New Mexico and the Pimería Alta

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INTRODUCTION

On November 7, 2002, soon after *Moquis and Kastiilam: The Hopi History Project* began,1 Stewart B. Koyiyumptewa of the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office interviewed vice-chairman of the Hopi Tribe, Elgean Joshevama, in his office in Kykotsmovi, Arizona. Stewart was there to record Hopi oral traditions Vice-Chairman Joshevama had heard about the Kastiilam, the Spaniards who conquered and missionized the Hopis between 1629 and the Pueblo Revolt in 1680. “The information that I heard about came from not a lot of discussions, because apparently this was an issue that was very difficult to talk about, and so people were not very willing to even say too much about what happened then,” Vice-Chairman Joshevama responded. “But I sense that it was an important time to Hopi because of the disruption of our lives and how it later on impacted our lives. And even today, I think, we’re still struggling with some of those issues that, that the Spaniards inflicted on us.”

As the interview proceeded, Vice-Chairman Joshevama reflected on his work at the Hopi Guidance Center with Hopi children who had been sexually abused.
“And, and as I was working with them I was curious to see how these victims of abuse had a lot of feelings. And, these feelings included anger,” he continued. “A lot of feelings of being sad, sometimes some signs of depression, some signs of helplessness, guilt.” Vice-Chairman Joshevama went on to say:

And, and the more I worked with them trying to help get them past these kinds of feelings, trying to help with what they had been going through, to get them to a point where they might now be able to talk about it easier, the more I began to think that these children were showing me, and showing us who were working with them, to me were similar to the way that we in the villages were behaving too.

We had a lot of suspicions of each other. We were angry at each other. We weren’t very happy. We were sad sometimes and a lot of times these kinds of feelings of anger, sadness, would come out in different ways in our villages. And, then I recalled this part of our history that something happened to us a long time ago, and in particular, that period between about 1630 and 1680 when the Spanish were here and from the stories that we learned, they forced our people to do things that was against our way of doing things. (Sheridan et al. 2015:236)

Spanish conquest and missionization were profoundly traumatic for the Hopis, shaking the very foundations of Hopi society and provoking Hopis to carry out acts of violence that still haunt them today. The Franciscans never asked, “Could we be your guests here,” Vice-Chairman Joshevama observed:

They just simply intruded into Hopi lives and then enslaved us, enslaved our people, and then subjected Hopi to a very foreign way of life. But Hopi, all this time, had already had its own way of life. We had our own initiations, we had our own rituals, we had our own ceremonies, we had own spiritual beings that we would talk to and pray to those. And, then here comes a foreign intruder and totally tells us that that’s not right. This is the way your life has to be lived. And, so they forced that kind of idea or that concept on us. And, when any time anybody does that to somebody, it’s, it’s going to create a lot of feelings. It’s going to create anger but at the same time fear because what can you do about it when these people have the might of the weapon, the modern weapon at the time, and that they could kill you without any kind of respect given to whether you agree with them or not.

See they, they just took completely away our freedom to live the kind of life that we had up to that point. So, those were the things that I thought about when I saw the similarities between the victims of sexual abuse of children, and then when I look at our villages and how they were behaving, and that behavior was pretty much the same as what these children were showing as victims of abuse. And, I concluded then that we, we must have been victims of abuse at some point, and that’s when I thought back on our history and I thought of that period. That’s when this abuse happened to us. (Sheridan et al. 2015:237)
Like the other Pueblo peoples in southwestern North America, the Hopi Indians first encountered Europeans in 1540, when Francisco Vázquez de Coronado’s expedition passed through the region like a brief but brutal plague. Spanish accounts of this initial contact between Kastiilam and Moquis, the latter the term the Spaniards used for Hopis, paint a relatively benign picture of the interactions. More than four centuries of Hopi oral traditions, in contrast, report that Coronado’s soldiers destroyed a Hopi village (Sheridan et al. 2013; Sheridan et al. 2015). For the next nine decades, contact between Hopis and Spaniards was intermittent, but in 1629, the governor of New Mexico led six Franciscans and thirty soldiers to establish missions among the Ácomas, Zunis, and Hopis. The leader of the Franciscans, custodio Padre Fray Esteban de Perea, claimed that the Ácomas and Zunis welcomed the Spaniards. But the Hopis at Awat’ovi, the easternmost Hopi pueblo on Antelope Mesa, received them “with some coolness” because an “apostate Indian of the Christian pueblos” had told them that the Spaniards “were coming to burn their pueblos, rob their haciendas, and behead their children.” The Franciscans later accused Hopis at Awat’ovi of poisoning their first missionary, Padre Fray Francisco de Porras, in 1632.

