

RESISTANCE AND COLLABORATION

O'ODHAM RESPONSES
TO
U.S. INVASION

J.D. HENDRICKS



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The People Who Emerged From the Earth

Over two thousand years ago the descendents of the O'odham moved into the southwestern region of the area now claimed by the U.S. as the state of Arizona.¹ The O'odham have had one of the longest histories of contact with the forces of European colonization compared with the rest of the native North American peoples. The O'odham's first contact with Spanish invaders took place in the mid 16th century; nearly one hundred years before the colonization of the North Atlantic coast and Great Lakes regions were begun by the French and English colonists. As such, the history of the O'odham provides a good context for an investigation of the colonization of Native North America, and more specifically, an investigation of the interplay between, and results of, the varied responses to colonization – that of collaboration, accommodation, and resistance.

Many histories of the O'odham refer to these desert people as the Papago. The term Papago was a name given to the O'odham by the Spanish colonizers, and is likely the result of a Spanish corruption of the O'odham word "papabi" which was the O'odham name for one of their principal bean varieties. Thus, the Spanish colonizers term for the O'odham (Papago) came to mean "the bean eaters."² For the purposes of this study I will refrain from the use of the term Papago and will refer to "the people"³ by their traditional pre-colonial name.⁴ As is often the case, with the name Papago being a good example, European constructs are often imposed upon indigenous peoples by the historians that seek to portray their past. This result can occur when historians seek to glorify European norms and traditions at the expense of indigenous ones, and can also be the result of the subconscious indoctrination of the historian by the dominant culture – in this case that of western style industrial civilization. In other cases it can be the result of a simple uncritical usage of language. One of the most dominant and reoccurring "civilized" constructs imposed upon indigenous peoples history is the commonly understood notion that the O'odham, or any other indigenous North American culture for that matter, existed as a totality or uniformed mass. This study will seek to use the history of the interaction between the O'odham peoples and the United States, both its government and its peoples, to deconstruct this myth of the totality and provide a history of the O'odham's varied responses to colonization from an anti-colonial and anti-industrial perspective. By investigating various important case studies in O'odham history, and looking not only at resistance but also accommodation and collaboration, it is hoped that this work will help to provide a more realistic historical picture of the effects of colonization, and the intentions and reactions of both the colonizer and the colonized. Within the previously stated context and theoretical framework, this study will argue that while the O'odham responded to the U.S. invasion of their lands in various ways, the choices to resist, accommodate, or collaborate with the forces of colonization did not affect the overall U.S. policy

¹ This date is based on archeological evidence gathered by E.W. Haury in Ventana Cave. Haury, E.W. The Stratigraphy and Archeology of Ventana Cave Arizona. Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1950. Cited from Williams, Thomas R. "The Structure of the Socialization Process in Papago Indian Society." Social Forces, Vol.36, No.3. p.253.

² Fontana, Bernard L. Of Earth and Little Rain: The Papago Indians. Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1989. pp.37-39.

³ The name "O'odham" is roughly translated as "the people" in the Piman dialect spoken by the various O'odham groupings.

⁴ In 1986 the tribal government of the Papago reservation officially changed its name to the Tohono O'odham Nation.

concerning the O’odham – that policy being the eventual total assimilation of the O’odham into the dominant “civilized” industrial system.⁵

This investigation will include a strong focus on O’odham resistance to colonization, as any anti-colonial history should, however it will not discount or ignore the many historical occurrences of accommodation, and in some cases outright collaboration, with the colonizers. It is important to always keep in mind that none of the actions and reactions in any of the case studies looked at are attributable to the O’odham as a “totality,” but rather are attributable only to the various groupings of O’odham, be they incarnated in the form of the individual, the clan, the village, an economic or spiritual grouping, or an established political organization.

A God of Civilization and Coercion Comes to the O’odham

The O’odham’s first encounter with Spanish invaders took place in the mid sixteenth century when a group of conquistadors led by Alvaro Nunez Cabeza de Vaca entered O’odham territory in search of gold. These men did not find the riches they were looking for and left the desert region to return to the Spanish colony. However, soon after word spread of the O’odham villages on the northern periphery of the Spanish colony, missionaries began to travel north to bring God and “civilization” to the native people residing there. By 1686, Catholic missionaries had formed a few small missions in O’odham territory using what they believed to be the influence of their soft power⁶ techniques to lure the O’odham into their missions where they were then subjected to a rigorous schedule of cultural indoctrination. Most O’odham historians, including Winston Erickson,⁷ and to a lesser extent, Bernard Fontana⁸ have, during this time period, focused on the O’odham who chose to reside nearby and within these early missions, thus painting a picture of the O’odham as accepting of Spanish influence and cultural indoctrination.

However a closer look at this time period reveals that mission O’odham were only a small percentage of the total population of O’odham residing in the Sonoran desert⁹ and that the ones who were there may not have been so for the reasons that the colonizers believed. San Xavier del Bac, the largest mission in O’odham lands, as well as many other missions, took advantage of the fact that the desert O’odham migrated in the dry winter months to the

⁵ The term “civilized” is a problematic historical term, and its definition tends to be very subjective. The meaning of the term and its use as a label is heavily influenced by how the author and the reader understand its meaning. For the purposes of this paper, the term “civilized” refers to the totality of the “western” cultural, political, and economic system – and most importantly the belief that technological/industrial progress is inherently beneficial and liberatory. For most, being labeled “civilized” is viewed as a positive and the label of “un-civilized” or “savage” is viewed in the reverse. However, for the purposes of this study it is imperative to understand that this author views “civilization” itself as an inherently oppressive and destructive entity, and this must be kept in mind to correctly understand the arguments and analyses in the paper.

⁶ The term “soft power” refers to the concept of gaining influence and control over another group by means of the attraction of the dominating group’s cultural attributes and the use of commodification rather than using military might and coercion (“hard power”) to gain that influence. See Joseph S. Nye, Jr. Soft Power: The means to success in world politics. New York: Perseus Books, 2004.

⁷ Erickson, Winston T. Sharing the Desert: The Tohono O’odham in History. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003.

⁸ Fontana, Bernard L. Of Earth and Little Rain: The Papago Indians. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989.

⁹ According to Catholic missionary records, the numbers of mission O’odham during this time period were somewhere around 2,000. However, according to population estimates there were at least 10,000 O’odham peoples living in this area. See Fontana, Bernard L. Of Earth and Little Rain . pp.11,46.

