Applying Anthropology, Assembling Indigenous Community: Anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe in Southern Arizona

Nicholas Barron

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APPLYING ANTHROPOLOGY, ASSEMBLING INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY: ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE IN SOUTHERN ARIZONA

by

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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DEDICATION

For Mom and Susy Riot. I would not have been able to start and finish this project without the support of these strong and compassionate women.
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ABSTRACT
In the context of the US, anthropology and Indigenous politics are interconnected phenomena with points of intersection that are more often assumed then empirically explored. Using a historical anthropological approach, this study addresses this oversight through a focused analysis of the interconnected histories of anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Southern Arizona. Illustrated through four case studies of engagements between anthropologists and the Pascua Yaqui, I pose three interrelated arguments regarding the relationship between anthropology and Indigenous political formations. To being with, the dichotomous view of anthropology as friend or foe, dominator or liberator, to and of Native communities is not tenable in this particular case. From the 1930s to the present, this relationship has been, if anything, a mixed bag. To think about the history of anthropology and Pascua Yaqui politics in such a binary manner yields
very little insight. Additionally, anthropology does not appear either as an enemy or as a savior in this history; anthropology was in many ways more of a tool selectively deployed by Yaqui intellectuals. As I illustrate across each chapter, there has been a long-term pattern of Yaqui thinkers and advocates who used anthropological texts, institutions, events, and individuals to bring about their own objectives–namely, to construct and maintain the Pascua Yaqui as a culturally distinct and politically viable community in Southern Arizona. Finally, as Yaqui intellectuals have enrolled anthropology into their political repertoire, they have subtly–but consequentially–shaped the formation of anthropology itself. This confirms the findings of several contemporary scholars who argue that Native peoples have played a heretofore underappreciate role in the formation of the discipline and its key concepts. While their contributions to anthropology may not have always been fully conscious or intentional, Yaqui intellectuals and their political projects certainly had a role to play.
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Introduction

Ambivalent Reflections

In the summer of 2016, I had just moved to Tucson, Arizona from Albuquerque, New Mexico to begin the research for this project. Though I had been making frequent trips to Tucson for the better part of a year as I began preliminary archival research, I was still very much new to the area and the history that I was preparing to explore—the relationship between the discipline of anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Southern Arizona.¹ I spent my days moving in and out of a variety of archival institutions including the Arizona State Museum (ASM) and the Arizona History Museum in search of materials that would illuminate this relationship. Much of my time was devoted to sifting through the papers of the premier anthropologists of the Pascua Yaqui—Edward and Rosamond Spicer. Edward, in particular, followed the history and culture of the Yaqui from their early days as a migrant group of Indians from Mexico living in urban Tucson to their virtually unprecedented reformation and recognition as a reservation-based American Indian Tribe in 1978.

At night, I chose to re-read Edward’s many ethnographic and ethnohistorical accounts of the Yaqui to keep myself immersed in this small corner of history. One

¹ Historically, Yaqui peoples refer to themselves as Yoeme amongst other Yaquis. In the presence of Yoris (white people), the term Yaqui was most commonly used. I take a cue from David Delgado Shorter, a prominent scholar of the Yaqui, for my use of terminology. Shorter chooses to use the term “Yoeme” as opposed to Yaqui in his writing. He states that while most people on both sides of the border use the term Yaqui, “I use ‘Yoeme’ because my Yoeme friends do so when talking about themselves” (2002, 6). Except for rare instance in which the native language is used (such as for greetings at conferences or ceremonies), I have rarely heard an Old Pascua community member use Yoeme. Thus, I use the term Yaqui because my Yaqui interlocutors do so when talking about themselves.
particular night, I revisited Spicer’s posthumously-published *People of Pascua* (1988). Based on ethnographic research conducted in 1939 and 1940, *People of Pascua* offers an account of life in Pascua Village, an early site of Yaqui settlement in Tucson and the epicenter of what would become the modern-day Pascua Yaqui Tribe. During this particular reading, I came across a statement so subtle that I missed it the first time around. In the 1988 preface to the book, Rosamond Spicer reflected on her and her husband’s relationship with the Yaqui of Pascua. “Ned and I together chose the branching of the road of life that led us to involvement with the Yaqui people. The choice of this path has had a profound influence on our lives; perhaps there has been some small measure of influence on them, as individuals and as a group” (Spicer 1988, xlv, emphasis added). Despite the somewhat cursory nature of this statement, I was stuck by how its critical reflexivity signaled the intersubjective and coeval nature of ethnographic research. Rosamond openly acknowledges that her and Edward’s work with the Yaqui of Pascua Village shaped their professional and personal lives. Additionally, she alludes to the possibility that—“perhaps” in “some small measure”—this relationship shaped the Yaqui as well. As I waded deeper into the waters of research, this passage from Rosamond’s reflection continued to occupy my thoughts.

At the time, the notion that anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui have a deeply entangled history was by no means novel for me. I was already quite aware of Edward’s involvement in the federal recognition of the tribe thanks in part to the research of several anthropologists and historians (Castile 2002; Meeks 2007; Miller 2004) as well my own excursions in the archives. Spicer appears time and again in the historical record of longstanding advocates for recognition of one form or another. Furthermore, for me, this
relationship was not mere history. In 2015, I began working on a sporadic, voluntary basis with the Old Pascua Museum and Yaqui Cultural Center located in the heart of Pascua Village (now called Old Pascua). My connection with the museum was facilitated by the Edward H. and Rosamond B. Spicer Foundation, a non-profit organization founded in the name of the Spicers that funds academic and community-based projects relating to social justice and Indigenous cultural survival. I would soon become a foundation research fellow. In the process of securing that position, I assisted with the archival research for what would become “The Spicer Desk,” an interactive tribal museum exhibit funded by the Spicer Foundation and designed to provide a space for community members to learn about the history of Pascua Village (see chapter two). Thus, for me, the linkages between anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui were as much an issue of the present as they were the past.

With this assortment of secondary research, preliminary archival investigations, and personal anecdotes acting as anchor points, the interconnections of anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui—specially the community’s political and cultural formations—appeared undeniable. Only the most positivistic of contemporary anthropologists and historians of anthropology would presume that ethnography is free of some degree of intersubjective construction. Rosamond’s reflection clearly departs from this line of thinking as it acknowledges the dynamic entanglement of science and Indigenous community. However, I could not help but wonder about the cautious nature of the latter part of Rosamond’s statement—the proviso of “perhaps.” Perhaps anthropologists had shaped the Yaqui. Perhaps? Of course they had. Hadn’t they? Don’t they still? Did Rosamond’s
hesitation flag a nagging positivism in her view of anthropology? Was it a classic reassertion of the god’s eye view from nowhere (Haraway 1988)?

With Rosamond’s *ambivalent reflection* in mind, I continued to pursue this line of research in a more thorough manner. Clearly, there was a connection between anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui. But what exactly did it look like on the ground in specific situations, especially beyond the 1970s and the quest for federal acknowledgement? How might that on-the-ground-history contextualize Rosamond’s “perhaps”? The next three years would prove to be an attempt to investigate this ambivalent reflection in and across multiple archives.

After several years of researching and writing, Rosamond’s words continue to ring true but in a slightly different key than I had originally anticipated. Anthropology was most definitely a vital component in the construction of the modern Pascua Yaqui Tribe. It seems at almost every critical turn in the formation and reformation of the Yaqui of Pascua Village, anthropology and anthropologists were present in some form or another. The name Spicer was perhaps the most prominent manifestation of anthropology’s presence in Pascua Yaqui life and history, but Edward and Rosamond were certainly not alone. Muriel Thayer Painter, John Provins, Carleton Wilder, Tad Nichols, George Castile, William Willard, Lita Osmundsen, and many other names, which will appear in the chapters that follow, also came to play critical roles. Anthropological and anthropologically tinged institutions like the University of Arizona, the Office of Economic Opportunity, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation were equally present. Today, the Spicer Foundation carries on this tradition. Yes, it would appear that
anthropology has long been enmeshed with the story of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe’s formation.

And yet, my research has not resulted in what could be a reductive interpretation of Rosamond’s qualified declaration regarding the relationship between anthropology and the tribe. Over-encumbered with a simplified reading of inventionist literature (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), one might make the presumption that anthropology determined the formation of the tribe, that anthropology invented the Pascua Yaqui.2 Such a conclusion might also entail the longstanding view of anthropology as the all-powerful, malevolent force lurking in Native history. Rather, my findings suggest that anthropology has been less a cunning force and more of a tool that Indigenous intellectuals (a term that I will develop in the material that follows) selectively draw upon to bring their own projects to fruition. One must not forget the non-comital nature of Rosamond’s statement—the proviso of “perhaps.” In light of my research, Rosamond’s apprehension betrays the fact that while anthropologists played a significant role, they did so in a manner that they did not fully control. To be sure, the Yaqui would not be a tribe without the support of people like the Spicers. But—as the cases explored in this study indicate—that is more a matter of the dynamic relationships between Yaqui creativity and the structuring power of imperialism than it is the will of individual anthropologists.

The Case

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2 It would be unfair to blame scholars like Hobsbawm and Ranger for the ways in which the invention of tradition framework has been deployed in relation to Indigenous peoples of North America (e.g., Haley and Wilcoxon 1997). Hobsbawm designed such a concept to target powerful, fascistic movements (e.g., the Third Reich) of the early and mid 20th century. As a Jew displaced by the rise of Nazi Germany, Hobsbawm along with fellow anti-nationalist scholars like Ernest Gellner had been the victims of these regimes and their invocation of deep, natural nationhood. Their scholarship was intended to speak to truth to power, not to engage in suspect games of sorting the “real” from the “fake.”
In the context of the US, anthropology and Indigenous politics are interconnected phenomena with points of intersection that are more often assumed than empirically explored. From the work of Lewis Henry Morgan to the construction of the Bureau of American Ethnology under John Wesley Powell in the late 19th century to the formation of university-based anthropology around Franz Boas in the early 20th century, encounters between (proto)anthropologists and Indigenous peoples constitute the very foundation of American anthropology. Natives served as research subjects while their communities functioned as laboratories of observation. Of course, they were rarely passive subjects. As scholars have shown, they also contributed greatly to the production of anthropological knowledge itself as intellectuals and researchers in their own right (Berman 1996; Blackhawk and Wilner 2018; Bruchac 2018). The contributions of Indigenous peoples to the field have been vital. In a very real sense, there is quite literally no American anthropology without Indians. Thus, one cannot tell the story of anthropology without them.

And what of anthropology’s role in Indigenous communities? Or, put differently, what of the ways in which Indigenous intellectuals have leveraged anthropology in their attempts to navigate US politics and maintain their existence as distinct communities? At the risk of oversimplifying the issue, while the question of Indigenous involvement in American anthropology can be thought of as a neatly dissected butterfly whose brilliance and grandeur have been put behind plexiglass for others to observe, the reverse is a hornet’s nest buzzing with confusion and fervor. Since the 1960s (if not earlier), there has been a growing assumption inside and outside of the discipline that portrays anthropology’s impact on Indigenous communities as one of unilateral disruption,
exploitation, and domination. This presumption has been met with an equally emphatic
counter-position that presents anthropology as being entirely innocent of any and all harm
and misery that has come to one of the nation-state’s most marginalized groups. This
second depiction leads to the logical conclusion that the deployment of anthropology by
Native peoples in their political struggles is an inherent good.