Despite Hopi resistance, however, Franciscan missionization proceeded. Missionaries established cabeceras (headquarters) with resident priests at Awat’ovi on Antelope Mesa, Songòopavi on Second Mesa, and Orayvi on Third Mesa, with visitas (subsidiary churches) at Wàlpi on First Mesa and Musangnuvi on Second Mesa. The primary purpose of the religious mission in New Spain was to convert Native peoples to Roman Catholicism and transform them into vassals of the Spanish Crown. This usually involved prohibiting people from practicing their own religious ceremonies and beliefs. At Awat’ovi, for example, the sanctuary of the mission church—that most sacred of Catholic ritual spaces—was constructed on top of a perfectly preserved kiva (Montgomery et al. 1949). Building the church above one of the Hopis’ sacred underground chambers proclaimed that the Christian God was superior to Hopi gods, that Christian sacred spaces were submerging Hopi sacred spaces.

Conquest and colonization took an unrelenting material toll on the Hopis and other Pueblo peoples during the seventeenth century as well. Demands for labor and tribute under both missions and the encomienda system, which granted prominent Spaniards the right to extract foodstuffs and textiles from Pueblo households, increasingly burdened the Pueblos as their populations plummeted because of Old World diseases. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, when Juan de Oñate’s expedition was establishing the colony of Nuevo México, Elinore Barrett (2002:64) estimates, there were about eighty-one occupied pueblos along the Rio Grande and its tributaries. That number had plummeted to about thirty-one when the revolt broke out eight decades later. Her figures do
not include either Zuni or Hopi communities. Population figures are more difficult to calculate because not all rooms in a pueblo may have been inhabited at any one time. Spanish observers provided population figures, but those were no more than educated guesses, colored by where the Spaniards went and for whom they were writing. Barrett (2002:65) speculates that there may have been perhaps 60,000 Pueblo inhabitants when Oñate arrived. By 1678, that number had dropped to 17,000. She argues that the greatest losses of both pueblos and people took place in the late 1630s and early 1640s, when smallpox decimated the Pueblo world (Barrett 2002:78). More recent studies contend that even greater declines occurred after 1650, with another wave of disease ravaging the Pueblos in 1671 (Liebmann 2012:40).

Climate change compounded epidemics. In the mid-1660s, the third worst drought between AD 622 and 1994 seared the northern Southwest (Grissino-Mayer et al. 1997; Grissino-Mayer et al. 2002; Parks et al. 2006). It was a cold drought, with cooler temperatures reducing the growing season for corn, the staple of Pueblo peoples. In the words of Carla Van West and her colleagues, “These harsh conditions initiated around 1664 and continued, almost unbroken, through 1678” (Van West et al. 2013:8). For three straight years—1667, 1668, and 1669—summer monsoons failed to moisten the parched fields of the Salinas pueblos, forcing their abandonment over the next decade. The Piro pueblos of the southern Rio Grande Basin also drained away. The smallpox epidemic of the early 1640s had savaged the southern Pueblos most, causing the abandonment of eleven of 14 Piro pueblos and five of 11 Salinas pueblos (Barrett 2002). Drought provided the coup de grâce three decades later.

The same drought that afflicted the Pueblo World in New Mexico withered crops on the Hopi Mesas. From 1650 to 1680, the Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI) for the Southwest was negative, indicating poor conditions for agriculture for all years except seven; between 1664 and 1670, the drought was particularly harsh, with negative PDSI ranging from −1.632 in 1666 to −3.303 in 1668 (Cook 2000). An even more sensitive indicator of agricultural conditions on the Hopi Mesas is the PDSI for the month of June, when the all-important spring crops were ripening. Between 1660 and 1679, June PDSI was negative for fourteen of twenty years; from 1666 to 1670, June PDSIs reveal why famine stalked the Hopi pueblos as one dry year slid into another: 1666 (−2.232), 1667 (−3.407), 1668 (−3.542), 1669 (−1.095), 1670 (−4.954). What little household surpluses were left after the demands of missionaries and encomenderos had been met would have been quickly exhausted.

The final blow may have been a hard freeze during the growing season in the summer of 1680, as evidenced by a “frost ring” in the tree-ring chronology for the San Francisco Peaks and other sites in western North America. “Given that bristlecone pines in the Rocky Mountain region put on new growth from late June to late August or early September (Salzer 2000:92), we suspect that this destructive
frost took place at a point in the corn-growing season when it was too late to replant at lower elevations,” Van West et al. (2013:9; italics original) surmise. “The frost-damaged section of the SFP ring of 1680 is located within or near the late-wood rather than the early wood. It is likely that this destructive freeze took place in early August during a year and a multiyear interval of exceptional cold. Our guess is that this ‘event’ was a contributing factor in the timing of the revolt.”