Northern Piman settlements along the rivers to work the small farm plots for sustenance.¹⁰ The Catholic missions inserted themselves into this traditional pattern. Those O'odham who worked and lived near the missions were, for the most part, seasonal residents, which shows that the missions were viewed merely as being of utilitarian value. Thus, the O'odham as a totality were not necessarily accommodating to or interested in anything the missionaries had to offer per se, and when the missionaries began to employ "hard power" techniques and abuse or overstep the grounds for their welcome it did not go without consequence.¹¹

Accommodating and ignoring the missionaries was not the only response to colonization practiced by the O'odham during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although historians such as Erickson feel that "*the missions did serve the O'odham well....*,"¹² that assertion is contradicted by the fact that there were many large scale rebellions waged against the missions from outside and from within. In 1695, 1751, 1756, and 1776, large scale rebellions occurred in which missionaries were killed and their missions burned to the ground.¹³ In some cases these rebellions were the doing of joint O'odham/Apache alliances, which is significant considering that many histories of the O'odham and Apache portray them as immemorial enemies. This may be the result of the fact that by the early nineteenth century the Spanish government initiated a campaign of divide and conquer that was continued later by the Mexican and U.S. governments to turn the O'odham and Apache against one another, thus easing the project of their subjugation.

A Change in the Occupation Government: Washington Enters O'odham Lands

In 1821, Mexican Independence from Spain was achieved and interest in the O'odham dropped away nearly entirely. By 1828, the new and secular Mexican government began the process of shutting down the missions in O'odham territory and by 1842, the last of the missions were closed. Soon after, in 1846, the United States initiated a war for territorial expansion against Mexico. This war was not of immediate consequence to the O'odham peoples. Isolated in desert regions, the fighting between the two occupation powers affected them little in the short run. However, the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, which ended the war, would lay the foundations for a series of disastrous events which would affect the O'odham in very negative ways.

Of greatest consequence to the O'odham was the fact that the boundary between the United States and Mexico was not finalized by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The boundary was designated by Article Five of the Treaty as being an arbitrary line roughly following the 32nd parallel, an area which runs through the southern part of modern Arizona. To the east, the border was provided by the Rio Grande. The exact boundary line along the 32nd parallel was to be decided at a later date. It is also important to note here that the Treaty also provided that all Mexican citizens absorbed by the United States were to be granted U.S. citizenship, which included all indigenous

¹⁰ Fontana, Bernard L., p.40.

¹¹ It is well documented that many of the Missions resorted to physical abuse, forced confinement and occasional murder to coerce the O'odham into compliance. San Xavier del Bac, the largest and most famous of Catholic missions in O'odham lands was built with forced labor. See Daniel McCool; "Federal Indian Policy and the Sacred Mountains of the Papago Indians." *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 9.3 (1981).p59.

¹² Erickson, Winston P., p.66.

¹³ Fontana, Bernard L., pp.61-64.

peoples in the annexed territory since under Mexican law they were considered citizens. In the treaty the United States also assumed the responsibility for preventing cross border raiding into Mexico by the southwestern tribes, specifically the Apache.¹⁴

In the aftermath of the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, it became quickly apparent that an acceptable border between Mexico and the United States along the 32nd parallel would not be achieved. An official survey expedition was assembled by the United States and Mexico in 1849 to trace out the boundary between the two countries with little success. Various borderlines were agreed to and then abandoned and re-made by the United States, sometimes in a unilateral decision that dismissed the positions of the Mexican government altogether.¹⁵

The principal concern for the United States was to secure title to an area of land in northern Sonora, Mexico that was ideally suited for the construction of a portion of the southern continental railroad whose building was being discussed in the U.S. Congress at the time. One of the main advocates for this southern railroad route was a South Carolina man by the name of Colonel James Gadsden. Gadsden's history of connections to powerful business, military, and political leaders is very interesting and his appointment by the United States to be Minister to Mexico in 1853 serves as a very informative source to gauge the United States' intentions towards Native Americans and the O'odham in particular.

James Gadsden was born into an influential southern family and graduated from Yale University. After enlisting and serving in the war of 1812, Gadsden was sent to the Florida territory with Andrew Jackson to aid in the campaign of removal and extermination being waged against the Seminole Indians, which took place from 1816-1818. After this war against the Seminole, Gadsden was appointed by President Monroe as commissioner to oversee the removal of the Seminole Indians to Indian Territory. Like the more famous removal of the Cherokee, the removal of the Seminole, and the high death rate suffered as a result, unarguably constituted genocide.¹⁶ As a reward for a job well done, Gadsden was appointed by Monroe to a seat on the legislative council of the territory of Florida, thus beginning Gadsden's political career. In 1840, Gadsden was elected President of the Louisville, Charleston, and Cincinnati Railroad. In 1853, the Secretary of War, an ardent white supremacist and slavery defender by the name of Jefferson Davis, appointed Gadsden to be Minister to Mexico.¹⁷ As Minister to Mexico, one of Gadsden's primary missions was to negotiate a final demarcation of the boundary between the U.S. and Mexico. Although Gadsden was a zealous believer in Manifest Destiny, his ideas concerning racial Anglo-Saxonism¹⁸ caused him to be an opponent of the total annexation of Mexico. Gadsden, like many racist U.S. politicians of that time, felt that the total absorption of Mexico and its non-Anglo population into the United States

¹⁴ Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Feb 2nd, 1848. United States Statutes At Large, pp. 922-943

¹⁵ For a detailed treatment of this series of events see; Garber, Paul N. The Gadsden Treaty. Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1959.

¹⁶ For more information on the removal of the Seminole; Stannard, David E. American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. P.124. For additional information about the Seminole Wars see; Churchill, Ward. "A Little Matter Of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas 1492 to the Present." San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1997.

¹⁷ All dates for the political appointments of James Gadsden are cited from Paul Garber's "The Gadsden Treaty." Pages 74-81.

¹⁸ Racial Anglo-Saxonism was a belief popular in the later 19th century which held that Europeans of Anglo-Saxon descent were at the forefront of evolution and were responsible to bring civilization to the world. This ideology was used as a convenient justification for the extermination and removal of Native Americans. For a detailed study of this ideology see: Horsman, Reginald. Race And Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

would pollute the Anglo bloodline too much and thus he sought only to gain enough territory for the United States to build the southern pacific route.¹⁹ Thus, a man who had presided over a war of genocide against the Seminole Indians, was a devout racist, and who had obvious conflicts of interest due to his connections to the railroads, was put into a position to determine the territorial boundary between the United States and Mexico and in the process also determine the boundaries of the O’odham’s land. With its appointment of Gadsden, the intent of the U.S. government could not be clearer. Business interests and territorial expansion were to run roughshod, by any means necessary, over any native peoples who stood in the way.

