O'odham woman.

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[224] Kozak, "Swallow Dizziness," 3.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Kozak, "Swallow Dizziness," 8.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Perez, "Indian Rebellions," 191.

In the end, it is impossible to unravel the strands of colonialism and separate them from what is "traditional" O'odham culture. O'odham *himdag* is forever evolving, taking in new information and technologies, adapting them and doing away with those that are not needed or caused harm. But examined here is the long process of assimilation where the United States, Anthropologists, Catholics, and Presbyterians, imposed a settler moral order, which disrupted the sovereignty of the minds and bodies of the Tohono O'odham. If a Sovereign Erotic is indeed related to our bodies, nations, traditions, and histories, "[d]ecolonization, then, partially entails a changed understanding of the relation between sexuality and sovereignty."[229] A (re)turn to a Tohono O'odham erotic is to embrace the ecstatic, the intoxicating dizziness of song, dance, and lovemaking among the saguaro, tasting each other's lips, sweet and sticky from the *nawai*— *nodagig*. The Tohono O'odham experienced a colonized sexuality, "one in which we have internalized the sexual values of the dominant culture. The invaders continue to enforce the idea that sexuality and non-dichotomous genders are a sin, recreating sexuality as illicit, shocking, shameful, and removed from any positive spiritual context."[230] Driskill argued that in order to "decolonize our sexualities and move towards a Sovereign Erotic, we must unmask the specters of conquistadors, priests, and politicians that have invaded our spirits and psyches, insist they vacate, and begin tending the open wounds colonization leaves in our flesh."[231] Therefore, a Tohono O'odham erotic recognizes our animal relatives'

[229] Mark Rifkin, *The Erotics of Sovereignty: Queer Native Writing in the Era of Self-Determination*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 174.
[230] Driskill," Stolen from Our Bodies," 54.
[231] Ibid.

agency and what they teach us about desire, obsession, and selfishness. An O'odham erotic looks towards the stars and what they can teach us about balance and recognizes the fire, strength, and mystery of the universe that lives inside every woman. The O'odham may use a sovereign erotic to create a more holistic, radical decolonization project, which includes the repatriation of O'odham lands and bodies, illuminating our path into the future.[232]

[232] Ibid, 58.

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