It is a truism in the social sciences that there are no “natural disasters.” Mission and encomienda exacerbated cold and drought, grinding the Hopis and their Pueblo neighbors down. During these decades when famine and abuse haunted the Hopi mesas, many Hopis who may have converted to Christianity returned to the beliefs of their ancestors. Similar patterns of nativistic resistance and rebellion aggravated by drought wracked colonial Sonora in the mid-eighteenth century as well (Brenneman 2004; Sheridan 1999). Hopis and other Pueblo peoples were forced to carry out their religious ceremonies in secret, far from the prying eyes of missionaries. “Whose religion had been taken away? Whose ceremonies had been stamped down?” Vice-Chairman Joshevama asked rhetorically. “It’s no wonder that we understand that in order for a Hopi person, or a Hopi people to do something that would bring back those kinds of things that had been important to them, that they had to steal themselves away in secrecy” (Sheridan et al. 2015:238). Later in the interview, he added, “So that they would not forget. So that they could maybe teach the younger ones who might have been there with them those kinds of things that they needed to have them remember” (Sheridan et al. 2015:239).

**THE INVESTIGATION OF PADRE FRAY SALVADOR DE GUERRA**

When we began the Hopi History Project, Hopi colleagues, teachers, and elders expressed a great deal of interest in how Spanish colonial officials and missionaries portrayed colonial abuses. They wanted to see how those representations articulated with, or silenced, the Hopi people’s long memory of missionary abuses during the seventeenth century prior to the Pueblo Revolt. One case in particular captured their attention because of its horrific details.

In 1655, a Hopi named Juan Xiveni appeared before Padre Fray Antonio de Ybargaray, the *custodio* of New Mexico. As custodio, Ybargaray was the highest-ranking Franciscan in charge of New Mexico’s missions. Xiveni represented the Spanish-appointed Hopi *gobernador* (governor) of Orayvi and its *nativos*, or native inhabitants. They sent him to lodge a formal complaint against Padre Fray Salvador de Guerra, missionary in the pueblo of Orayvi on Third Mesa, “because of the terrible and inhuman punishments that [Guerra] has given to some natives, whipping them extremely cruelly in all parts and limbs of their bodies, and afterwards scalding them and anointing them with boiling turpentine.” Ybargaray, Guerra’s superior, took the charges seriously enough to travel
to the Second Mesa village of Songòopavi and conduct a formal investigation, which is how and why the case made its way into the Spanish colonial record (see Sheridan et al. 2015).4

Guerra’s worst abuse involved a Hopi named Juan Cuna, whom Guerra had caught in an unspecified “idolatry.” During the first stage of the investigation, Ybargaray heard the testimonies of three Hopis from Orayvi—Joseph Ocheguene, a fiscal (native official who carried out the policies of the gobernador) and two capitanes de guerra (war captains) from Orayvi: Francisco Quera and Juan Cocpi. All three confirmed that Guerra kicked and punched Juan Cuna just outside the door to Orayvi’s mission church until he was “bathed in blood.” Then, inside the church, Guerra tied Cuna to a ladder and whipped him severely “on the back, belly, and all of the other parts of his body.” Finally, the Franciscan “scalded him from head to foot with a large lump of turpentine, and he burned him with it.” After these grisly punishments, Cuna and “other idolaters” were dispatched to Awat’ovi under the charge of Joseph Ocheguene and other Hopi fiscales. Cuna died, “unconscious and speechless,” along the trail between Orayvi and Songòopavi.

Guerra denied that he kicked or punched Cuna, stating that he only gave him a slap on the face from which “six or seven drops of blood came out of his nose.” He admitted to having Cuna tied up and whipped, but claimed that he did not do the lashing, that “the lashes did not exceed twenty, and he gave him no lashes on the belly.” As for the turpentine, “seeing that [Cuna] was old and sick, he had thrown on him no more than ten or twelve drops, and not all [over] his body, as the witnesses state.” Guerra then accused fiscal Joseph Ocheguene of whipping Cuna to death because he “did not want to walk.”

In light of Guerra’s testimony, Ybargaray ordered Ocheguene, Quera, and Cocpi to ratify their statements. Ocheguene could not be located because Franciscan lay brother Fray Pedro Moreno, who “loved him well,” had told Ocheguene to hide because of Guerra’s counteraccusations. So Ybargaray took Moreno’s testimony. Moreno stated that Ocheguene only hit Cuna “with a switch or branch on the legs so that he would move along.” Quera and Cocpi swore that their original statements were true and also testified that Ocheguene did no harm to Cuna.

While at Songòopavi in June, Ybargaray also investigated other charges against Guerra brought by Hopi leaders from Orayvi, Songòopavi, and Musangnuvi. The Hopis said that Guerra “compelled them to make many cotton mantas, for which the aforesaid father would give them half the cotton that was necessary to finish them. And the harshness of the aforesaid father obliged them to finish [the mantas] with cotton they had in their homes within eight days. Because of this rush, they could not plant their cotton [fields] or cultivate their milpas [corn fields].” As to his “harshness,” the Hopi officials accused Guerra of “whipping them terribly
and giving them up to forty and fifty lashes, and scalding and smearing them with burning-hot turpentine.” Ybargaray took the testimonies of nine Hopis who confirmed those charges. Guerra denied them. Ybargaray called the Hopis back in again, and they all ratified their original charges. They also declared that Guerra was only entitled to less than a third of the mantas he demanded of them.