It is no surprise that when James Gadsden finally successfully negotiated a treaty with Santa Anna to secure what is now the southern portion of Arizona, the O’odham were not consulted. In fact, the Gadsden Treaty, signed into law in 1853, did not contain any mention of the O’odham at all. Considering that the new boundary line put in place by the Gadsden Treaty literally split the traditional O’odham lands in two, it is obvious that the intentions of the United States were in no way benevolent. Here it is also important to point out that the terms of the Gadsden Treaty specifically included the same citizenship provisions which were spelled out in the earlier Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.²⁰ Although the Gadsden treaty was of great significance for the O’odham, their isolation and the breakout of the Civil War enabled them to live another decade in relative isolation from Anglo encroachment.

Assimilation, Cultural Destruction, Double Speak and Ordained Genocide

The causes which the Almighty originates, when in their appointed time he wills that one race of men – as in races of lower animals – shall disappear off the face of the earth and give place to another race, and so on, in the great cycle traced out by Himself, which may be seen, but has reasons too deep to be fathomed by us. The races of the mammoths and mastodons, and the great sloths, came and passed away: The red man of America is passing away!

United States Congress Committee on Indian Affairs report, 1865.²¹

No doubt with similar justifications in mind as those of the Committee on Indian Affairs, Anglo settlers began their invasion of O’odham lands less than a year after the conclusion of the Civil War. The Homestead Act had opened up the lands of Southern Arizona to Anglo squatters and in 1866, one of the first of many bills was passed by Congress granting mineral rights to any citizen who claimed them.²² Every one of these homesteads opened and every resource extraction operation initiated without the express consent of the O’odham represented an illegal action under the Gadsden Treaty. The citizenship provisions of the Gadsden Treaty had granted citizenship

¹⁹ For a detailed investigation of the role that the railroads played in the Gadsden purchase see; Schmidt, Louis B. “Manifest Opportunity and the Gadsden Purchase.” Arizona and the West, vol.3 (autumn 1961).

²⁰ Forbes, Jack D. The Papago-Apache Treaty of 1853: Property Rights and Religious Liberties of the O’odham, Maricopa and Other Native Peoples. Davis: Native American Studies Tecumseh Center, U.C. Davis, 1979. p.1.

²¹ United States Congress. Joint Special Committee. Condition of The Indian Tribes. Report of the joint special committee, appointed under joint resolution of March 3, 1865. With an appendix. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1865.

²² Erickson, p.77

to all former Mexican citizens and the O’odham were, by legal definition, included in this formulation. The United States, however, refused to consider “uncivilized” peoples as being worthy of the protections granted to citizens by the fourth amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits the expropriation of property. This refusal of the United States government to follow its own laws pertaining to Native Americans when those laws happen to stand in the way of U.S. interests has been a common occurrence in United States Indian policy. This land grab was only the first of many illegalities committed against the O’odham people by the United States and its citizens. In this respect the O’odham are in a special position when compared with many other tribes. While the theft of native lands by the United States Government was usually legally justified by treaty stipulations signed between a tribe and the U.S. government, this justification could not and cannot be used in the case of the O’odham since no treaty was ever signed with the O’odham by the United States Government.²³

For the most part, the O’odham did not resist this initial incursion of Anglo settlement, rather the O’odham practiced accommodation and moved farther out into the desert to shield themselves from the new settlers invading their lands. Traditional ways were maintained with the exception of the introduction of cattle ranching. The O’odham territory was well suited for the raising of cattle and a good number of O’odham became cattle ranchers, both for purposes of subsistence as well as for sale to Anglos residing in and around Tucson. In the 1880s, as increasing numbers of Anglo cattle ranchers began to invade and take over their pasture, some O’odham began to resist.

The O’odham resisted by stealing the Anglo cattle herds which were rounded up and driven south to be sold on the Mexican market. The expropriation of Anglo cattle herds was not isolated, and it became a major concern for the settlers and the government. In at least one case, a large cattle outfit was driven out of business.²⁴ The concern over this outbreak of O’odham theft of Anglo cattle was large enough that newspapers as far away as Los Angeles ran stories about the phenomenon. For the most part these stories seem to have been deliberately used to justify the enclosure of the O’odham into reservations as the government and Anglo cattle ranchers seized the opportunity to gain even more O’odham land by arguing that it was an unfair burden for the Anglo cattle ranchers to have to “*support*” the O’odham.²⁵ Here, in previous case study, we have another common attribute of U.S. Indian policy in general, and one which occurs again and again in the history of O’odham contact with the U.S. government and Anglo settlers – blaming the victim.

Another official position of United States Indian policy during this time period was that everything done to the Indians was, in the words of Indian Commissioner J.Q. Smith, in their own “*best interests*.”²⁶ Whether this obvious sham was based on a subconscious guilt and delusion or was a cynical example of “double-speak,” it is

²³ During this time period many treaties were negotiated with native tribes in the regions west of the Mississippi to gain legal justification for the United States’ theft of their lands. For a detailed list of treaties signed between the United States and Native American tribes, see the compendium edited by Charles J. Kappler. Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties. 7 volumes. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1903-4.

²⁴ Spicer, Edward H. Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1962. p.138.

²⁵ “Arizona News; Papago Cattle-thieves Brought to Justice.” Los Angeles Times. Feb 1, 1894. Also see: “Arizona News; Report Showing the Depredations Committed by Papago Indians on Stockmen’s Herds.” Los Angeles Times. June 8, 1895, In addition see; “Arizona News: Papagoes Destroying Cattle in Large Numbers.” Los Angeles Times. Mar 23, 1894.

²⁶Kehoe, Lawrence. “Our New Indian Policy and Religious Liberty.” Catholic World, vol. 26 (Oct. 1887). P.96.

obvious that Native American's best interests were the last thing on the government's mind. Nevertheless, with this reasoning as justification, the first official reservation for the O'odham was created by executive order of President Grant on July 1, 1874. This small reservation surrounded the Old Catholic mission at San Xavier del Bac. It is estimated that only about ten percent²⁷ of the desert O'odham took up residence within this reservation – these were labeled as “civilized” O'odham by U.S. census takers. The vast majority of O'odham were labeled as “wild” and continued to live in the vast desert regions west of San Xavier del Bac. While it is obvious that the desert O'odham were resisting cultural assimilation by avoidance, even the mission O'odham maintained a resistance to European culture as the next example will illustrate.