The present study follows a different line of research and argumentation. Taking
cues from self-reflexive anthropologists and historians of anthropology who suggest that
the discipline’s relationship with Indigenous groups and their struggles for political
viability in a colonial landscape has been infinitely more complex, paradoxical, and—at
times—transformative, I pursue a single in-depth case study concerning the ways in which
*Indigenous intellectuals* have operationalized anthropology in the construction and
reconstruction of an Indigenous group. Drawing selectively upon Gramscian Marxism,
the historiography of nationalism, and ethnohistory, I understand *Indigenous intellectuals*
to be historically produced individuals living among Indigenous groups in contexts where
their role is to transmit ideas between the group, civil society, and the settler government.
Indigenous intellectuals and Native communities are mutually constitutive. Groups
delegate representational authority to select individuals. These individuals help codify a
collective identify as they articular ideas about the group in the public arena. I take the
story of anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Southern Arizona as a node of
analysis that throws the intricacies of this relationship between anthropology and
Indigenous intellectuals into examinable relief.

While I will elaborate on their history shortly, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe offers an
instructive example of Indigenous political struggle in North America. The tribe is
largely composed of the descendants of individuals who migrated to the US from Sonora, Mexico in the late 19th and early 20th century. Motivated by the push of Mexican state violence and the pull of railroad and agricultural labor, Yaqui individuals and families moved through economic networks that stretched from Arizona to California. Significant numbers came to settle in Southern Arizona in and around the developing city of Tucson. In time, many aggregated into several urban villages (or barrios), one of the most prominent of which became known as Pascua Village located on the northwestern periphery of the city proper. Lacking any form of federal recognition or support as an Indigenous community, the Yaqui of Pascua Village managed to cultivate a niche for themselves within Tucson’s budding cultural tourism industry. Eventually, Pascua became ground zero for the Yaquis’ attempts to garner political recognition from the federal government. This resulted in the construction of a reservation on the southern outskirts of the city in the 1960s and, most unexpectedly, the federal recognition of the Yaqui–now Pascua Yaqui–as an American Indian Tribe in 1978.

Throughout this history, from the early days of Pascua Village to the conferral of recognition and beyond, Pascua Yaqui intellectuals maintained close ties with anthropologists in the Tucson area. A prominent and consistent one was Edward Spicer, arguably the most influential and well-known anthropologists of the Yaqui. Anthropologists like Spicer were more than just observers. They were active participants in the attempt to bring cultural and political viability to the people of Pascua. This study will show how anthropology in Southern Arizona has been adopted as a tool of Pascua Yaqui political representations, which has in turn moved the community from a diasporic, borderlands Indigenous group to a federally recognized American Indian Tribe. As I will
discuss in the chapters that follow, operating as intermediaries between the Yaqui, the
general public, and various levels of government, Indigenous intellectuals effectively
deployed anthropologists to reframe the Yaqui as a coherent cultural and political entity
capable of being selectively incorporated into the US body politic.

Main Arguments

Using a historical anthropological approach, this study illustrates three
interrelated arguments regarding the relationship between the history of anthropology and
Pascua Yaqui politics. To being with, the dichotomous view of anthropology as friend or
foe, dominator or liberator, to and of Native communities is not tenable in this particular
case. From the 1930s to the present, this relationship has been, if anything, a mixed bag.
To think about the history of anthropology and Pascua Yaqui politics in such a binary
manner yields very little insight. Additionally, building on the notion that the discipline
does not appear in this case as a handmaiden of colonialism or subaltern panacea,
anthropology was in many ways more of a mechanism selectively deployed by Yaqui
intellectuals. As I will show in the chapters that follow, there has been a long-term
pattern of Yaqui thinkers and advocates who used anthropological texts, institutions,
events, and individuals to bring about their own objectives—namely, to construct and
maintain the Pascua Yaqui as a culturally distinct and politically viable community in
Southern Arizona. Finally, as Yaquis have enrolled anthropology into their political
repertoire, they have subtly—but consequentially—shaped the formation of anthropology
itself. This confirms the findings of scholars such as Margaret Bruchac (2018) and Isaiah
Wilner (2013, 2015) who argue that Native peoples have played a heretofore
underappreciate role in the formation of the discipline and its key concepts. While their
contributions to anthropology may not have always been fully conscious or intentional, Yaqui intellectuals and their political projects certainly had a role to play.

Anthropology and Indigenous Peoples

Before delving into the details of the case at hand, it is important to explicate the problem that lies at the heart of this study: anthropology’s relationship with Indigenous peoples in the US. Contemporary meditations on the discipline’s involvement in the lives of American Indians invariably stem from historian Vine Deloria Jr.’s now canonical compendium of Indian thought and criticism *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (1969). Published in the fervor of the Red Power Movement, which leveraged the philosophy and direct-action tactics of the Civil Rights Movement for the purposes of ameliorating the political, social, and economic marginality of Indians in the US, *Custer* funneled the emotions of the time through Deloria’s unique blend of sardonic criticism. The book included an essay, which had been previously published for a much wider readership in *Playboy* magazine, cleverly titled “Anthropologists and Other Friends.” In a concise 22 pages, Deloria hilariously and irreverently paints the discipline as a horrific curse that perpetually plagues Indian peoples with misinformation. “Indians are…certain that Columbus brought anthropologists on his ships when he came to the New World. How else could he have made so many wrong deductions about where he was?” (Deloria 1969, 79). More than a mere bumbling nuisance, however, the anthropologist, according to Deloria, is also in some sense responsible for the objectification and subsequent destruction of Native communities.

Behind each successful man stands a woman and behind each policy and program with which Indians are plagued, if traced completely back to its origin, stands the
anthropologist... The fundamental thesis of the anthropologist is that people are objects for observation, people are then considered objects of experimentation, for manipulation, and for eventual extinction. The anthropologist thus furnishes the justification for treating Indian people like so many chessmen available for anyone to play with (1969, 81).

Cutting, matter-of-fact passages like these are legion in “Anthropologists and Other Friends.” As they pile up, the image of the anthropologist becomes increasingly malevolent and powerful.

The massive volume of useless knowledge produced by anthropologist attempting to capture real Indians in a network of theories has contributed substantially to the invisibility of Indian people today (1969, 81).

Over the years anthropologists have succeeded in burying Indian communities so completely beneath the mass of irrelevant information that the total impact of the scholarly community on Indian people has become one of simple authority (1969, 82, emphasis added).

Despite its ubiquity in present-day discussions, it would be wrongheaded to assume that Deloria’s critique of the discipline stood alone at the time of publication. Contrary to the impression one might take from Custer, anthropologists themselves were already examining their relationship with systems of power in and beyond the US (perhaps with less flair) by the time Deloria’s critique captured a wide readership. For instance, one year prior to the publication of Custer, Kathleen Gough offered a “New Proposal for Anthropologists,” which matter-of-factly labeled the discipline a “child of western imperialism” (1968, 1653). Several years later, the linguistic anthropologist Dell
Hymes produced *Reinventing Anthropology* (1972), “the anti-textbook of anthropology’s then mid-career political Left” (Silverstein 2010, 395). This collection of 16 essays (including Hymes’s introduction) called for a recognition of the field’s colonial roots and the nurturing of a self-reflexive examination of the ethnographer’s relationships with their “objects” of study. In 1973, Tala Asad curated the influential edited-volume, *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*. Asad too suggested that the discipline is bound up in a checkered history of European expansion. However, rather than rendering anthropology a simple handmaiden of coloniality that is intellectually complicit with projects of exploitation and conquest, Asad asserted that anthropology is rooted in an “unequal power encounter between the West and Third World which goes back to the emergence of bourgeois Europe, an encounter in which colonialism is merely one historical moment” (1973, 16). While Deloria was certainly not alone in his call for the appraisal of the discipline’s relationship with systems of power, his voice may have been the loudest and most resonant, especially for those working and living in Indian Country.

Additionally, people often forget that Deloria’s essay is not all defamation. Perhaps because of his close personal and professional association with anthropologists like Nancy Lurie and (later) Keith Basso, Deloria saw a future for the discipline. Consider this example of a more positive view of anthropology and its potential:

I would advocate a policy to be adopted by Indian Tribes which would soon clarify the respective roles of anthropologists and tribes. Each anthro desiring to study a tribe should be made to apply to the tribal council for permission only if he raised as a contribution to the tribal budget an among of money equal to the
amount he proposes to spend in his study. Anthropologist thus become productive members of Indian society instead of ideological vultures. (1969, 95)

However, even this suggestion is somewhat undercut with Deloria’s closing sentences, which once again castigates the “anthro” for exploiting Native peoples for their own intellectual ends and ends with a cosmic warning of chickens coming home to roost. “It would be wise for anthropologists to get down from their thrones of authority and PURE research and begin helping Indian tribes instead of preying on them. For the wheel of Karma grinds slowly but it does grind finely. And it makes a complete circle” (1969, 100). Thus, despite the intimation of redemption, Deloria ultimately arrives at a jaundiced view “the study of man.”

In the wake of Custer in some segments of the academy, it has become commonplace to view the history of anthropology as being intimately entwined with the domination of Indigenous peoples in the US. In other words, it has become something of a reflex to perpetuate Deloria’s notion of “simple authority.” This impulse has been met with an equally trenchant counter position, which defends anthropology from any and all accusation of complicity with colonialism. The gap between these two positions was illustrated nicely in 2014, a year which saw the publication of two provocative and wildly opposing perspectives. In the appropriately titled In Defense of Anthropology (2014), Herbert Lewis insists that “neither in location, timing, opportunity, intellectual interests, values, nor in the substance of their work did professional American anthropologists fit the profile of tools of colonialism” (2014, 81). With equal assuredness, Audra Simpson, in her much-lauded Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States (2014), argues the desire to “apprehend” socio-cultural difference makes it so that
anthropology “weds elegantly, effortlessly, and very cleanly with the imperatives of settler colonial projects…” (2014, 71). The two positions could not be any more opposed.

Even their conceptions of colonialism are of very different orientations. Simpson relies almost exclusively on the work of the late historian Patrick Wolfe to characterize Canadian and US authority as settler colonial. While I elaborate on the tenants of this literature below, settler colonialism is broadly defined by “a sustained institutional tendency to eliminate the Indigenous population” in order to appropriate land (1999, 163). Wolfe further reduces this definition to what he calls the “logic of elimination” (1991, 1999, 2006), which he and others following in his wake argue is a contiguous and pervasive fact of societies predicated on permanent foreign settlement (Morgensen 2011; Veracini 2010, 2015). Though Simpson is not as dogmatic in her characterization as Wolfe, her argument embraces this definition with little to no modification. Lewis, on the other hand, adopts a more bare-bones definition. “‘Colonialism’,” he tells us, “is not just any misrule, inequality, domination, but generally refers to the conquest and acquisition of foreign territory by a state and the subsequent rule over the land and its people to the advantage of the population of the controlling country” (Lewis 2014, 74).