Mission Indians were supposed to supply their missionaries with food, cloth, and other basics. These provisions were in addition to the annual stipend the missionary received from the Spanish Crown. But missions were not parishes, and the Franciscans were not secular clergy who could own property or receive benefices. Nor could they charge mission Indians for administering the sacraments to them (Farriss 1968; Taylor 1999). Franciscans such as Guerra tried to justify the extraction of mantas from their neophytes by claiming that it was in the support of the mission, not the missionary. But Guerra clearly violated the moral economy of the Hopis by forcing them to produce an excessive amount of mantas at a time when they needed to plant their fields.

The investigation then moved to Santo Domingo, where, in July, Ybargaray and five other Franciscans found Guerra guilty of killing Cuna and the other charges. Clearly shocked by his behavior, they concluded that Guerra not only had to be removed from Orayvi but sent to Mexico City as well. Ybargaray and the others therefore sentenced Guerra to seclusion in the convento, or priests’ residence, at the mission of Quarai until he could be deported to Mexico City for punishment by Franciscan superiors of the Provincia de Santo Evangelio. Guerra was also prohibited from saying mass or administering the sacraments.

But Guerra may never have traveled to Mexico City. In 1659–60, he was stationed at Taos. A year later, he was posted to Isleta. In 1661, he served at Ácoma and then at Jémez, where he was notary to Fray Alonso de Posada, comisario of the Holy Office of the Inquisition (Scholes 1945). During the 1660s, Guerra was Posada’s right-hand man during his crusade against governors Bernardo López de Mendizábal and Diego de Peñalosa (Scholes 1942). Guerra remained at Jémez at least until 1668, when he described himself as “preacher, difinidor actual, commissary of the Santa Concordia, secretary of the Holy Custodia of the Conversion of San Pablo of New Mexico, and minister-guardian of the congregation of San Diego de los Jemez” (translated by Scholes 1929:196). In 1672, he was in charge of the supply train itself (Bloom and Mitchell 1938). Guerra’s fall from grace was short indeed.

**THE TORTURE AND DEATH OF SITKOYMA**

Most Hopi oral traditions of missionary abuses are generalized accounts. The most common concern having to haul beams for mission churches from distant mountains or of priests abusing Hopi women, often after sending their husbands away to fetch water from distant springs. Occasionally, however, precise details
emerge. One afternoon in October 2009, during a three-day workshop with members of the Hopi Tribe’s Cultural Resources Advisory Task Team (CRATT; Figure 9.1), Leigh Kuwanwisiwma, director of the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office, led a field trip to a natural amphitheater in the mountains south of Third Mesa known as Katsina Buttes. There, while talking about how Hopis had to hold their ceremonies in secret during the mission period, Kuwanwisiwma gave another version of what may have been Juan Cuna’s punishment. Four years later, on October 19, 2012, Stewart B. Koyiyumptewa recorded Kuwanwisiwma’s narrative of the incident at greater length (see Sheridan et al. 2015).

After discussing the “pretty systematic . . . suppression of Hopi religion,” including the burning of Hopi paraphernalia and altars “necessary to conduct ceremonies and initiate members,” Kuwanwisiwma talked about how the missionaries were called away from the Hopi missions to attend a meeting in Santa Fe:

So one individual by the name of Sitkoyma from Orayvi thought about quickly sponsoring a katsina Home Dance—we call it Nimántikive—and that was because his son had recently married and had gone through the Hopi wedding ceremony so I guess you would think that at least those kinds of ceremonies were not forbidden by the church.

And as he looked throughout the village of Orayvi and other villages, he knew that other traditional weddings had also been completed. But because the katsina ceremonies were never completed, they could never conduct the Home Dance, which is a really major part of the Hopi wedding ceremony. There’s many things that occur between both sets of the family and, particularly—and of the ceremony—there’s an exchanging of different kinds of personal vows between the bride and husband. And, you know, of course, because the katsinas were forbidden, none of the brides that had gone through—over a period of years—never completed that part of the Hopi wedding ceremony. So, he thought that maybe he could take advantage of the absence of the priest, the church and the military to quickly conduct—sponsor and conduct—a katsina ceremony, Home Dance, so that that last piece of the ceremony would be offered to the couple and then subsequently work towards concluding the Hopi ceremony.

So he probably sought advice and got support, and they say that it was out of season—the katsina season had ended—but he took that opportunity to quickly call together some people. Men and I’m sure women, and said this is what I want to do. And that was to hold a katsina ceremony and Home Dance for his new bride, his new daughter in law. So they said that they quickly convened out of season—and yes, they still remembered the Home Dance songs—so they quickly put together their own types of paraphernalia and then because they really didn’t want to have a big, big public show because they were afraid that would be very well be immediately known by the Spanish priest and the military, they took
refuge in what we now call Katsina Buttes or *Kaktsintuyqa*. So that’s where the men practiced the katsina Home Dance and then when they were ready then they announced it and Sitkoyma, Sitkoyma was the guy in charge of it (figure 9.2).