While visiting the old mission at San Xavier a newspaper columnist from the Los Angeles times wrote that upon her visit in 1882, she could see “*not a single civilized human habitation within miles.*” This writer goes on to state that the O'odham's dwellings were in the form of “*conical mud huts.*” In the casual racism and Social Darwinist rhetoric of the period she also adds that, “*The Papagos are but little in advance of gophers and prairie dogs in their habitations.*”²⁸ The point is that after more than 200 years of European influence, even the mission O'odham continued to build their traditional shelters.²⁹

Progressivism and Cultural Genocide: The Dawes Act

In 1887, the General Allotment Act, also known as the Dawes Act, was signed into law. The Dawes Act was the staging point for the forced assimilation of those remnants of Native American groupings which had not been totally decimated by the preceding period of “Indian Wars” and forced relocations. The essential function of the Dawes Act was to disrupt traditional tribal land holding patterns and thus force Native Americans into the Anglo system of private property. The O'odham, like most other Native American cultures, did not have a concept of private property – land was held in common for the benefit of the village group. Communally held land was an essential pre-requisite for their Anarchistic political system and extremely de-centralized tribal structure.³⁰

The first section of the Dawes Act provides for equal “*sections*” of land to be parceled out to each “*head of family.*” This head of family was always understood to be the father of each family when land was allotted. Thus, this first section of the act not only attempted to destroy the communal land system of Native Americans, it also instituted Patriarchy as the basis for social functioning in Native America.³¹ In addition, Section Five of the Act also provides that any un-allotted lands be subject to purchase by the United States government. Section Six and Seven provide that all monies paid by the U.S. for un-allotted Native lands be held for each tribe by the U.S. Treasury and “*subject to appropriation*” by the U.S. government to repay itself for the implementation of allotment as well as to

²⁷ Erickson p.78.

²⁸ “Tucson And Fort Lowell; Notes of a Visitor – The Church of San Xavier.” Los Angeles Times. Nov 18, 1882.

²⁹ The Spanish had brought the adobe style of construction to the O'odham but, although the resources for adobe construction were readily available to the O'odham at San Xavier, they continued to build their traditional grass huts.

³⁰ For a detailed study of traditional O'odham tribal structure and life style see; Underhill, Ruth M. Social Organization of the Papago Indians. Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1939.

Papago Woman. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979.

³¹ For the most part, traditional Native American societies exhibited gender parallelism and were rarely if ever patriarchal by definition. For a detailed study of gender in Native America see: Allen, Paula G. The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions. Boston: Beacon Press, 1986.

provide for the “civilization” of Native Americans.³² In less veiled words, these sections are basically stating that Native Americans will be forced to pay for their own cultural annihilation.

This interpretation of the intent of the Dawes Act becomes clearer when one looks at the arguments and debates that took place in Congress and within self described progressive “Indian rights” groups such as the Indian Rights Association. Critics of the Dawes Act in Congress such as Rep. Russell Errett understood that “*the main purpose of this bill is not to help the Indian troubles so much as it is to provide a method for getting at the valuable Indian lands and opening them up for settlement.*”³³ And Senator Dawes, the namesake of the final bill, speaking of the land and resources of Native Americans stated that “*civilization has got after these possessions with a greed never before equaled but it is idle to expect to stay it...*”³⁴ As for the progressive Indian Rights Association, they argued that “*the organization of the Indians into tribes is, and has been, one of the most serious hindrances to the advancement of civilization, and that every effort should be made to secure disintegration of all tribal organizations...*”³⁵ And one of their leaders, Reverend L. Abbott, provided justification with the statement: “*Barbarism has no rights which civilization is bound to respect.*”³⁶ So here we have a self-proclaimed progressive Indian Rights organization arguing for cultural genocide and against the notion that Native Americans have any rights that civilized people are bound to respect! This conclusion provides a perfect example of the essence of “progressive” or “civilized” thought.

The Dawes Act had a much less devastating effect for the O’odham than it did for many other Native American tribes. At the time of its passage, the only official reservation for the O’odham was the San Xavier reservation which, as was stated earlier, was only a small 71,090 acre reservation around the old mission San Xavier del Bac. When the allotment agent came to San Xavier in 1890, he allotted out 41,600 acres of land to the 363 O’odham whom he counted in his census as being resident at the time.³⁷ The vast majority of the O’odham still continued to live west of San Xavier in the expansive desert regions and were little affected by the allotment schemes. Even those O’odham who lived in San Xavier and were allotted land paid little attention to the artificial boundaries drawn on paper which supposedly privatized their land – they continued to farm and graze the land communally.³⁸ This refusal to abide by the provisions of the Dawes Act is also a form of resistance to cultural assimilation and adds one more example to show that for those O’odham who resisted, the most often employed method of resistance was non-compliance and avoidance. This specific response to colonization was made possible

³² All direct quotations from Dawes Act. General Allotment Act (Dawes Act). February 8, 1887. Printed in its totality in: Prucha, Francis, P. ed. Documents of United States Indian Policy. 3rd ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

³³ U.S. Congress, House Committee on Indian Affairs, Lands in Severalty to Indians: Report to Accompany H.R. 5038, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., May 28, 1880, H. Rept. 1576, pp.7-10. Reproduced in: Washburn, Wilcomb E. The Assault on Indian Tribalism: The General Allotment Law (Dawes Act) of 1887. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1975.

³⁴ Letter from Henry L. Dawes to Henry M. Teller (Commissioner of Indian Affairs), September 19, 1882. Dawes Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Reproduced in: Washburn, Wilcomb E. The Assault on Indian Tribalism: The General Allotment Law (Dawes Act) of 1887. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1975.

³⁵ Washburn, Wilcomb E. The Assault on Indian Tribalism: The General Allotment Law (Dawes Act) of 1887. P.12.

³⁶ Washburn, p.16.

³⁷ Fontana, pp. 77-79.

³⁸ Erickson, p. 92.

by the isolation and expansiveness of their desert home, which many Anglo's continued to view as a "hopeless desert."³⁹

The Domestication of the "Wild Papago"

The vast majority of the O'odham continued to resist assimilation and maintained a fairly traditional lifestyle – minus the introduction of cattle herding and horse rearing. In the twenty years following the passage of the Dawes Act, a growing effort was made to enclose the "Wild Papago"⁴⁰ and forcibly strip them of their traditional culture and instill them with the "civilized" values of the industrial Anglo. As was mentioned previously in the paper, ranchers and the government used O'odham cattle theft from Anglo ranchers as one tool to justify the enclosure of the O'odham within a reservation. During this period, Anglo Cattle ranchers continued to encroach deeper and deeper into O'odham territory and scuffles began to break out.