As one might expect, these divergent conceptions allow for divergent views on anthropology’s implication in colonial projects. By narrowing his definition to material exploitation, Lewis negates the ideological dimensions of colonial rule and the ways in which the desire to civilize—but not necessarily exploit—has also ungirded Euro-American expansionism. As David Dinwoodie notes, neglecting this dimension of colonialism causes Lewis to skirt “the possibility—notwithstanding the fact that most anthropologists hold the best of intentions toward their subjects—that all of anthropological practice has
been subtly shaped by colonial ideologies” (Dinwoodie 2015, 126). In contrast, Simpson’s broad definition of settler colonialism as an omnipresent “logic” woven throughout settler society enables her to more readily render anthropological inquiry and settlement closely related, if not isomorphic, projects.

To be sure, the vast majority of practicing anthropologists likely fall somewhere in the middle of such polar opposite perspectives. A healthy dose of postmodern reflexivity during the 1980s (and prior) has helped to make the irreducible complexity of the anthropologist’s positionality vis-a-vis colonial legacies a discipline-wide point of consternation. Just as the majority of the US might not be as divided as the 24-hour news media portrays, anthropologist on the whole have more nuanced and mixed views of their discipline’s past (not to mention present). Voices like that of Lewis and Simpson are the extremes. That being said, they tend to garner a great deal of attention. Simpson’s book, for example, has earned a slew of accolades from such organizations as the American Anthropological Association, American Ethnological Society, American Studies Association, and Native American and Indigenous Studies Association. As a result, these accounts leave one with a binaristic view of anthropology’s relationship with Indigenous peoples. Captivated by the striking prose of both scholars, it is tempting to reduce the discipline to an extension of conquest or completely innocent of any such association.

More recently, scholars working at the blurry edges of anthropology and the history of anthropology have actively complicated this dichotomous view. Peoples such as Grant Arndt (2017), Michael Asch (2009, 2015), Judith Daubenmier (2008), Alice Kehoe (2014), and Joshua Smith (2015) argue that—contrary to previous critiques—the
discipline’s history is rife with cases of anthropologists who actively challenged colonialism and the elimination of Native peoples around the world either through overt activism or their academic writing. For example, by reassessing the work of A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, Asch has complicated Asad’s assertion that anthropologists of years past, despite tendencies toward progressive critiques of colonial practice, “chose nevertheless to live *professionally* at peace” with administrators and settlers (1973, 18). Asch acknowledges that due to Radcliffe-Brown’s unwillingness to engage in political controversies, “the picture that emerges is that he dedicated his energies to the development of the discipline… and offering practical advice to colonial authorities” (Asch 2009, 152). By reassessing several overlooked publications, Asch makes the case that Radcliffe-Brown “actively sought to undermine [colonial rule in Australia] in public debate and in scholarly discourse” (2009, 153). While researches such as Asch do not ignore the discipline’s deep historical entanglement with Euro-American expansion and settlement, they suggest that a “decolonial” anthropological future has its roots in an occluded disciplinary past.

This research dovetails with Indigenous actors who consistently engage anthropology in their pursuit of cultural and political revival. An important example can be found amongst the unacknowledged Indian tribes of California and their relationship with the voluminous writings of John Peabody Harrington. An eccentric ethnographer and linguist, Harrington produced over one million pages of field notes as an agent for the Bureau of American Ethnology. In the 1990s, unacknowledged tribes and their allied anthropological advocates began actively engaging Harrington’s corpus of notes to substantiate claims to federal resources and generate cultural revitalization (Field 2003;
Harrington was hardly a “decolonial” social justice warrior. He is now well known for his anti-Semitic attitudes (Laird 1993). That being said, the use of his papers in the present is an attempt to uncover something liberatory in the legacy of ethnographic entextualization.\(^3\)

Such approaches by no means require a Pollyannaish view of the discipline’s history. Even with this perspective, one can keep in mind the fundamentally paradoxical nature of anthropology’s relationship with the Indigenous peoples of North America (and the world more broadly). It is difficult to ignore how Euro-American expansion was on some level “always part of the reality anthropologists sought to understand, and of the way they sought to understand it” (Asad 1992, 315). While their knowledge was often marginal and their participation dispensable to colonial projects (James 1973; Kuper 1973), one cannot deny that anthropologists worked in “colonial situations” of one form or another (to borrow George Stockings terminology [1992]). The fundamentally compromised nature of the context in which anthropologists operated and continue to operate opens up the possibility for their efforts to be subtly shaped by colonial ideologies and practices. This subtle shaping might then allow more powerful actors to operationalize anthropological efforts for political ends that violate the personal stances of anthropologists (e.g., Price 2008, 2016).

This ironic twist also betrays the possibility that anthropologists might not have the power that has been attributed to them by people like Deloria or the postmodernist

who focus on textual authority. Despite their otherwise stimulating attention to the situated and inherently partial nature of anthropological knowledge, it is possible to read James Clifford (1988), Johannes Fabian (1983), and others and presume that the act of writing is a powerful moment in which anthropologist generate their seemingly unassailable authority over the “Other.” In other words, it is tempting to see writing as the point in which “simple authority” (à la Deloria) is constituted. While this is by no means untrue, such a perspective downplays what Richard Fox calls the “factory conditions” of academia (1991, 9). Fox has in mind such factors as the always scarce funding for projects and the trials and tribulations of securing a professorship, which condition what and how anthropologists write. To this I would add the legacies of coloniality congealed in the bureaucratic institutions of the state, especially when we are dealing with anthropologists who find themselves awkwardly positioned at the center of Indigenous-state negotiations.4

Approaches to the History of Anthropology

This perspective on the discipline and its entwining with Indigenous political struggles directs attention to the following question: why do the history of anthropology to begin with?5 Put differently, what is the value of documenting and analyzing this

4 David Graeber makes a similar point in his reflection on historical accounts of the development of anthropological theory:
   How did the earlier split between idealists and materialists relate to the larger political economy of the time? How did each relate to the particular ways the larger political economy was refract through the structure of the university, and the broader institutional conditions under which anthropologists produce their work?...This tendency to treat academic practice in idealist terms, that is, as if it takes place in a kind of conceptual bubble separate from economic, political, or even institutional constraints, is still very much with us. (Graeber 2016)

5 Principled explorations of the discipline’s past owe a great debt to A. Irving Hallowell’s foundational assertion that the history of the discipline be understood as an
ambivalent legacy? Who does it benefit? The cultivation of a self-reflexive perspective for practicing anthropologists has long been the name of the game for anthropologists who choose to do the history of anthropology (e.g., Asch 2009, 2015; Darnell 1977, 2001; Smith 2015). In certain respects, this is a gussied-up version of the old adage: those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it. We can conclude that the history of anthropology has a similar function for Native communities and Native anthropologist (Simpson 2014; Smith 2012). Exploring the history of the discipline provides a means to “recapture” anthropology (to borrow Fox’s phrasing [1991]) and make it more conducive to the very real political struggles of Indigenous communities. Despite my reservations noted above, Simpson does this with remarkable precision in her ethnography of the political struggles of Iroquois peoples and her own home community of Kahnawà:ke as she presents her concept of “ethnographic refusal” (2014). This “ethnographic refusal,” Simpson explains, is an anthropolological methodology that “acknowledges the asymmetrical power relations that inform the research and writing about native lives and politics” and in turn refuses to write in a way that might compromise hard won and always precarious tribal sovereignty (Simpson 2014, 104-105). Simpson’s cultivation of ethnographic refusal is informed by her historicization of disciplinary formation and its relationship to ongoing histories of settler coloniality. Specifically, her approach is shaped by her account of the formation of what she calls the “Iroquois canon,” a “regulatory body of knowledge” manifested in the form of anthropological (and

“anthropological problem” (1974[1965], 305). This is to say, rather than constructing decontextualized histories of ideas, scholars would do well to turn their attention to “the cultural context and historical circumstances out of which formulations of anthropological questions must have developed and suggests that, at this level, one may find parallels in early western culture to non-western culture” (1974[1965], 305).
historical) monographs that have constructed Kahnawà:ke as a place of cultural
degeneration and loss, which, according to Simpson, has been conditioned by historical
processes (2014, 70, 93, 112-114).

Despite their important implications for developing a more ethnical and
politically-minded discipline, such self-reflexive approaches have a tendency to intersect
with legacies of positivist and presentist narratives of the history of anthropology. As the
intellectual historian Robert Launay has recently noted, in years past,

 positivist histories of the discipline…were concerned with distinguishing
between ‘good’ and comparatively less ethnocentric representations, harbingers of
the discipline to come, as opposed to ‘bad’ pejorative representations of others...
(2018, 8)

While such histories are, as Launay admits, “no longer in fashion,” the tendency “to
interpret the past in terms of the preoccupations of the present” remains (2018, 9). To
categorize anthropology’s past in terms of “good” and “bad” runs the risk of reiterating a
presentist view. Presentism, as described by the noted historian of anthropology George
Stocking, is a form of historical analysis that “wrenches the individual historical
phenomenon from the complex network of its contemporary context in order to see it in
abstracted relationship to analogues in the present…” (1965, 211; see also Butterfield
1931 for a more detailed discussion of presentism). Rather than arriving at a point in
which the past can be understood on its own terms, in the hands of presentism, “history
becomes the field for a dramatic struggle of children of light and children of dark”
Despite their numerous innovations and attempts to determine the disciplines complicity with colonial domination and even more nuanced attempts to identify past cases of anti-colonial struggle within the discipline, such approaches unintentionally veer toward the reproduction of presentist accounts.

However, not all conjunctions with presentism are accidental or subtle. There is perhaps no grander instantiation of an intentional and explicit propagation of a presentist history of anthropology than Marvin Harris’s *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* (1968). In this epic, 600-plus page survey of the formation of anthropological theories of culture, Harris portrays disciplinary history as a movement from a noble “nomothetic” tradition in search of laws, origins, and causality to a misguided “idiographic” orientation that stresses the “unique and nonrepetitive aspects of history” (1968, 2). Harris makes no bones about the objective laying behind such a narrative: “My main reason for writing this book is to reassert the methodological priority of the search for the laws of history in the science of man” (1968, 3). More precisely, he is concerned with rendering “idiographic” paradigms unscientific schisms and touting the legitimacy of his own brand of nomothetic anthropology, “cultural determinism,” which emphasizes the primacy of techno-economic and techno-environmental determinism (Harris 1968, 4-5, 634-687).