And so he invited other villages that if in fact they were able and willing. He invited all the brides that had gone through the ceremony to go there so that they could conclude a part, and part of the last parts of the Hopi wedding ceremonies. So they say that brides from throughout the mesas, they’d accept the invitations, so the dance was held. And we now call it over in the Hopi Buttes area about maybe half an hour away from Old Orayvi due east, we call it now that whole landscape *Kaktsintuyqa* but we also call this one alcove that they used as a plaza we call it *Tipkya* and *Tipkya* is a very important place in a village and that’s where the final Home Dances are danced—where the bride is shown publically to everybody, the audience. So that’s what happened. They danced the Home Dance and then towards the evening, all the brides were dressed up in their robes and then they were presented to the people witnessing it and then of course to the katsinas, the katsina spirits. So that’s what happened and of course everybody I’m sure with that happening and then ending successfully, everybody liked all of our dances, was pretty happy about it.

After returning from Santa Fe, however, the priest at Orayvi found out about Sitkoyma’s sponsorship of the forbidden Home Dance. Hopis referred to that
missionary in particular, and missionaries in general, as Tota´tsi: Kuwanwisiwma defined Tota´tsi as “a spiritual person that you can never ever please and if you don’t please him, Tota´tsi will do whatever it can to get its way.” The missionary ordered Sitkoyma to be arrested and interrogated. Then, in Kuwanwisiwma’s words:

The Tota´tsi told the military to announce and also make sure that on a particular day he wanted all of Orayvi to converge on the plaza. So that’s what happened. It was announced that on a certain day no one would be allowed [to leave] the village and the military of course I’m sure, made sure of that. I’m sure they had units watching the village outside the village, making sure. And what the Tota´tsi now had decided was that because he [Sitkoyma] was convicted of violating this decree of the ban on Hopi ceremonies that he had to be publically punished and that was the intent of having the whole village come to the Orayvi plaza where when Sitkoyma got there, the posts had already been put into the plaza there and he was led there and then tied there with his frontal body tied, strapped. Hands were tied. And then he was tied to this post. So the priest, they say, who was fluent in Hopi, then announced the charges, the conviction and now the punishment. So the punishment was flogging by horsewhip. So that’s what happened with the whole village present there. The priest and the military commander ordered the whipping of Sitkoyma.

So he received some initial slashes they say and of course quite literally the horsewhip with the amount of force landing on human skin simply cut it open. And there were more slashes they say until Sitkoyma, because of the amount of whipping he took, was literally covered in blood from throughout his body and they say he was screaming. The point was that if there were any further violations of different kinds of decree, such as the one that Sitkoyma and others violated, this would be the kind of punishment that they would receive.

So while Sitkoyma was still strapped there, still alive, then Tota´tsi then ordered the military, I guess, to show Sitkoyma and the village really what he meant when he said you will suffer the consequences if you dare violate church and military decrees. So what he ordered then was to have the military people pour turpentine on Sitkoyma, on his wounds. And you can imagine what Sitkoyma was going through. So based on the turpentine and everything else that happened, they say that Sitkoyma died there in Orayvi plaza still strapped you know to the post that was there in the village. And so when you look back to that incident you can see probably the kind of horrific trauma the whole village witnessed and suffered. And also what Sitkoyma also went through. (Sheridan et al. 2015:173–74)

THE PUEBLO REVOLT AND THE DESTRUCTION OF AWAT’OVI

The torture and death of Sitkoyma, may have been one of the tipping points that pushed the Hopis to rebel. Kuwanwisiwma continued:
So one Hopi informant said that was what Sitkoyma went through—what he did and was killed there—the decision on whether to join the Pueblos in the revolt was being debated and the Hopis being pacifist people, against the taking of life, were not really wanting to participate in the Pueblo Revolt that the Pueblos were planning. But they say that when the Hopi chiefs and leaders witnessed this thing of Sitkoyma, that’s when Orayvi said, “We will participate in the Pueblo Revolt. We just simply need to get rid of the church and the military.” And when Orayvi decided to do that then because it was one of the biggest ceremonial centers, largest in population, very influential, then that’s where other Hopi villages, particularly Songóopavi, Musangnuvi, Wàlpi, and Awat’ovi, decided to join Orayvi in the Pueblo Revolt (Sheridan et al. 2015:178–79)

We do not know if the torture and death of Sitkoyma were the same incident as that of Juan Cuna. Some of the details are different, particularly the location of Sitkoyma’s death in the Orayvi plaza. Juan Cuna supposedly died on the trail to Awat’ovi. The possibility that more than one Hopi individual was killed by whipping and scalding with turpentine would only strengthen our contention that missionary abuses profoundly traumatized the Hopis and drove them to rebellion. If Sitkoyma and Juan Cuna were one and the same, however, Hopis waited twenty-five years to throw off the Spanish yoke.