In another classic example of the "blame the victim" tactic, a pro-enclosure story was printed in the *Los Angeles Times*, no doubt to build public pressure for the domestication of the "Wild Papago." The story concerns a group of O'odham who had resisted an Anglo cattleman's attempts to enclose one of their water sources. When these O'odham continually tore down the fence that this cattleman had built, the rancher filed a report with the local Indian Agency sheriff to have the men arrested. When the sheriff arrived to arrest the O'odham responsible for defending their water source, he was taken hostage. The sheriff was later released unharmed; however, the incident was used to make the argument that such troubles can only be expected to increase if the O'odham were not enclosed on a reservation where they could be more easily controlled and monitored.⁴¹

The tactic of occupying and diverting natural water sources was one of the tools used by the Anglo settlers and government to destroy the self sufficiency of the O'odham and force them into reservations where they would be dependent on the government for their water and would thus be easier to control and monitor. Some of the O'odham clearly understood what was happening, which is evidenced by instances of resistance both to the enclosure of natural water sources as well as resistance to the drilling of wells. One example of the U.S. government using water as a tool of forced cultural assimilation can be found by looking at an event recorded by an O'odham calendar stick⁴² keeper. In 1912, the O'odham residing in the village of Santa Rosa, an isolated and traditional village in the western desert region of O'odham territory, were paid a visit by an Anglo Indian Commissioner who wished to drill a well for them. The Chief of the village objected to the drilling of the well on the grounds that it would disturb their culture, their autonomy and their self-sufficiency. The government agent proceeded to have the well drilled anyway. Upon completion of the well, the Chief of the village, according to the calendar stick keeper, stated that "*the well must be left alone and, in order that the Papagos might continue their old life, water must still*

³⁹ "Baboquivari Peak." *Los Angeles Times*. Nov 4, 1894.

⁴⁰ The term "Wild Papago" was a term used by the government and media to marginalize those O'odham who continued to resist "civilization."

⁴¹ "The Indian War Cloud." *Los Angeles Times*. May 22, 1885.

⁴² The Calendar Stick was a device used by the O'odham as a tool to aid in the remembering of their history. The Calendar Stick itself was a cactus stick on which notches were carved at various intervals which aided the history keeper in the remembrance of events.

be carried from the spring in the foothills."⁴³ However, the prohibition by the Chief could not be upheld due to the overwhelming convenience of the new well and after a period of abstaining from its usage, the village of Santa Rosa (including the Chief) gave in and thus was assimilated into the industrial system by being made dependent on the Government well.⁴⁴ During this same time period, encroaching Anglo farmers engaged in the diversion of O'odham water sources to irrigate their farms. This practice served as another method of forcing the self sufficient O'odham into a relationship of dependence upon the government. In many areas so much water was diverted that the O'odham could no longer grow their traditional summer crops.⁴⁵

In 1919, the first incarnation of an O'odham reservation to enclose the nearly two million acres of desert that the "Wild Papago" were residing in was established. The formation of the desert O'odham reservation in 1919 ushered in a period of exponentially increased government interference in O'odham matters, and of course, the various forms of coercive assimilation were multiplied. By 1933, thirty-two unwanted wells were drilled all over the new reservation.⁴⁶ The well drilling was often opposed by those who were trying to maintain the O'odham *Him'dag* – the traditional ways of the desert people.

Resistance and Collaboration: O'odham Responses to Forced Modernization

In contrast to the traditional O'odham who had maintained resistance to cultural assimilation for the past 300 years, there was also a small number of O'odham based in the new reservation that welcomed collaboration with the forces of Anglo modernization and advocated for cultural accommodation and in some instances for total cultural assimilation. These *men* would later form an organization called the Papago Good Government League, which would serve as the propaganda arm of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and government policy in general. The leadership of this new faction had been taken from their families as youths and placed in Protestant boarding schools to be culturally indoctrinated. The Tucson Presbyterian Training School was one of the indoctrination centers where many future members of the Good Government League had been sent.⁴⁷

Religious indoctrination, whether Catholic or Protestant, has always been one of the most powerful tools of colonization and its justification used by European invaders against the indigenous peoples of the Americas. The

⁴³ Fontana, p.54.

⁴⁴ This example is meant to show the insidious nature of industrial technology and is not intended to place any blame on this specific group of O'odham for their ultimate choice to begin using the well. This example is given to show how industrial technology always comes with strings attached. In this case, once the village becomes dependent on the well they in turn become dependent on the Anglo civilization which is needed to maintain the functioning of such a well, and thus become less able to resist other Anglo incursions. In addition it must be pointed out here that the traditional water gathering procedure talked about was preformed by O'odham women. Due to this fact, some may feel that by resisting the building of the well, the male O'odham are in fact seeking to perpetuate patriarchy. It is true that the O'odham did have a system of gendered roles, but the overall system made room for exceptions and is best characterized as one of gender parallelism, not patriarchy. It is the Anglo industrial system that brought patriarchy to the O'odham. For more information see: Underhill, Ruth, Papago Woman. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979. Also see: Allen, Paula G. The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions. Boston: Beacon Press, 1986.

⁴⁵ Forbes, Jack D. The Papago-Apache Treaty of 1853: Property Rights and Religious Liberties of the O'odham, Maricopa and Other Native Peoples. Davis: Native American Studies Tecumseh Center, U.C. Davis, 1979. pp..5-8.

⁴⁶ Spicer, p. 140.