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6 Not without reason, several scholars have labeled Stocking a “historicist,” one who studies the past for the sake of the past alone (Darnell 1971, 84, 2001, 1; Hancock 2008, 171). Stocking certainly cottoned to historicism fearing the oversimplification and distortions of presentism, but he did not reject presentism altogether. Rather, he argued for an “enlightened presentism”–a mode of analysis that views the cultivation of critical accounts of the past for the enhancement of explorations of the present to be a necessary component of disciplinary practice. “Precisely because most of us are practicing behavioral scientists, we are and indeed must be, interested in thought as well as thinking, in rationality as well as reasonableness–not in absolutistic terms, but in the context of on-going attempts to develop generalized explanations of human behavior at the highest level that present knowledge permits” (Stocking 1965, 215).
Thus, this magisterial journey through several centuries of anthropological thought is intentionally and explicitly premised on the presentist impulse to judge the past in terms of a contemporary intellectual strategy.

For historians, the function of the history of anthropology has been less practical. In a sense, they have been the ones that better suggest that the history of anthropology has something to say about the world and the issues in it, not just the discipline itself (e.g., Baker 1998, 2010; Launay 2018). For instance, Lee Baker, an anthropologist by training whose work is firmly rooted in historical practice, examines American anthropology’s role in the construction of race and racism in the early to mid-20th century US (1998). Using the landmark and diametrically opposed Supreme Court rulings *Plessy v. Ferguson* and *Brown v. the Board of Education* as his barometer for the changing nature of race relations in US politics, Baker documents the ways in which anthropology was appropriated by politicians, popular media, and the courts to affirm and, later, challenge a racialized worldview steeped in Social Darwinism and eugenics. During the 1890s, amateur and professional anthropological thought, encapsulated in the works of Josiah Nott, Daniel G. Brinton, and Frederic Putnam, affirmed the presumed racial inferiority of African Americans codified in *Plessy*. Importantly, Baker identifies a notable shift in this history. With care and precision, he shows how by the mid-20th century, African American intellectuals and leaders selectively adopted anthropology—namely the work of Franz Boas—in their efforts to affirm notions of racial equality. Thus, Baker documents the underappreciated role of marginalized intellectuals within the

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7 Baker holds a PhD in anthropology and a position in anthropology at Duke University. However, his work is exclusively historical.
Boasian paradigm and the ways in which they challenged and shaped the status quo as well as the paradoxically liberating and normalizing potentiality of anthropological thought.

Of course, while anthropologists and historians might have different objectives for disciplinary history, one does not necessarily need to resign themselves to one or the other approach. Margaret Bruchac’s attention to the relationship between anthropologists and their Indigenous “informants” is highly instructive in this regard (2018). In recounting the history of several working relationships between Indigenous individuals and anthropologists, Bruchac identifies the ways in which Native interlocutors shaped early 20th century anthropological research. Rather than seeing these peoples as being complicit with the intertwined projects of salvage ethnography and Native erasure, Bruchac, drawing upon correspondences and field notes, frames these efforts of engagement as “situated strategies of survivance” designed to benefit Native peoples and minimize harm to their communities (2018, 176, 188). From this broader historical finding, Bruchac identifies ways of resolving modern problems related to museums whose holdings are composed of objects acquired through early 20th century salvage anthropology. In the attempt to repatriate their collections, institutions often have trouble determining to whom to give an object due to a lack of clear provenance. Bruchac proposes a solution informed by disciplinary history:

To address these challenges, I suggest that we retrospectively examine the relations among participants at each moment of acquisition and map the cartography of object circulation. It is especially helpful (in many cases, necessary) to do this research while consulting with contemporary Indigenous
interlocutors who hold tribal information relevant to those historical objects. By using this approach, I have found (despite warnings from skeptical curators) that is often possible to resolve some of the mysteries surrounding object provenance and meaning. (2018, 183)

Though she does not frame it in these terms, in Bruchac’s hands, presentist concerns (i.e., repatriation) cannot be fully addressed without some form of principled historicist examination of anthropology’s entangled relationship with Indigenous individuals and communities. In other words, by documenting the obscured contributions of Indigenous intellectuals to the anthropological project, Bruchac simultaneously develops a means to understand a pressing concern of the present. This study follows a similar path.\(^8\)

As will become apparent in the chapters that follow, this approach compels me to view anthropology neither as child of the light nor a child of the dark, but as a paradoxical endeavor historically tied to the “irrevocable process of transmutation” (Asad 1992, 314) that is colonial and imperial expansion. This is a discipline whose authority over its subjects is relatively limited in comparison to the political systems in which it operates. If we look at the case of the Pascua Yaqui through such a lens, we come to see anthropology in a more complex and nuanced light that exceeds the bounds of Lewis’s or Simpson’s characterizations. However, in order to tell this kind of history, I require concepts capable of addressing the complexities of these paradoxes.

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\(^8\) Similar approaches that balance the historicist and presentist impulses of the history of anthropology can be found in Dinwoodie 1999, 2010, 2016; Field 2003, 2013; Wilner 2013, 2015.
Though this is in many ways a straightforward microhistorical narrative of the relationship between a discipline and Indigenous intellectuals, I approach the case with a theoretical tool kit that accounts for the intertwined nature of science and politics and the structural constraints in which anthropology and Indigenous struggles take place. More precisely, I deploy concepts that help make sense of the activities of Yaqui intellectuals and their engagements with other types of intellectuals—namely anthropologists.

To begin with, my analysis flows through the prism of historical ontology. Articulated most clearly by the philosopher Ian Hacking, historical ontology is a field of inquiry rooted in the writings of the premier post-structuralist Michel Foucault and his essay “What is Enlightenment” (1984). In this piece, Foucault considers the ways people constitute themselves as particular kinds of subjects along an axis of power, knowledge, and ethics. However, as Hacking argues, historical ontology can also be understood more expansively as a mode of constructionist analysis that stresses a dynamic relationship between all sorts of subjectivities, ideas, and institutions and their corresponding socio-political matrices (Hacking 2002, 2). Hacking stresses that understanding how these formations come into being requires more than highlighting the structural conditions in which they take shape, especially when we are dealing with human subjects, who consciously engage the mechanism of their constitution (Hacking 1999, x). As Hacking puts it “categories of people come into existence at the same time as kinds of people come into being to fit those categories, and there is a two-way interaction between these processes” (2002, 48). Thus, in contrast to primordialist and rigid nominalist traditions of ontology, Hacking’s “dynamic” brand of historical ontology stresses the inherently
interactive nature of subject formation. The subject whose historical ontology lies at the center of this study is the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. However, I am chiefly interested in the role that anthropology has played in that process.

To trace the complexities of the historically specific circumstances in which anthropology has participated in the construction of the tribe, I deploy the concept of “assemblage.” As used by Michelle Murphy, assemblage refers to “an arrangement of discourses, objects, practices, and subject positions that work together within a particular discipline or knowledge tradition” (2006, 12). While the concept bears a resemblance to the much-touted notion of “network” as used in Actor-Network Theory (ANT) (not to mention its more overt Foucauldian aspects [e.g., discourse and power/knowledge]), assemblage offers important utilities not present in the notion of network. Most closely associated with the progenitor of ANT Bruno Latour, network refers to heterogenous and mutable associations of actors (Latour 2005, 128, 131; Law 1992, 381). While the concept offers a productive, de-essentialized and underdetermined view of “the social,” it can artificially flatten the historically conditioned topographies of power woven throughout shifting associations of actors, ideas, and institutions. This limitation is most apparent in Latour’s blanket assertion that “[a]n invisible agency that makes no difference, produces no transformation, leaves no trace, and enters no account is not an agency. Period. Either it does something or it does not” (Latour 2005, 53). While Latour is trying to stave off the tendencies of social theorists to make a priori, abstract statements about the existence of certain social subjectivities (e.g., race, class, and gender) and structures (e.g., The State, The Market, Capitalism, etc.), he fails to realize that there are plenty of “invisible actors” who play vital roles in the maintenance of social
life without registering a clear material trace. As Susana Leigh Star has suggested, the invisibility of agencies is a mark of power, for in order for networks to run smoothly many people must suffer silently (Bowker and Star 1999; Star 1991, 43). Invisibility and marginality are not natural phenomenon, which is to say, following Annemarie Mol, that they are “political ontologies”—social realities that are not given but are made possible by relationships of power (1999, 74-75). Furthermore, if we include Murphy’s interventions, we see that political ontologies are also bound up in malleable “patterns of arrangement that [are] repeated” across time and space (2006, 7). In other words, the invisibilities that Latour eschews are products of history whose conditions of possibility are not beyond empirical analysis.

Assemblage’s capacity for more detailed attention to power and history makes this a more apt concept for analyzing the construction and reconstruction of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. The concept sensitizes the analytical lens to the actions of the multiply marginalized—in this case, Yaqui intellectuals. These are people who did not necessarily leave an overt mark on the historical record but whose influence can nevertheless be discerned through careful readings of anthological archives and ethnographic publications supplemented with oral histories, newspaper reports, government records, and other pieces of documentary evidence. Thus, this concept allows me to account for the heterogenous labor that has contributed to the formation of the tribe without losing site of the shifting hierarchies of power woven throughout the process. Additionally, as used in this study, assemblage evokes both the heterogenous affiliation of actors and power dynamics as well as the very act of constituting such affiliations. As will become
apparent in the chapters that follow, the individuals operating in this study are both agents within assemblages and assemblage makers.

While historical ontology and assemblage provide a useful prism through which to analyze my data, this study requires additional conceptual tools to characterize the political dynamics embedded in each assemblage. As previously noted, the critical literature on anthropology’s relationship with Indigenous peoples has often invoked the term *colonialism* in order to characterize the conditions in which scholars and Natives encounter one another. In the case of the US, this has more recently turned to the more specific invocation of *settler colonialism*.

Though this is a vast, emergent subdiscipline whose case studies range from Australia (e.g., Ford 2010; Wolfe 1999) to Israel/Palestine (e.g., Salaita 2006; Veracini 2010), the central theoretical tenants of settler colonial studies can be traced to the historian Patrick Wolfe. Distinguishing settler colonialism from other colonial projects and genocidal practices is what Wolfe has termed a “logic of elimination” in which the primary motive is to replace the Indigenous population with a foreign society who holds dominion over stolen land (2006, 390). Land and its permanent acquisition, Wolfe tells his readers, constitutes “settler colonialism’s specific, irreducible element” (2006, 388). Importantly, Wolfe shows that, in this process, “elimination” is not limited to the physical destruction of Native bodies (although that can be a major component). More often than not, settler colonialism operates through diverse practices of assimilation (Wolfe 2006, 397, 401).

As an analytic, settler colonialism accurately captures periods in US history where the federal government actively worked to remove, assimilate, or exterminate Indigenous
peoples so as to facilitate the expansion of the young nation-state and underwrite its specious claim to an inherent sovereignty. This includes the removal of groups like the Cherokee from their homelands in the Southeast to free up space for Anglo-American settlement; the implementation of the Dawes Act, which sought to break up collectively held tribal land into individual parcels so as to incorporate Native peoples into US economic, social, and political life as individuals; and the Indian Wars of the late 19th century, which saw the horrors of Wounded Knee in South Dakota (Dunbar-Ortiz 2014; Hixson 2013).