What we do know is that rebellion was simmering throughout the Pueblo world long before the coordinated uprising of August 10, 1680. After the revolt erupted, Sargento Mayor Diego López Sambrano stated that he had witnessed sorcery, rebellion, and punishment for “more than forty years” since the administration of Governor Fernando de Argüello (1644–47), “who hanged, and lashed, and imprisoned more than forty Indians” (Hackett and Shelby 1942:2:298–99). Pueblo peoples, including the Hopis, clearly had been contemplating rebellion for a very long time.

During the early days of the revolt, the Hopis killed the three missionaries stationed among them. In Fray Padre Silvestre Vélez de Escalante’s “Extracto de Noticias,” written nearly a century after the revolt, the Franciscan chronicler includes the interrogation of a Pueblo rebel named Bartolomé de Ojeda, who was captured during Governor Domingo Jironza Pétriz de Cruzate’s siege of the pueblo of Zia in 1689. Ojeda provided an account of the missionaries’ execution:

This fatal news [the murder of Padre Fray Agustín de Santa María by the Zunis] reached Moqui, and the Moquinos immediately undertook to kill the friars who administered them. And they were Father Fray José de Espeleta (he had been a missionary for 40 years), Fray José Trujillo, and Fray José de Figueras. An Indian named Francisco, also a Moquino, whom Father Espeleta had reared, defended them. And seeing this, the apostate rebels said to him: “Now you must kill them yourself, and if not, we must kill you.” In order to save his life, although against his
will, he gave up the charitable office of advocate for the three blameless priests, and agreed to be their executioner. They placed the three friars together as a target (for their rage) and Francisco, impelled by fear, went on shooting at them with a musket until all three died of the bullet wounds. Then some compassion entered them, which could also have been a horrible manifestation of such execrable evil at seeing the three bodies stretched out, and they carried them to a church and burned them in it. The same Moquino Francisco related this long afterwards to this witness, Bartolomé de Ojeda, with tears in his eyes. (In Sheridan et al. in prep.)

Francisco was the same Francisco Espeleta who served as chief spokesperson for the Hopis who refused to allow the Franciscans to return in 1700. He also may have organized, if not masterminded, the destruction of Awat’ovi in late November of that same year. If Bartolomé de Ojeda’s account of young Francisco’s reluctance to kill his namesake is accurate, Espeleta must have had a radical change of heart over the next two decades of Hopi independence. Taught to read and write by his namesake, Fray Padre Espeleta, whom he killed during the Pueblo Revolt, Espeleta emerges from Spanish pages as the foremost opponent to the Franciscans. Wily, intransigent, and fluent in Spanish, he embodies Hopi resistance to the Spaniards.

During his reconquest of the Pueblo world, Diego de Vargas visited Awat’ovi, Wàłpi, Musanguñuvi, and Songòóopavi, where the Hopis appeared to “reconcile” themselves to God and king (see Sigüenza y Góngora 1693). But that was just an example of one Hopi strategy: to tell the Spaniards what they wanted to hear so they would go away. When the Franciscans returned to stay, Hopi resistance hardened. The rejection of the missionaries appears unequivocal everywhere except Awat’ovi in José Narvaez y Valverde’s account, written in 1730 (see Sheridan et al. in prep.).

The standard interpretation of the destruction of Awat’ovi is that Espeleta and other Hopi leaders razed the pueblo and killed its men because its inhabitants had invited the Franciscans to return (Figure 9.3). Adolph Bandelier (1892:372) provides one of the first and most detailed published accounts of it—an account that largely shaped subsequent non-Hopi understandings of the event: “In the meantime, Ahua-tuyba [Awat’ovi] had virtually become again a Christianized pueblo. In the last days of the year 1700, or in the beginning of 1701, the Moquis of the other pueblos fell upon the unsuspecting village at night. The men were mostly killed, stifled in their estufas [kivas], it is said; the women and children were dragged into captivity, and the houses were burnt.”

Hopi accounts paint a much more complex picture, one in which leaders of important ceremonial societies at Awat’ovi were spared in order to keep those societies from dying out. There were also accusations of witchcraft and disorder (koyaanisqatsi) at Awat’ovi and a desire to wrest control of important
initiation societies such as the Wuwtsim, which originated there, from Hopis who were considered to be corrupt (Curtis 1922; Courlander 1982; Malotki et al. 2002; Sheridan et al. in prep.; Whiteley 2002). Anthropologist Peter Whiteley (2002) argues that the Hopis in 1700 were engaged in a cultural revitalization movement that was redefining what it meant to be Hopi. Like other Pueblo peoples, the Hopis had endured decades of forced labor and religious persecution. Some may have converted to Christianity; others were compelled to attend mass and allow their children to be baptized. But the Spaniard’s God had not brought them prosperity. Instead, pestilence and drought stalked the land. Hopis conspired with the other Pueblos to kill their missionaries and drive the Spaniards from their homelands. When the Spaniards returned to Nuevo México, many Tewas, Tiwas, Tanos, Jemez, and Keresans sought refuge on their mesas. Those desperate, uprooted people must have stiffened Hopi resistance. Never again, they may have told one another as they revived their ceremonies. Never again would the katsinam or the corn mothers be driven away by the gray-robed Franciscans.