⁴⁷ Spicer, p.141.

necessary counterpart to the forced indoctrination of Christian principals and morals has always been the repression of indigenous spiritual practices. The United States government understood the profound power that traditional spiritual practices had in maintaining group solidarity and cohesion and it is for this reason that such spiritual practices were made illegal and repressed historically. In 1883, a Court of Indian Offenses was established by congress at the request of Secretary of Interior Henry M. Teller to eliminate traditional spiritual practices. In a report to the commissioner of Indian Affairs, Teller laid out his goals and his rationale stating that, “*If it is the purpose of the Government to civilize the Indians, they must be compelled to desist from the savage and barbarous practices that are calculated to continue them in savagery....*” Teller went on to associate those who resisted the repression of their spirituality with the “*non-progressive*” faction of Indians and labeled traditional spiritualism as “*debauchery,*” “*diabolism,*” and “*savagery.*” The overarching argument of his letter is that in order to civilize the Indians and bring them into the industrial system, their traditional spiritualism must be destroyed. As an initial step towards this end, Teller advised that Medicine Men be “*compelled*” to desist from their practice of “*deception.*”⁴⁸

Although the Court of Indian Offenses advocated that coercion be used to repress and destroy indigenous spiritualism, it failed to succeed in this project even when it used force to try to stop traditional spiritual rituals. According to Historian Edward Spicer, the only thing the Court succeeded in doing was driving traditional spiritual practices underground. In the case of many resistant O’odham, traditional spiritual practices were continued without regard to regulations or prohibitions against them, and in many cases, federal authorities resorted to repression and arrest to try to stop these practices. One traditional spiritual practice of the O’odham which was particularly hated by the Protestant Missionaries and Indian Agents was the *Vi-kita* ceremony.

The *Vi-kita* ceremony of the O’odham has been written about and studied by many Anglo historians and anthropologists, the most prominent being Columbia Anthropologist Ruth Underhill.⁴⁹ Before going into a short description of the *Vi-kita* it is important to understand that this ceremony varied depending on who was conducting it and where it was being conducted. Peter Blaine, an influential O’odham man sympathetic to the traditional ways, wrote in his autobiography about Underhill’s methods. Blaine explained the traditional way for the O’odham to tell about their past was to do it “*in a group so that everybody had a chance to talk and tell it their way. Underhill was talking to just one man...Dr. Underhill was wrong all the way in how she got her information.*”⁵⁰ As scholars from the dominant culture often do, Underhill had applied her own notions of hierarchy, authority and individualism to her work with the O’odham and totally disregarded their traditional methods of conveying information in a communal fashion.

The *Vi-kita* itself was a yearly rain and fertility festival preformed to initiate and give thanks for the yearly summer rains. The ceremony itself consisted of the communal singing of rain songs, dancing, intimate encounters, and the consumption of *Navait* (Saguaro wine), an alcoholic drink made by the fermentation of Saguaro Cactus buds. The consumption of this wine was meant to symbolize the connection between the sky and the earth. The

⁴⁸ All quotes taken directly from: House Executive Document no.1, 48th Cong., 1st sess., serial 2190, pp.x-xii. Reproduced in; Prucha, Francis, P. ed. Documents of United States Indian Policy. 3rd ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

⁴⁹ For a detailed account of the *Vi-kita* see: Davis, Edward H. The Papago Ceremony of Vikita. New York: Museum of The American Indian, 1920. Also see: Underhill, Ruth. Papago Woman. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979.

⁵⁰ Blaine, Peter. Papagos and Politics. Tucson: The Arizona Historical Society, 1981. p.42.

intake of the *Navait* was representative of the earth's intake of rain. Participants drank *Navait* until vomiting occurred as this act embodied the clouds issuing forth rain unto the earth. It was a powerful ceremony that bonded the O'odham with the elements of nature.

When Protestant missionaries, and a small number of Protestant O'odham in the Good Government League, backed by U.S. Indian Agents, began their attempts to usurp power on the newly formed western O'odham (Sells)⁵¹ reservation in the early 20th century, one of the first things they attacked was the practice of the *Vi-kita* ceremony. In the early 1930s, Peter Blaine explained that the traditional O'odham from the San Xavier reservation would travel to the western reservation for the *Vi-kita*. He states that, "*In the late 1920s the government tried to stop this wine drinking ceremony on the Sells reservation. But no Papago or Agency police could ever stop it.*" In one instance Blaine tells the story of how he helped defend three traditional O'odham *Vi-kita* ceremony leaders when they were arrested by agents from the Indian Bureau and jailed in Tucson. During the trial, a group of Protestant O'odham men from the Good Government League⁵² argued for the repression of the ceremony – one of these men, Richard Hendrix, would continue to plague the traditional O'odham in future encounters. To respond to the collaborationist Good Government League, the resistant traditional O'odham formed the League of Papago Chiefs to counter the attempts of the Protestant Good Government League to usurp control on the reservation.⁵³

The Indian Reorganization Act and O'odham land rights

On June 18th, 1934, President Roosevelt signed into law the Indian Reorganization Act which finally stopped the forced allotment process initiated by the Dawes Act in 1887. The Indian Reorganization Act was viewed by its proponents as being in the best interests of the Indians. One of the reasons for this view was the fact that the Dawes Act and its forced allotment provisions had resulted in the loss of 90,000,000 acres of tribal lands and it was hoped by some, including then Indian Commissioner John Collier, that the Indian Reorganization Act could be used to regain some of this lost land.

The public was also encouraged to view the Indian Reorganization Act as being beneficial for Native Americans. A large article in the *Los Angeles Times* entitled "*The Bill to Return Indian Rights*" stated that: "*After a century of graft, plunder and injustice, this bill has the objective of handing their own souls back to the Indians.*"⁵⁴ However, such optimism and notions of cultural relativism were not held by all. As a precursor to the Indian Reorganization Act, a report was prepared for the Secretary of the Interior in 1928 to lay out the need for a change in Federal Indian Policy. The report stated that the "*great majority of Indians are ultimately to merge into the general population*" and that it was the government's responsibility to assimilate Native Americans into "*white civilization*" because "*the hands of the clock cannot be turned backwards.*" Sympathetic attempts to help Native Americans retain

⁵¹ The expansive western O'odham reservation was officially called the Sells reservation. It was named after the first Indian agent in the region, John Sells.

⁵² The Good Government League was formed by a small group of Protestant O'odham who used the organization to advocate for the assimilation of the O'odham into Anglo civilization as well as to promote general U.S. Indian policy.

⁵³ Blaine, pp.40-50.