What is less clear is how well the label applies to US-Indian history as a whole. There are numerous instances in which federal policy has been oriented toward the recognition—albeit partial—of Indigenous sovereignty and the preservation of Native culture. The Commerce Clause of the Constitution, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, and the Trade and Intercourse Act of 1790 indirectly affirmed the status of tribes as distinct, foreign political entities (Brunyeel 2007, 11; Wilkins and Tsianina 2001, 102-103, 148-149). The (in)famous Supreme Court ruling Cherokee Nation v. Georgia in the mid-19th century introduced the category “domestic dependent nations,” a qualified recognition of the “inherent—though diminished—sovereignty” of Indigenous groups (Wilkins and Tsianina 2001, 84). The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 established mechanisms by which tribes could generate councils and constitutions so as to exercise limited self-government (Taylor 1980). The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1935 established a regulatory body to promote “the development… and the expansion of the
market for the products of Indian art and craftsmanship.”\textsuperscript{9} In 1978, Congress passed legislation to establish a formal process for federal recognition (Miller 2004). Taken together, these examples suggest that US Indian policy is less of straight-line heading toward elimination and more of “pendulum” swinging back and forth between always partial but nevertheless substantial acknowledgement and an absolute curtailment of Indigenous political and cultural survival (Biolsi 2007).

Importantly, Native and non-Native scholars from across the social sciences and humanities have cautioned that recognition, despite its apparent departure from legacies of termination, can itself be the lupine logic of elimination in sheep’s clothing (Barker 2011; Coulthard 2014; Povinelli 2002; Simpson 2014). These studies illustrate how Indigenous sovereignty is recognized, but always in highly qualified manner that renders tribes sub-national entities whose members must substantiate their claims to a largely imagined “Indianness.”\textsuperscript{10} This is a vital critique that underscore the indispensability of a settler colonial perspective. However, these scholars are not solely concerned with settlement not are they resigned to subsuming every assertion of state power under the adjective “settler colonial.” For while elimination is no doubt a significant and

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\textsuperscript{10} While I agree with the notion that federal recognition is not what it purports to be and that it does just as much if not more to underwrite the power of the settler state than Indian tribes (as will be illustrated in chapters three and four), I am cautious of the impulse segments to reduce all forms of recognition to elimination. When ungrounded in case studies, this theoretical reflex can downplay the ethnogenetic (albeit power-laden) nature of US-Indian relations.
foundational part of the US’s story—one that cannot be overlooked, it is not the whole story.

This point has been made directly and indirectly by a number of people working within the settler colonial framework work who are pushing the field into new and more challenging territories. Without ignoring the violence of settlement, these scholars approach US colonialism not as a free-standing static structure but as a “dynamic historical assemblage” bound up in domestic settlement, overseas imperial projects, and global diasporas (Goldstein 2014, 5; see also Aikau 2010; Vimalassery 2014). Such a perspective pushes against the tendency to isolate settler colonialism from other forms of exploitation and domination. As Joanne Barker warns, “the nation-state is treated within ‘settler colonialism’ as having moved beyond its own tragically imperial and colonial history to be something else, still albeit colonial, but not quite entirely colonial because it is ‘reconciled’ and ‘consistent’” (Barker 2011). The implication of this work is that while settlement cannot be cast aside, it must be understood within a broader framework that is inclusive of the multifarious nature of US history.

This need is doubly important in the case of the Pascua Yaqui. As Jodi Byrd (2011) and Shona Jackson (2014) have argued, analysis of settler states must make room for the experiences of “arrivants”—people who have entered the lands of other Indigenous communities as a result of colonization and diaspora. These subjects do not fit easily into categories of “settler” or “Indian.” This is especially true of the Yaqui, who were most certainly “Indians” when they arrived in Arizona—just not the kind that was legible to the federal government (Rensink 2018; Schulze 2018). Furthermore, while they entered a land forged in the flames of settler coloniality, their relationship with the federal
government has never quite resembled elimination in the manner envisioned by Wolfe. Therefore, I take a cue from Byrd, who opens up her analytical aperture by zooming out from the *settle colonial* US to address the full scope of an *imperial* US.

While Byrd invokes a theoretical apparatus replete with the philosophical frameworks of Slavoj Zizek to make her case for an analysis of empire, I turn to the work of historians and historical anthropologists of empire whose sensibility are better suited to an archival-based study such as this. Traditionally, “empires are large political units, expansionist or with a memory of power extended over space and polities, that maintain distinction and hierarchy as they incorporate new people” (Burbank and Cooper 2012, 8; see also Howe 2010; Osterhammel 2010, 21). In contrast to colonialism, a subset of imperial practices concerned with maintaining the distinction of the incorporated population, empire’s rule through more varied tactics. At one extreme, these expansive political entities “recognize the multiplicity of peoples and their varied customs as an ordinary fact of life” (Burbank and Cooper 2012, 12). At the other, “drawing a strict boundary between insiders and ‘barbarian’ outsiders” is common practice (Burbank and Cooper 2010, 12). More often than not, these two poles come to overlap, paradoxically, “[reproducing] distinction among collectivities while subordinating them to…the ruling authority” (Cooper 2005, 27; Sider 1987).

Conceptualizing the US as an empire is by no means uncomplicated. In the wake of 9/11 and the US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, “US empire” became common terminology amongst mainstream pundits. However, such classifications have been more
'accusatory and celebratory than analytical. Following Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, I am less concerned with asking the “is it or isn’t it” question than I am in addressing the nation-state’s “selective use of imperial strategies” (2010, 456). If the scope of inquiry is limited to US-Indian relations, imperial practices of incorporation and differentiation are as old as the polity itself (Byrd 2011; Williams 1980). As becomes plain in the chapters that follow, this approach can be applied to diasporic Indigenous groups of uncertain status as well.

I make particular use of the concept of “imperial repertoires” as described by Burbank and Cooper. Imperial repertoires refer to “the different strategies empires chose as they incorporated diverse peoples into the polity while sustaining or making distinctions among them” (2010, 2). As noted above, these strategies oscillate between poles of incorporation and differentiation. This concept helps us see the political circumstances in which anthropologist and the Pascua Yaqui operated not as an abstract structure but as a series of shifting and often paradoxical practices and ideologies. Such a perspective is more inclusive of the Pascua Yaqui’s experience of US politics. As we shall see, Yaquis often found themselves on a spectrum of incorporation and differentiation—not simple elimination.

Conceptions of imperial power enables me to examine practices that exist outside the restrictive settler colonial framework. As I will discuss in the following chapters, indirect colonialism has been an important feature of US Indian policy. Following

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11 The late 19th and early 20th century discourse of US empire relating to the acquisition of former Spanish colonies is instructive in this regard. Similar to talk of empire in the early 2000s, groups like the American Anti-Imperial League and Roosevelt Republicans spoke of “empire” in a fairly uncritical fashion (Tompkins 1972).
historians and historical anthropologists of colonialism, I understand indirect colonialism to be an asymmetrical relationship of power between a polity and a nominally sovereign unit, in which the dominant entity justifies its existence with a discourse of Indigenous self-determination and cultural preservation (Beidelman 2014; Dirks 2002; Fisher 1991; Iliffe 1979; Ranger 1983; Mamdani 1999). Indirect rule is one amongst many strategies used by imperial regimes to constitute, maintain, and justify control over disparate populations. In stark contrast to settler colonialism, indirect rule does not pursue Indigenous elimination. Rather, it benefits from the construction and control of a semi-autonomous Indigenous political body.\(^{12}\) As I will illustrate in chapter three, elements of this practice could be unknowingly reproduced by anthropologists as they worked on behalf of Native peoples even if that was not their intention.

By utilizing these frameworks and concepts—historical ontology, assemblage, and imperial repertoires, I analyze anthropology and Pascua Yaqui encounters as sites of assemblage conditioned by imperial repertoires, which have in turn shaped the actions of anthropologists and the political future of the Pascua Yaqui.

Chapter Outline

Leveraging archival documents and oral historical data, I explicate my argument that anthropology functioned as a consequential tool of Pascua Yaqui political recognition by homing in on four prominent cases of engagement between Pascua Yaqui

intellectuals and anthropologists. These cases range from (but are not exclusive to) the early 1920s to the early 1980s. Chapter one traces the contours of the historical field that will follow in later chapters by providing an overview of Yaqui history and a biographic sketch of Edward Spicer. It also highlights key themes that will reappear including Yaqui engagement with imperial power and the woven nature of science and politics in the anthropology that formed around and within the Yaqui of Tucson. Chapter two documents the construction and ethnographic objectification of Pascua Village to show how Indigenous elites engaged anthropologists and their material productions (i.e., ethnographies, pamphlets, artwork, and ethnographic film) to mark Pascua as a distinctly Yaqui and Indian place. Chapter three turns to the formation of the Pascua Yaqui Pueblo Reservation arguing that anthropological intervention in the reservation’s formation resulted in a greater degree of institutionalization and bureaucratization of Pascua Yaqui identity and political structures, which extended the US’s control over the community. Chapter four probes the shared terrain of Indigenous political recognition and anthropological knowledge production through the formation of Edward Spicer’s theory of cultural persistence known as “enduring people.” Examining the construction of “enduring people” from the late 1930s to the early 1980s, I show how Spicer, a longstanding applied anthropological interlocutor of the Pascua Yaqui, and his concept were shaped by the politics of recognition and specific Pascua Yaqui intellectuals. Chapter five turns to the 89th Wenner-Gren International Symposium on Yaqui Ritual and Performance, which developed in the wake of federal recognition. I show how an anthropological conference became a sight for the reconfiguration of anthropology’s institutional identity and the Pascua Yaqui as an American Indian Tribe, naturalizing the
community’s newfound political status and the plenary authority of the US over Indigenous peoples—including migrant groups. I conclude with a summation of my finding and a reflection on their implication for the relationship between anthropology and contemporary Indigenous political struggles. More precisely, I discuss the importance of a relational view of indigeneity and imperialism and the value of studying the history of anthropology from the margins.
Chapter One: The Yaqui and Spicer

Introduction

In order to begin to unpack the complex relationship between anthropologists and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, I must first trace the contours of Yaqui history in and beyond Arizona as well as the life and career of Edward Spicer so as to identify points in this broader history that I will examine more closely in later chapters. However, this is not intended to be a mere litany of chronological events. Rather, I identify two common themes present throughout this study: active Yaqui engagement with imperial power and the braided nature of science and politics in the anthropology that formed around and within the Yaqui of Tucson. I frame these dual historical overviews with the literature on cultural brokerage and intellectuals to better conceptualize the case of the Pascua Yaqui and the co-production of science and politics to understand Spicer’s brand of anthropology.