Whatever their motivations, however, the destruction of one of their own communities and the killing of their own people still sear Hopi memories today. The covenant that the Hisatsinom (Hopi ancestors) made with Màasaw, Guardian of the Fourth World, required them to be a humble, peaceful people.
As Vice-Chairman Joshevama explained, “We have this basic value of respecting all forms of life. Human life is respected. Animal life is respected. The spiritual life, the plant life. All of these are respected. And, that’s what our ceremonial events are based on” (Sheridan et al. 239). The forced labor, the suppression of their religion, the sexual exploitation of their women, and the shocking brutality of a Padre Fray Salvador de la Guerra—all drove the Hopis to kill their missionaries during the 1680 Pueblo Revolt and then, twenty years later, to destroy the village of Awat’ovi itself to prevent the missionaries from returning. “But what they left us though was with the consequence,” Vice-Chairman Joshevama observed. “They left us with us having to deal with the guilt of destroying our own people. And, then the anger we have to deal with of those who survived it, the survivors of Awatovi probably felt a lot of anger. And, what do they do with that anger? A lot of it is suppressed” (Sheridan et al. 2015:242).

HISTORICAL TRAUMA, SOCIAL MEMORY, AND HEALING THE SOUL WOUND

Vice-Chairman Joshevama was expressing what a growing number of researchers and clinicians have observed among American Indian and Alaskan Native (AIAN) peoples: “historical” or “intergenerational” trauma (Duran and Duran 1995; Brave Heart–Jordan 1995, Brave Heart 1999a, 1999b, 2000; Brave Heart and DeBruyn 1998; Duran, Duran, and Brave Heart 1998). Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, a pioneer in the identification and treatment of historical trauma, defines it as the “cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences” (Brave Heart 2003:7). Examples of historical trauma experienced by AIAN peoples include “community massacres, genocidal policies, pandemics from the introduction of new diseases, forced relocation, forcible removal of children through Indian boarding school policies and the prohibition of spiritual practices” (Begay 2012:11). For the Hopis, those systematic assaults began in 1540 when, according to Hopi oral traditions, Coronado’s soldiers destroyed a Hopi village on Antelope Mesa (Sheridan et al. 2013; Sheridan et al. 2015).

Substance abuse is one of a “constellation of features” Brave Heart describes as “historical trauma response (HTR).” Others self-destructive behaviors include “suicidal thoughts and gestures, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, anger, and difficulty recognizing and expressing emotions” (Brave Heart 2003:7). One of the consequences of such trauma—a consequence Vice-Chairman Joshevama himself acknowledged—is “historical unresolved grief,” which may be “impaired, delayed, fixated, and/or disenfranchised” (Brave Heart 2003:7). Unlike post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), historical trauma is collective rather than individual, passed down from one generation to another. Research on survivors of the Jewish Holocaust (Fogelman 1988, 1991; Yehuda 1999; Kidron 2003),
African Americans (Cross 1998; Eyerman 2002), and Cambodian refugees (Sack et al. 1995) identify similar patterns of what many Native Americans call the “soul wound.”

The two volumes of Moquis and Kastiilam: The Hopi History Project tell the story of that trauma, and the Hopis’ resistance to it, from both Hopi and Spanish points of view. For nearly 500 years, the story has been overwhelmingly one-sided. Historians and anthropologists have relied upon documents written by representatives of the Spanish Empire. Hopi voices have been silenced, ignored, or relegated to “myth.” Those of us on the project have attempted to restore a balance to the historical record by presenting not only Spanish documents about the Hopis but interviews with Hopi elders about the Spaniards carried out by members of the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office. We argue that these Hopi oral traditions are living records of the past that have just as much, if not more, scholarly validity as the letters, court records, and reports of Spanish officials and Franciscan missionaries. Both are lines of evidence—“texts” in the parlance of literary and cultural criticism—that need to be interrogated. Both have their strengths and limitations that need to be understood.

The testimony of the Vice-Chairman Joshevama offers a historical memory distinct from colonial documentary representations in content, form, and voice. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the abuses of the missionaries were “very difficult to talk about, and so people were not very willing to even say too much about what happened then.” In other words, the Spanish presence in the Hopi pueblos was still a sensitive subject more than 300 years later.

The vice-chairman’s testimony also reveals that some Hopi memories of trauma are grounded in a generalized identity of descent; no particularities are mentioned. Instead, Hopis are referred to as a single group who suffered and were abused by Spaniards. Other narratives such as Leigh Kuwanwiswima’s narrative about Sitkoyma reference specific persons, places, events, landscape features, or supernatural beings (Whiteley 1988, 1998), often foregrounding clans or villages rather than the Hopi Tribe, which in many respects was a creation of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. The juxtaposition of Kuwanwiswima’s very specific account with more general stories of missionary abuse suggest the depth, richness, and diversity of Hopi narratives about the past. There is no single Hopi oral tradition about the Kastiilam. On the contrary, Hopi chronicles about the past are like underground rivers that flow together and break apart, surfacing only when the moral topography of speaker and audience comes together and the narratives issue forth as small springs.