⁵⁴ "Bill To Return Indian Rights" Los Angeles Times. June 8, 1934.

their culture were stigmatized as attempts to “*preserve them as museum specimens.*”⁵⁵ Indian Commissioner John Collier was one of those who believed that Native Americans should retain their culture and that “*the awakening of the racial spirit must be sustained...*”⁵⁶ However, although the finalized Indian Reorganization Act did contain elements that were meant to “help” Native Americans, many of its articles were still designed to impose “civilized” systems on Native Americans. It can be argued that the intent of the finalized Indian Reorganization Act was to initiate a new chapter in the push for the total cultural assimilation of the Native American tribes. The argument that there was no qualitative change between the Dawes Act and the Reorganization Act is legitimate. The Indian Reorganization Act provides the examples for the argument. The main tool of assimilation in the Indian Reorganization Act was the provision in Section 17 which allowed for Native American tribes to form their own tribal governments, constitutions and laws which, although it is not specifically stated, were intended to be Anglo in structure and functioning. In the case that these native governments were not sufficiently acceptable to the U.S. government, section 17 also provided that all Tribal Government formations must be “*approved by the Secretary of the Interior.*”⁵⁷ This clearly shows that the intent of the Act was not to allow Native Americans to become fully autonomous, either culturally or politically. For a tribe such as the O’odham, which had a long history of decentralization and consensus decision making, the imposition of western style liberal democracy, with its attendant centralization and majority rule system, was an obvious method of forced cultural indoctrination.

Peter Blaine, who was mentioned earlier, was an O’odham man who had sympathy for the traditional, decentralized and communal way of O’odham societal organization. When the collaborationist Papago Good Government League began to maneuver themselves into the position of representing all of the O’odham, Blaine took it upon himself to lead the charge to discredit their assertions to business interests and the Federal Government that they represented the O’odham. Blaine wrote that: “*This so-called council represented only their own church people, but they took it upon themselves to become a council for all Papagos. They had meetings. Nobody attended them but these four guys because most people didn’t recognize them as leaders.*”⁵⁸ In 1934 Blaine, along with another O’odham from the Gila Bend reservation named Leon Pancho became the first O’odham to travel to Washington D.C. These two men were sent as representatives of the traditional chiefs of the O’odham villages to argue against a recent court order that closed the Sells reservation to outside, Anglo owned, mining. The court order was a result of a lawsuit brought by the members of the Good Government League, including Richard Hendrix, who had teamed up with outside lawyers. These lawyers were to receive as payment a ten percent share of all land reclaimed from the mining companies, or a monetary equivalent. As this entire procedure was done behind the backs of the majority of the O’odham, when it was revealed, there was great resentment towards the Good Government League by many of the O’odham.

⁵⁵ Lewis Meriam et al., The Problem of Indian Administration. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1928. Selection printed in: Prucha, Francis, P. ed. Documents of United States Indian Policy. 3rd ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

⁵⁶ Annual Report of the Secretary of Interior, 1934, pp.78-83. Reprinted in; Prucha, Francis, P. ed. Documents of United States Indian Policy. 3rd ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

⁵⁷ Wheeler-Howard Act (Indian Reorganization Act) June 18, 1934. U.S. Statutes at Large, 48:984-88. Re-printed in: Prucha, Francis, P. ed. Documents of United States Indian Policy. 3rd ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

⁵⁸ Blaine, p.50.

While in Washington D.C., Blaine was informed of the pending Indian Reorganization Act, and he became a supporter of the Act due to its provision allowing for the self government of Native Americans, as well as a provision in section Six that allowed the Secretary of Interior to manage mineral, mining, and livestock on the reservation.⁵⁹ In the case of the O'odham this meant that the reservation would be re-opened to mining and they would regain an important means of economic sustenance. According to Blaine, the mines were an important economic resource for the O'odham as they provided jobs and a market where beef and other O'odham products could be sold.⁶⁰ This is yet another unfortunate example of how the incursion of Anglo industrial technology served to destroy the self-sufficiency of the O'odham by making them dependent on it for survival.

Whether or not the mines were truly in the best interest of the O'odham is a complex topic which cannot be dealt with here. However it should be stated that Blaine and his companions' trip to Washington D.C. was financed by the Tucson Chamber of Commerce, an organization that functioned in support of the mining interests, not the O'odham. This Tucson Chamber of Commerce was the same organization that had aggressively petitioned President Wilson to rescind his 1916 act forming the Sells reservation because it prevented Anglo agricultural interests from exploiting the area's "*best agricultural and grazing lands.*"⁶¹

Resistance to and Collaboration with the "White Man's War"

Not long after the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act and the formation of the first O'odham Tribal Government, the United States declared war on Japan, thus entering World War II. The participation of Native Americans in World War II has been well publicized, especially the role the Dineh (Navajo) played as code talkers in the South Pacific. The United States government and the mainstream media portrayed Native Americans as being eager to fight for their homeland, and eager to assimilate into "white civilization" once they returned from the war. Nearly 25,000⁶² Native Americans served in the United States military during World War II, many of whom were no doubt under the impression that their service would be rewarded with increased "rights" after the war's end. Instead, as a "reward" for Native Americans participation in World War II the United States government established the Indian Claims commission in 1946 to legalize the U.S. occupation of Native American Lands never granted to the U.S. by treaty, passed House Concurrent Resolution 108 to terminate tribal recognition as separate entities from the Federal Government, and then instituted a plan in 1954 to relocate Native Americans off the reservation and into "Indian Ghettos" in the nation's large cities.⁶³ These were the "rewards" for participation in World War II.

⁵⁹ Wheeler-Howard Act (Indian Reorganization Act) June 18, 1934. U.S. Statutes at Large, 48:984-88. Re-printed in: Prucha, Francis, P. ed. Documents of United States Indian Policy. 3rd ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

⁶⁰ Blaine, pp.50-53.

⁶¹ McCool, Daniel. "Federal Indian Policy and the Sacred Mountains of the Papago Indians." Journal of Ethnic Studies 9.3 (1981). p.62.

⁶² Holm, Tom. "Fighting A White Mans War: The Extent and Legacy of American Indian Participation in World War II." The Journal of Ethnic Studies. 9.2. p.70.

⁶³ For more on this aspect of the Indian Claims Commission, and a discussion about the termination act see: Forbes, Jack D. The Papago-Apache Treaty of 1853: Property Rights and Religious Liberties of the O'odham, Maricopa and Other Native Peoples. Davis: Native American Studies Tecumseh Center, U.C. Davis, 1979.