Brokers and Intellectuals

As alluded to in the introduction, the contemporary, federally recognized Pascua Yaqui Tribe is composed of the descendants of Indians from Northern Mexico who first came to the US in larger numbers during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. By the time individuals and families began to take up residence in the developing city of Tucson, Yaquis had already experienced centuries of interactions with Europeans and European-descended settlers in Mexico. Much has been made of the Yaqui’s “resistance” to Spanish and Mexican rule (e.g., Hu-Dehart 1984). As a result, there is a tendency to draw a caricature of Yaqui-European relations as being one of deadliest enemies, hell-bent on the other’s destruction. In contrast, I follow Raphael Brewster Folsom’s recent revisionist
history, which suggests that “the Yaqui people were not fearsome enemies of the colonial government but were in fact its most valued allies” (2014, 3). While this relationship was certainly marred by periods of violence (as Folsom notes), this was because of breakdowns in Yaqui-state negotiations and the overreach of state power in the north, a region largely under Indigenous control since the arrival of the Spanish. Building upon Folsom’s thesis, I highlight the role of Yaqui leaders who devised ways of dealing with intrusion and displacement.

Ethnohistorians such as Daniel Richter (1988) and Margert Connell Szasz (1994) have proffered the concept of the cultural broker to discuss the lives of individuals (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) who operate between and within Native and non-Native communities to facilitate communication, collaboration, and recognition across lines of difference (see also Wolf 1956). This concept compels ethnohistorians to study colonial relationships not from the bottom-up or the top-down manner, but in a middle-out fashion, as it were, which in turn leads the discussion towards an optic that sees Indigenous and settler communities and identities as products of colonial negotiations (e.g., Clifton 1989; Iverson 1981, 1994; White 1988). Though the cultural broker concept enjoyed popularity during the late 1980s and early 1990s, it has since fallen out of fashion in the history of Native North America in favor of more tribe-specific studies that have a tendency to conflate contemporary ethnonational and territorial identities with the heterogeneous and shifting peoples of the past. Lost within such accounts are the creative individuals who labor to bring nations and homelands into being (notable exceptions include Cahill 2012; Meeks 2007; Rosenthal 2012; Jagodinsky 2016).
Adopting a historical and symbolic approach, sociologists of nationalism such as Anthony D. Smith (1983, 1986, 2009) and John Hutchinson (1987; 1999) suggest that brokers of the type described above have played significant roles in the making of modern cultural nationalism. Coming from a novel “secular educated professional middle class,” such individuals use notions of a “golden age” and “homeland” to create and sustain group stability during periods of uncertainty, if not outright chaos (Hutchinson 1999, 396, 403; 2016). Hutchinson conceptualizes these actors as “mediators” who are not simply looking to reject political incorporation in favor of a rigid and primordial differentiation (1999, 397). Such a characterization presupposes “Western oppositions of tradition vs. change, custom vs. rationality” (Sahlins 1999, xi). These individuals are far more creative and innovative in their engagements with the political forces that surround them. What they do is perhaps more accurately captured in Marshall Sahlins’s notion of the “indigenization of modernity” (1999). That is to say, they self-consciously incorporate exogenous elements into their locally constituted social systems, thereby “[creating] their own cultural versions of modernity” (1999, xi).

In so much as these mediators transmit ideas within civil society and between government and civil society, they also fall under Gramsci’s influential definition of an intellectual (Adamson 1980, 143). When these individuals bear a close connection to the subaltern communities whose interest they represent, they might more accurately be seen as “organic intellectuals” (Gramsci 2000, 301).13 Anthropologists of Native North

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13 This distinction between traditional and organic is also productive for thinking about the relationship between Yaquis and anthropologists. With their positioning in the university, the anthropologists featured in this study constitute a classic case of the traditional intellectual. To be sure, their applied efforts trouble the boundary between traditional and organic as they split their allegiance between the university and the
America have deployed this concept to analyze the work of Indigenous actors who broker deals between subaltern groups and the dominant society (Field 1999a, 2003; Nagata 1987). With elements of cultural brokerage, national mediation, organic intellectualism, Yaqui intellectuals have been just as important to Yaqui history as the romanticized warriors of the 19th century.

The Yaqui Indians (in Arizona and Beyond)

At the time of their first encounter with the Spanish conquistador Diego de Guzmán in 1533, the Yaqui lived in some 80 small, loosely interconnected settlements of roughly 30 people along a river that flowed through the present-day state of Sonora into what would become known as the Sea of Cortés and later the Gulf of California. The river allowed for a productive agricultural existence. These people spoke a distinct language later classified as part of the Uto-Aztecan language family. How they referred to themselves prior to the arrival of Europeans is uncertain. The ethnonym “Yaqui” appears to have been in use since the time of contact. As Spicer noted,

Spaniards began to employ the word “Hiaqui,” or a related term “Yaquimi,” for the river on which the people lived and probably for the people themselves from communities they study. Nevertheless, their relatively separate existence from the day-to-day life of the community renders them more traditional than organic. In contrast, Yaqui intellectuals, who are immersed in the quotidian struggles of their community with limited and often indirect ties to the university, are more of the organic variety. Furthermore, Gramsci’s notes that until subaltern groups come to prominence, traditional intellectuals will be required to fill a leadership vacuum (Adamson 1980, 143). However, once the group is established, organic intellectuals will supplant traditional intellectuals (Adamson 1980, 144). This implies that while these two types of thinkers and mediators operate within a common matrix, there is the potential for conflict between the organic and traditional. This will become evident in chapter four and five as we begin to see Yaqui intellectuals pull away from and question the authority of the anthropologists that they worked with for decades.
the time of first contacts with them in 1533…The standard usage in the Yaqui language, however, is “Yoeme.” For this term we have less sure record of continuous use than for the term “Yaqui.” (Spicer 1980, 288)

As Guzmán and his companions quickly learned, the people of the river were a formidable military force. They defended their territory from Guzmán’s encroachments in a violent encounter (Spicer 1980, 5). While the Spanish would have success incorporating the neighboring Mayo, the militarily dexterous Yaqui kept imperial forces at bay throughout the 16th century. However, in 1617, the Yaqui established relations with Jesuit missionaries. This decision to embrace some semblance of Spanish colonial authority was likely a strategic attempt to protect themselves from the violent intrusions of Captain Hurdaide (Folsom 2014, 74-84). By 1623, missionaries baptized a reported 30,000 Yaqui. Religious authorities worked to aggregate these converts into eight towns with limited Jesuit and Spanish military control (Spicer 1980, 15).

In these towns, Yaqui life changed greatly. Following the concentration of the 80 communities into eight towns, economic, cultural, and political transformations followed. Subsistence practices changed as the Yaqui began to develop a surplus of agricultural staples for the mission system. This also saw the introduction of new products such as cattle and wheat (Spicer 1980, 30). Relatedly, the Yaqui grew more integrated into the colonial economic system by raising sheep for wool production and performing domestic labor in Spanish villages and cities (Spicer 1980, 30). Within the eight new towns, the

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14 One of the first documented accounts of the Yaqui sheds circumstantial light on the origins of this term. According to Andrés Pérez de Ribas, in 1645, Jesuits encountered a group of Indians who said, “Don’t you see we are hiaqui, ‘the ones who make sounds’?” (quote in Shorter 2009, 7).
typical Spanish colonial political systems took form with the Yaqui filling the positions of town governor, assistants, sheriff, church governor, and military commander (Spicer 1980, 37). Of course, these Yaqui officials were subordinate to the Spanish authorities of Sonora. Religious practices and beliefs became another vital site of socio-cultural transformation. From the fusion of pre-colonial Yaqui ceremonies and Catholic doctrine came the Yaqui’s much studied Easter and Lenten ceremonies (see chapter four). These transformations were by no means unilaterally imposed on the residents of the towns. As Spicer notes, “although the process carried Yaquis into closer and closer touch with European civilization, it was not just a matter of European expansion. Yaquis were responding to the influence largely on their own ground” (1980, 32).

With the dissolution of Jesuit influence in 1767 and the independence of Mexico from Spain in 1821, the Yaqui entered a prolonged period of intermittent conflict with the state. Under the leadership of Juan Banderas (from 1825 to 1833), Yaquis evaded the state’s attempt to pacify and incorporate the Indians of the north (Spicer 1980, 130-133). During the 1870s, violence was renewed as a new leader José María Leyva (also known as Cajeme) led the Yaqui against state officials who broke up collective landholdings placing the Yaqui in a system of peonage with the emergent and powerful landowners of the north (Spicer 1980, 145-147, 324). Attempts to subvert this process continued under the leadership of Juan Maldonado (also known as Tetabiate) in the 1890s (Spicer 1980, 150). The very real threat of intermittent state violence disrupted life in Yaqui towns, making labor in the growing transnational railroad industry and US agriculture all the more attractive (Truett 2008). Migration to the US experienced a major uptick as a result (Spicer 1980, 158). Relocation to the land of their northern neighbor became even more
attractive during the first decade of the 20th century. Expanding sugar production in the southern Mexico required a large and cheap labor force. The military regularly rounded up Yaquis living in Sonora and shipped them to Yucatán where they worked in a system of virtual slavery (Spicer 1980, 160). It was during this period and after that places like Tucson became home to the now widely dispersed Yaqui peoples.

Relocation to Tucson

Despite relative poverty and minimal access to federal resources, the Yaqui of Tucson effectively eked out an existence as a distinct cultural entity and key component of an emergent system of ethno-tourism throughout the first half of the 20th century. This was in no small part thanks to the efforts of Juan Pistola (also known as Juan Muñoz), a Mayo Indian living amongst the Yaqui of Tucson, who actively engaged members of the settler establishment to secure land and resources for the Yaqui. These efforts contributed to the construction of Pascua Village, which would become an important site of Yaqui community organization and tourism centered around the groups religious ceremonies (see chapter two). During the 1950s, as the agricultural industry contracted and seasonal labor with it, the Yaqui of Pascua succumbed to new levels of economic precarity. To combat such problems, a contingent of Yaquis living in Pascua organized to secure land and later federal recognition as an American Indian Tribe in 1978 (see chapter two and three). These efforts were led by Anselmo Valencia, a young Yaqui intellectual who carried on the tradition of Pistola as he worked with outside parties to ameliorate Yaqui-living conditions.

Today the Pascua Yaqui Tribe resides on the southern outskirts of Tucson on a small, 202-acre reservation. The Pascua Pueblo Yaqui Reservation—or New Pascua as it is
more commonly known—is replete with two casinos, a hotel and resort, a world-class golf course, and a 5000-person-capacity amphitheater. While one also finds vibrant Yaqui communities in Guadalupe (outside of Tempe and Phoenix), Marana (north of Tucson), Pascua Village (now called Old Pascua), and South Tucson, New Pascua is the political-economic-cultural hub of a people that have consistently devised ways to engage the world around them and maintain an existence as a distinct socio-political entity on the margins of two empires.¹⁵ From the Yaquis who entered the Jesuit towns in the 17th century to Valencia’s efforts during the 20th century, the history of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe sits atop a mountain of creative and fluctuant engagements with the long arms and weak fingers of imperial power.