Accounts such as that of Vice-Chairman Joshevama also meld past and present together in a way that fosters an “imagined community” based on the intergenerational memory of colonial trauma. A frequent use of “we,” “our people,” and
“our way of life” reflects this sense in the vice-chairman’s testimony. Moreover, this generalized identity of descent emphasizes, and is reinforced by, disruption and interruption. In the words of Vice-Chairman Joshevama, the missionaries “didn’t ask, ‘Could we be your guests here?’ They didn’t ask if they could build the churches or their missions in our villages.” On the contrary, “They just simply intruded into Hopi lives and then enslaved us, slaved our people, and then subjected Hopi to a very foreign way of life. But Hopi, all this time, had already had its own way of life.” The disruption and interruption of the “Hopi way of life,” then, is remembered as more than simple transgressions or individual acts of violence on the part of the colonizers. On the contrary, the Spaniards attempted to destroy or transform many domains central to the social reproduction of the Hopi people: their subsistence activities, their spiritual practices, their gender relationships, and their political organization. “And, when any time anybody does that to somebody, it’s, it’s going to create a lot of feelings,” Vice-Chairman Joshevama noted. “It’s going to create anger but at the same time fear because what can you do about it when these people have the might of the weapon, the modern weapon at the time, and that they could kill you without any kind of respect given to whether you agree with them or not” (Sheridan et al. 2015:237).

Along with anger and fear, an even more powerful trope of guilt also emerges. Although the Hopis rebelled by carrying out their rituals in secret, and by participating in the Pueblo Revolt, they had to destroy the village of Awat’ovi to keep the missionaries from reestablishing missions among the Hopi and suppressing the Hopi way of life once again. “They never returned to have that, have that influence again. But what they left us though was the consequence. They left us having to deal with the guilt of destroying our own people. And, then the anger we have to deal with of those who survived it, the survivors of Awat’ovi probably felt a lot of anger. And, what do they do with that anger? A lot of it is suppressed” (Sheridan et al. 2015:242). Past injustices continue to cause contemporary ills.

Missionary abuses during the 1600s and the destruction of Awat’ovi in 1700 remain open wounds among the Hopis today. The enduring experience of these emotive memories accounts for the Hopi Tribe’s response to a formal apology for past abuses issued by the Diocese of Gallup. When Bishop Donald Pelotte, a Native American whose father was of the Abenaki/Algonquin Nation, met with Hope Tribe members in 2000, he reported, “They are still cautious and uncertain about efforts at reconciliation. Nonetheless, they are open to allow[ing] us to prove that we are indeed serious about healing the past by asking us for support of their efforts to have justice regarding treaty rights, land and water rights, education, housing, health care, social services, training in jobs, and the use of sacred lands” (Pelotte 2000). The Hopi Tribe also replaced Columbus Day with
Hopi Independence Day—August 10, the anniversary of the outbreak of the Pueblo Revolt—as a paid tribal holiday.

Nevertheless, Hopis still debate whether or not those memories should be exhumed. Perhaps because of his experience dealing with sexually abused children, Vice-Chairman Joshevama believes that the traumatic past has to be confronted:

How can we do a healing from that event, from those events? How can we heal?

So, what they did, what the Hopi did, start doing from that point is they just took those kinds of feelings and put them under here, stash it away somewhere else, but you know what happens when you stash something, you hide it. At some point it starts to creep back out and it surfaces. And that, that’s what happens. And that’s what’s happening even to this day. And then the younger people would learn from this, they carry it on. And it’s like telling our children that this is the way you’re going to have to be because this is what somebody did to your family a long time ago instead of saying, “We need to talk about this and let’s, let’s try to find a way to resolve it so that we don’t carry it onto the next generation.” To me, that’s the step we need to take. And that’s what I have been hoping can happen, that people can understand and, and not practice that kind of generational abuse.

(Sheridan et al 2015:243)

NOTES

1. The Hopi History Project is a formal collaboration between the University of Arizona (UA) and the Hopi Tribe. Its goals are to tell the story of relations between Hopis and Spaniards during the period when the Spanish Empire was attempting to incorporate the Hopi people into its colony of New Mexico. Researchers at the UA’s Southwest Center, School of Anthropology, and Arizona State Museum have selected, transcribed, translated, and annotated Spanish documents about the Hopis, whom the Spaniards called Moquis. The Hopi Cultural Preservation Office of the Hopi Tribe has interviewed Hopi elders to gather their oral traditions about the Kastiilam, the Hopi term for Spaniards. The results will be published in two volumes by the University of Arizona Press. The project has been partially funded by a series of grants from the National Historic Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) and a Collaborative Research Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

3. Southwest Paleoclimate Project, June PDSI, Hopi Mesas, AZ. Courtesy of Dr. Jeffrey Dean, Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research, University of Arizona.


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