Like many other Native American Tribes, some of the O'odham Nations members participated in World War II. Ruth Underhill claims that the O'odham enlisted to serve in World War II "in droves"⁶⁴ and it is documented that the O'odham tribal government bought \$10,000 in war bonds.⁶⁵ However, the extent of this involvement was distorted by the media, academia, and even some of the O'odham leaders in the tribal government. Richard Hendrix, a former member of the collaborationist Good Government League, had risen to prominence in the new O'odham tribal government by this time and was interviewed by the Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society on November 16, 1942. In this interview Hendrix exposed the extent to which he had allowed his mind to be colonized and assimilated into that of the dominant white culture. Speaking of colonization in general and World War II in particular, Hendrix stated that the O'odham had:

*Learned to love the American government and they learned to love the Stars and Stripes. And when the war came and the time came for our boys to be registered, there was no exception. They registered just the same as white boys did. And now they are out fighting alongside the white boys, the American boys. They are just as anxious as the white boys to kill as many Japs, to kill as many Germans, and they are very anxious to win this great war so that the Papago people in this desert land may continue to enjoy the freedom of their homes.*⁶⁶

Hendrix's internalization of white supremacist racial notions is a heart breaking and shocking example of the extent to which he had accepted the ideology of "white civilization." In addition, his assertion that every O'odham boy registered for the war with "no exception" is glaringly false.

Aside from the fact that there are always exceptions to everything, there was also a large scale organized resistance to World War II led by an old Chief and medicine man, Pia Machita, and his band of traditional O'odham who resided in an isolated village in the north western area of the Sells Reservation known as the Hickwan district. According to Peter Blaine, the O'odham residing in some of the most isolated villages in the Hickwan district had not seen a white man until the 1930s, and continued to practice the traditional O'odham *Him'dag*.⁶⁷ When Pia Machita was informed of the compulsory registration of young O'odham boys for induction into World War II, he instructed the youth of his village to refuse to sign the registration forms when they were visited by the local Indian Agent. Pia Machita was a very traditional leader who refused cultural assimilation and would not accept the authority of the Bureau of Indian Affairs or the O'odham tribal government. Finally, after all efforts to persuade Pia Machita's village to register had failed, the tribal chief of police and a gang of Federal Marshals led by U.S. Marshall Ben McKinney invaded the village at two in the morning on October 16th, 1941, with tear gas bombs and guns drawn – when the Marshals attempted to take Pia Machita into custody some of the young men from the village used force to liberate him and severely beat one of the federal marshals. In the face of this resistance, the government agents and their local collaborators retreated to Tucson. When the Attorney General's Office heard of

⁶⁴ Underhill, Ruth. Papago Woman. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979. P.94.

⁶⁵ Blaine, p.115.

⁶⁶ Hendrix, Richard. Talk by Richard Hendricks, Prominent Papago Indian, Given at the Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society, November 16, 1942. The Kiva, vol. 8 (Nov. 1942).

⁶⁷ Blaine, p.92.

the resistance on the O'odham reservation, they immediately got involved in the effort to repress this draft resistance movement as quickly as possible to prevent its possible spread to other reservations. By May 17th, 1941, after a period of about six months of trying to track down Pia Machita and his small band of men, Marshall McKinney and O'odham collaborators including Jose Ignacio from the tribal government, surrounded Pia Machita in the village of Stoa Pitk and took him into custody without incident.⁶⁸

Peter Blaine was the O'odham tribal chairman during the time that Pia Machita was leading the draft resistance movement. Although he did not believe that Pia Machita and his men were threats in any way, he was annoyed by what he perceived to be their stubbornness and attributed their draft resistance to his belief that they "*didn't really understand what they were doing.*"⁶⁹ In reality, it was Blaine who did not understand the reasons behind Pia Machita and his men's resistance to enlistment. Pia Machita and his men understood very well what they were doing – they were resisting giving aid to a government that they understood was their enemy. Given this understanding, and given the dictionary definition of the word "collaboration," it becomes necessary to label those O'odham who participated in the arrest of Pia Machita as such – collaborators. The understanding that the U.S. government was the enemy of the traditional O'odham of the Hickwan district was based upon a long history of attempts by the U.S. government to force the Traditional O'odham of that area to abandon the Him'dag and embrace elements of Anglo "progress" such as dams, railroads, wells, and the protestant religion. Despite Peter Blaine's inability to understand why the O'odham in the Hickwan district rejected Anglo-civilization in its totality, he still maintained sympathy for the people there. When Pia Machita and two co-defendants were finally sentenced to serve 18 months in prison at Terminal Island Federal Prison for their roles in leading the resistance movement, Peter Blaine eventually came to their aid and used his connections as tribal chairman to persuade the sentencing Judge to release Pia Machita early and allow him to return to the reservation and his family.⁷⁰

Conclusion

The history of the O'odham's contact with the United States government has been one marked by a persistent current of resistance to cultural assimilation into "white civilization." This resistance has included a variety of tactics and actions. The favored tactic of resistance to assimilation for many of the O'odham groupings seems to have been that of avoidance and feigned accommodation to Anglo culture when expedient. However, as was evidenced by the O'odham's early history of contact with the Spanish, they did not refrain from waging armed resistance to colonization when they were pushed into a situation where other tactics might have been ineffectual. In addition to resistance and accommodation, it has also been shown that some of the O'odham choose to engage in direct collaboration with the Anglo colonization of their lands and minds. As this paper has shown, the levels of collaborative activity amongst the O'odham varied, and so did the effects of such collaboration.

When investigating instances of collaboration it is always important to understand the context which produced them and to remember that the ultimate blame for a situation of oppression should always be placed upon

⁶⁸ Flaccus, Elmer. "Arizona's Last Great Indian War: The Saga of Pia Machita." *The Journal of Arizona History*, vol. 22 (1981).

⁶⁹ Blaine, p.101.

⁷⁰ Blain, pp.103-4.

the group committing the acts of repression – in this case the United States government and allied business interests. It is important to show such examples of collaboration and to understand that all human cultures who have been the victim of colonization have invariably contained individuals who chose to collaborate for a variety of reasons. The O’odham are no exception to this rule. Making apologies for collaboration or failing to mention the instances where such collaboration did occur creates a historical distortion and does nothing to aid present struggles for liberation.

The O’odham responses to colonization never represented a totality, but a strong current of resistance is evident throughout their history. In regards to the United States government, it can be said, given the primary sources looked at, and the final drafts of laws signed and policies followed, that the intent of the United States government toward all Native American tribes, when it was not outright genocidal, has been the cultural destruction and absorption of remaining Native Americans into the dominant industrial culture of “white civilization.” Regardless of the varying tactics used, and the various lip service about “best interests” and “justice,” it has been shown that there has never been a qualitative change in United States policy toward the O’odham people and Native Americans in general. The O’odham have maintained aspects of their traditional culture *despite* the best efforts of the government to force assimilation, not as a result of such efforts. A continuing current of struggle between the forces of colonization and resistance has persisted for centuries, in all its various forms, within the minds and bodies of many O’odham and will continue until liberation.

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