Co-production in the Life and Times of Edward Spicer

Since this study is chiefly concerned with the role of anthropology in the formation of the tribe, it is also necessary to introduce properly the primary anthropologist who will appear throughout this critical narrative—Edward Spicer. In the tradition of “studying up” (Nader 1972), I bring focused attention to Spicer in order to better understand the inner workings of systems of power and the co-productive nature of science and politics. Moreover, I do this to avoid the tendency to read against the archival

grain before analyzing the powerful as complex, situated historical agents (Stoler 2009). This a tendency which runs the risk of blackboxing power altogether and endlessly producing facile narratives of subaltern “resistance.” Though he was not the only anthropologist involved in the formation of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, Spicer’s influence is vital for understanding the history that follows. If there is a motif that runs throughout Spicer’s life and is directly relevant to the study at hand it is the linkage between knowledge and political action.

Shelia Jasanoff has proffered the concept of co-production to describe the mutually constitutive nature of science and politics (2008). Less of a rigid theory and more of an idiom for a form of inquiry, co-production refers to the notion that how we understand the world is intimately bound up in how we chose to live in it (Jasanoff 2008, 2). That is to say, the streams of intellectual inquiry and power follow through one another in a complex fashion. Moreover, the two streams never operate in a vacuum. As Jasanoff states, “neither science nor society begins with a clean slate but operates always against the backdrop of an extant order” (2008, 19). Against this backdrop, “humans beings organize, and periodically reorganize, their ideas about reality” (Jasanoff 2008, 19). Following this proposition, I trace a co-productive theme running throughout Spicer’s life as he came to be an anthropologist of the Yaqui. Against the backdrop of Quakerism, leftist thought, and a life of mobility, Spicer constituted himself as an anthropologist of the Yaqui with a penchant for pluralistic politics.

Anarchy in Arden

Spicer’s upbringing was somewhat unconventional for an early 20th-century American. Born in Cheltenham, Pennsylvania in 1906, Spicer was raised in a Hicksite
Quaker home where the pursuit of knowledge and leftist politics were one-in-the-same. His mother Margaret Spicer was a well-read suffragette who hailed from a Welsh Presbyterian community in Shandon, Ohio. His father, Robert Barclay Spicer, was a roaming intellectual and active participant in the Society of Friends from Cincinnati who moved peripatetically through various institutions of higher learning and careers (something Edward would mirror in his youth) (see Figure 1). A graduate of Swarthmore College and Johns Hopkins University, the elder Spicer also took courses at University of Breslau and Leipsic in Germany and in the American School of Classic Studies in Athens, Greece. Following his graduation from Johns Hopkins, he became president of Franklin College, a small school in New Athens, Ohio founded by the abolitionist John Walker.\textsuperscript{16} In 1902, Robert relocated to Pennsylvania where he served as the superintendent for Quaker schools and married Margaret. Not long after Edward’s birth, Robert turned to a career in journalism as the editor for the \textit{Friends’ Intelligencer}, a Hicksite Quaker publication.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{16} Robert Barclay Spicer held this position from 1900 to 1902.
\textsuperscript{17} A humanitarian streak ran throughout the paternal side of Spicer’s family. His aunt, Esther Spicer, also graduated from Swarthmore College, taught in the Friends school system, studied nursing at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, became a social worker, and spent 30 years as Director of Prenatal and Social Work for the Obstetrical Department of Johns Hopkins Hospital (\textit{Friends Journal} 1958).
With his new position, Robert relocated the family to the experimental community of Arden, Delaware. Founded in 1900 on the principles of the economist Henry George, Arden functioned as a single-tax village that soon became a bastion for artists, transcendentalists, socialists, anarchists, and a variety of other leftists thinkers (Taylor 2002). The noted muckraking journalist Upton Sinclair famously called Arden home for a period of time during Edward’s youth (see Figure 2). It was here that Edward spent his formative years. He was brought up in home of deep philosophical and politically-progressive thought. Reflecting on her late husband’s childhood, Rosamond Spicer paints an almost bucolic picture of a youth stepped in radical rumination. “Intellectual discussions and interests absorbed much of his time. Many a night young Neddy and his older brother Bill went off to bed with talk of socialist philosophy, the evils of capitalism, as well as a great range of other subjects, echoing around in their heads” (Spicer 1990, 3-4) (see Figure 3). Later in life, Spicer reflected on his youth spent

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18 “Robert Barclay Spicer,” ca 1910, Arden Archives Photographic Collection, Box 5, Folder 3, Arden Craft Shop Museum.
in this mecca of counter-culture and his association with radical political voices as he composed a rejected journal article titled “Anarchy in Arden,” which warmly reflected on his youthful exposure to anarchist thought.  

Figure 2. Upton Sinclair with town co-founder Frank Stephens in 1910. Arden Archives Photographic Collection.

Figure 3. Young Edward Spicer with family and neighbors in Arden, Delaware. Standing: Ed and Cora Potter. Left to Right: Bill Spicer, Edward (“Ned”) Spicer, Amy


20 “Upton Sinclair with Arden, Delaware Co-Founder Frank Stephens,” 1910, Arden Archives Photographic Collection, Box 5, Folder 3, Arden Craft Shop Museum.
After several years of leading the *Friends’ Intelligencer*, Robert was fired for his reportedly too liberal views (Spicer 1990, 3; Officer 1995, 325). He temporarily turned to farming (see Figure 4) before leaving Arden in 1920 to accompany the American Friends Service Committee to Latvia and Estonia to provide aid in the wake of the Russian Revolution and, after that, Ireland (Spicer 1990, 5). Upon his return, the elder Spicer relocated the family to Louisville, Kentucky where he took up a position with the Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis.

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21 “Young Edward Spicer with Family and Neighbors in Arden, Delaware,” ca. 1910-1911, Arden Archives Photographic Collection, Box 5, Folder 1, Arden Craft Shop Museum.
Wandering into Anthropology

Following in his father’s footsteps, Edward decided to pursue a college education at the ripe age of 17. He considered applying to Reed College in Portland, Oregon because of its reputation for “social liberalism” (Spicer 1990, 6). The young Spicer, however, chose to attend Commonwealth College—a cooperative, democratic labor school in New Llano, Louisiana. Studying for four hours in the morning and working for four hours in the afternoon, Commonwealth students (men and women) were trained to take an “intelligent part in the struggle for social justice” (Spicer 1990, 6).

Ned soon grew restless with school after several months. He and a friend left Commonwealth for New Orleans in April of 1924, riding the rails and bumming rides with a mere 30 dollars for the two young men. Edward eventually found work as a merchant marine aboard the *Aquarius*. He spent the summer moving around the ports of Germany and wandering the streets of Bremerhaven, Stettin, and Hamburg when time allotted. He would soon return to his family, now living in Fallston, Maryland, following his father’s death from cancer. Ned took a job alongside his mother at a book store in Wilmington. This did not last long. Spicer returned to the sea this time on a banana boat bound for Puerto Barrios, Guatemala. “Never thereafter did he enjoy eating bananas;” Rosamond later reflected (Spicer 1990, 7-8). “He also learned something about the ‘banana republics’ and the US capitalistic policy there” (Spicer 1990, 7-8). Upon his return to the states, he found work on the *John C. Coolidge*, which transported ore on the Great Lakes, before a seaman’s strike brought his employment and seafaring career to a halt.

After a brief summer washing dishes at the Philmont Country Club in Hungtingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, Spicer returned to his studies, this time at the University of Delaware. His interests ranged from chemistry to German to sociology. There, Spicer appears to have become intrigued by the issue of racial difference. He wrote a paper provocatively titled, “Is There Race Superiority?” Considering his Hicksite upbringing, which placed a premium on racial equality (Hamm 2000), one can presume that the answer was an emphatic *no*. Given that this was a period of rampant eugenicist thinking (Kevles 1985), one wonders how Spicer’s paper was received.
Never fully satisfied with a stationary existence, Spicer soon transferred to one of his father’s alma matters, Johns Hopkins, where he settled on economics as a field of study. It was here that he founded and led The Radicals, a student club premised on the belief that “socialism was to save mankind from the capitalist morass into which society was falling” (Spicer 1990, 9). Again, Spicer soon grew restless with his academic pursuits and dropped out. Not long after, he was diagnosed with tuberculosis and admitted to the Maryland State Sanatorium for nearly a year.

Free from the sanatorium, the 23-year-old Spicer decided to go west, settling quite randomly on Arizona of all places as a destination. Though the dry climate would have likely been appealing to a recovered TB patient, Spicer purportedly closed his eyes and placed his finger on a map (Spicer 1990, 10). In Arizona, he found work with the Agricultural Inspection Service. On the slow evening shift, he read the works of Herbert Spencer and Alfred Kroeber, perhaps sparking his interest in more overtly sociological and anthropological intellectual pursuits. Poor health struck him again when he contracted smallpox. He was once again quarantined. This time in a tent on a cow pasture, for the “pest house” in Yuma was full.

With his health restored and money saved, Spicer moved to Tucson where he enrolled at the University of Arizona and at long last completed a BA in economics. However, a course in archaeology with Clara Lee Frapps (Tanner) led him down a new road of study. Spicer began to pursue an MA in the Department of Archaeology, then under the leadership of the progeniture of institutional archaeology in Arizona, Byron F. Cummings (Bostwick 2006). Under Cummings’s guidance Spicer cut his teeth on the
archaeological excavations of Kinishba on the Apache Reservation and King’s Ruin in Prescott.

Though he would write a thesis based on his archaeological research, Spicer’s interests quickly took another turn when he encountered John H. Provinse in 1932. A recent graduate of the University of Chicago, Provinse was UA’s only socio-cultural anthropologist. He had earned his degree under the tutelage of A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, the preeminent British structural-functionalist, and Robert Redfield, a key progeniture of acculturation studies in the US. Under Provinse, Spicer re-engaged his interest in racial difference as he wrote a term paper titled “Who are the Jews?”—a systematic deconstruction of supposed Jewish racial inferiority. According to Spicer, the thought of pursuing a PhD had not dawned on him until “John Provinse…urged me to go to the University of Chicago. In an exploratory mood, I went and met Radcliffe-Brown and Redfield. From then on I was under the spell of social anthropology á la Radcliffe-Brown (and also [Bronislaw] Malinowski)” (quoted in Spicer 1990, 12). Spicer relocated to Chicago in 1934 to begin his studies.

In the midst of a harsh Midwest winter, living on roughly 30 dollars a month and eating one meal a day, Spicer slipped back into a state of precarious health (Spicer 1990, 12).23 He was diagnosed with another case of pulmonary tuberculosis, which later turned out to be Valley Fever. Once again, he found himself confined to a hospital bed. Not to be dismayed, he kept up on his studies thanks in part to the class notes of Rosamond Brown. As usual, he read voraciously. During this period, he was particularly

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23 Fay-Cooper Cole, “Fay-Cooper Cole to Donald Slesinger,” March 27, 1935, University of Chicago, Department of Anthropology Records, Box 14, Folder 13, Regenstein Library, University of Chicago.
preoccupied with Emile Durkheim’s *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1995[1912]).

Upon Spicer’s release from the hospital in fall 1935, department chair Fay Cooper Cole, Redfield, and Provine arranged for Spicer to return to Tucson and work for the Arizona State Museum on the UA campus. This would give him time to restore his health.

“Discovering” Pascua

Back in Tucson, Spicer became involved in Provine’s growing interest in the community of Mexican Indians living down the road from the university. A few years prior, Provine joined an attempt to relocate the Yaqui of Pascua Village to a new site a few miles northeast of the barrio. These efforts were initiated by Thamar Richey, a local school teacher, and Isabella Greenway, an influential congressperson and local business owner. Along with Richey and Greenway, Provine envisioned a plan to “rehabilitate” the Yaqui through the construction of a “local experiment in self-government” that would (as he asserted in an early draft of his proposal) also double as an “laboratory in anthropology” in which researchers from the University of Arizona and University of Chicago, would explore “problems of physical anthropology, social anthropology, and linguistics” (Castile 2002, 393-395). This would involve the purchasing of “cultivable land,” “held in trust by the Government for the Yaquis”, upon which the community could reestablish their “self-respect and character” thereby “[relieving] a considerable charity burden” (Provine 1935). With the assistance of Richey, Provine sent two of his graduate students, John Welles and David Jones, to take up residence in Pascua as he attempted to secure funding for the project.

Spicer joined Welles and Jones in April 1936. The three men lived in a defunct, adobe hospital, which was originally intended to serve the small community. During this
period, Spicer slowly began to learn Spanish, but his interactions with the Yaqui were relatively limited (Spicer 1988, xxvi). In June, he left for Chicago only to return in July with his new bride Rosamond Brown (now Spicer). At that point, Provinse had left the project and Arizona all together to take up work with the Soil Conservation Corps. Welles and Jones soon left as well. Plans for a grand social scientific experiment never got off the ground. All that remained were the newlyweds. Rosamond decided to pursue a study of the Easter ceremonies for her MA while Edward set to work on his dissertation (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Edward and Rosamond Spicer with Yaqui men in Pascua Village, ca. 1937. Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona. For more information see http://parentseyes.arizona.edu/pascuayaquiaz/oldpascua5.html

Following the completion of their fieldwork in 1937, the Spicers left Pascua and Tucson for a position at Dillard University, an all-black institution in New Orleans. While at Dillard, Spicer wrote up his dissertation and secured publication with the University of Chicago Press (1940). In 1939, the couple returned to Pascua with a grant
from the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) to continue studying the community, this time focusing on the Yaquis’ relationship with the communities that surrounded Pascua. This led to a Guggenheim grant, which allowed them to travel to Sonora to begin studying Yaqui communities of Northern Mexico. This research came to an abrupt halt as the US entered WWII and the Mexican government began expelling US researchers. Once stateside with no employment, Edward scrambled to find a job. Thanks to Redfield and Provinse, Spicer became a community analyst with the War Relocation Authority (WRA), the organization charged with administering Japanese internment camps. Spicer was tasked with studying life in the camps and helping to devise plans to reintegrated these “impounded people” back into American society (Spicer et al. 1969). His first assignment was Poston, a camp on the Colorado River Indian Reservation. He quickly climbed the ranks of the WRA and became head of the community analyst division in Washington, DC. Some have convincingly criticized anthropological involvement in the WRA as a legitimation of state-sponsored segregation (Price 2008; Rosemblatt and Benmergui 2018; Starn 1988). Spicer, however, viewed his role as corrective. From his perspective, a grave injustice had been committed against the Japanese, and he and his ilk were there to temper prejudices and reintegrate people back into American social life (Spicer 1979, 218-219).24

24 In his review of Americans Betray: Politics and the Japanese Evacuation (1949) by Morton Grodzins, Spicer lamented the inability of the social sciences to mobilize their data in a manner that effectively reached top policy-makers presiding over interment. In the forty years preceding the evacuation decision this American minority became one of the most carefully studied ethnic groups in the United States. The economic behavior, social organization, and sentiment system of both first and second generations were known in some detail to scholars and to others, such as church groups. Many of these data controverted the stock of beliefs which was presented to policy-makers; none of it supported them. However, channels for
The end of the war (in 1945) and the dissolution of the WRA (in 1946) led the Spicers back to Tucson, where Edward secured a permanent position in the recently renamed Department of Anthropology at UA. Back in Tucson, Spicer was able to pursue his research and writing on the Yaqui with greater focus than ever before. What had been up until that point an itinerant life would now take up roots. The desire to stay in Arizona on a permanent basis first dawned on him while working for the WRA back in 1943.

“There is no longer any doubt in my mind that I must live in Arizona somewhere. For many years I have not cared greatly where I might live. I had no roots in any land after October 1929. Steadily since that month I have grown to love Arizona…I must go back down the years in Arizona. This is my land” (quoted in Spicer 1990, 16). And in that land he would stay, studying and writing about the Yaqui of Arizona (and Sonora). With Tucson as his base of operations, Spicer would go on to make contributions to several areas of anthropological inquiry including acculturation studies, ethnohistory, and applied anthropology (see chapter two and three) until his death from a prolonged struggle with cancer on April 5, 1983. As will be explored in the chapters that follow, along the way, he would remain a close interlocutor of his research subjects turned neighbors)–the Pascua Yaqui–as they navigated the dizzying twists and turns of imperial power.

Spicer’s Pluralism

Spicer never became a luminescent public anthropologist like Franz Boas or Sol Tax who captured public attention with their overtly political pronouncements. However, his anthropology was never blind to the political field in which he operated. When the communication of the facts were not opened up to individuals in key policy-making positions as they were in Hawaii. (Spicer 1950)
opportunity presented itself, Spicer did not shy away from making his political views known as an anthropologist. A particularly overt case of this came in 1954 when the Wenner-Gren Foundation provided the American Anthropology Association with funds “to examine our basic assumptions underlying our national approach to the Indian problem” (Provinse et al. 1954, 387). The purpose was not to evaluate policy but to determine whether or not accumulated anthropological knowledge validated the assumptions underlying policy. On February 20, 1954, the AAA and the foundation held a conference on the matter at the University of Chicago. Participants included such influential voices in anthropology as Clyde Kluckhohn and Robert Redfield and governmental figures such as John Collier. Many other participants straddled the line between academia and government at some point in their career such as Oliver La Farge, John Provinse, and Julian Steward. Provinse, Spicer’s former mentor, prepared a summary statement on the conference’s findings, which was published in the *American Anthropologists* (1954). According to Provinse, the conference participants concluded that

> despite external pressures, and internal change, most of the present identifiable Indian groups residing on reservations (areas long known to them as homelands) will continue indefinitely as distinct social units, preserving their basic values, personality, and Indian way of life, while making continual adjustments, often superficial in nature, to the economic and political demands of the larger society.

(1954, 389)

After reading his mentor’s report, Spicer wrote a letter to the *American Anthropologist*, which was published a few months later. While he “heartily” agreed with
Provinse and company’s suggestion that assimilation was not inevitable, Spicer felt that th3 conference missed a critical point. The issue was not whether or not assimilation was believed to be inevitable but whether or not is was desirable in the first place. As he pointed out, assimilation was not necessarily thought to be inevitable in the late 1800s. Hence, it needed to be quickened by the Dawes Act (1954, 890). Inevitability was beside the point; desire was determinant in federal Indian policy. According to Spicer, “it is the latter which ought to be publicly argued, so that its inconsistency with other basic American assumptions, such as freedom of religion, would become clear and explicit in public policy” (890). It was a short assessment of the political present poor in florid and sensational prose but rich with implication. In a sense, Spicer was suggesting a politics of pluralism, one in which cultural difference is not only inevitable, but its preservation is consistent with “our basic American assumptions.” This was presented as a contrast to assimilation, which he believed to be antithetical to core American values like the freedom of religion. The very fact that Spicer felt compelled to throw in his own two cents (unprompted) suggests that he was most certainly concerned with engaging broader political debates as an anthropologist.

More precisely, the brand of pluralism that Spicer’s espoused for the US was of a cultural—not political—variety. One might presume from his letter that Spicer might have advocated for the dissolution of government oversight of Indian tribes and the full political autonomy of these communities. However, Spicer’s pluralism did not quite extend to total political sovereignty. Though he held a jaundiced view of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Spicer was unconvinced of its supposed irrevocable complicity with assimilation. Rather, he thought that the BIA had the potential to embolden or
disrupt the organization of Indian communities. “It follows that the sphere within which
the [BIA] works is actually not that of cultural assimilation; it has been rather that of
accommodation and adjustment of cultures” (890). This view of the BIA was reflective of
his broader thoughts on the nature of the state and its relationship with ethnic

communities.

In a paper delivered at the 1974 American Anthropology Association conference,
Spicer referred to the state as “a triumphant political form” that “provided a model of the
centralized management of power” (1974). Despite this praise, Spicer feared that this
“exalted” form of political organization had become “an incubus with its own laws of
development” (1974). In particular, Spicer charged states with ignoring and often being
hostile to their internal ethnic heterogeneity. However, he did not feel that ethnic identity
should determine the borders of citizenship and the structures of rule. In other words, he
was not a political nationalist. Rather, Spicer looked toward the modification of existing
supra institutions to account for the “local levels of big organization and the policy input
from these levels” (1974). In his eyes, a shining example of this decentralized state
included the “community development” initiatives carried out under President Johnson’s
War on Poverty, which placed funds and organizational power in the hands of urban and
rural poverty-stricken groups with (supposedly) minimal government oversight (see
chapter three).

The foundation of Spicer’s cultural pluralism was likely shaped by his Quaker
upbringing. It is no coincidence that the analogy he used in his letter to frame Indian
policy was religious tolerance. As a Hicksite, Spicer would have been raised with an utter
disdain for unbridled religious discrimination and, as a result, an ardent appreciation for
spiritual difference. As the editors of the *Journal*, a notably liberal Quaker publication, pronounced, the attempt “to compel uniformity of belief only produces mental stagnation and decay” (quoted in Hamm 2000, 25). This appreciation for heterogeneity in ideas also shaped the broader political doings of Hicksites. Famously, the sect’s founder, Elias Hicks, was one in a long line of outspoken Quaker abolitionists. Operating under these same principles, Quakers today can be found on the front lines of many pressing social justice movements in this country such as Black Lives Matter (Brownlee 2016) and the detention of asylum seekers at the US-Mexico border (American Friends Service Committee 2017). It is difficult to ignore the similarity between Quaker philosophy and practice and Spicer’s advocacy—as an anthropologist—for cultural pluralism with respect to US-Indian relations.

Alice Kehoe draws a similar connection between theology and anthropological activism in her study of Lucy Cramer Cohen and Felix Cohen and their influence on the formation of federal Indian law (2014). Kehoe suggests that the Jewish principle of mitzvah shaped the couples’ decision to deploy Boasian anthropology in the construction of John Collier’s pluralistic Indian New Deal. As with Kehoe’s argument, it is difficult to substantiate the relations between Spicer’s religious background and his later political actions. That being said, the mirroring of the two elements of his subjectivity should not be denied. For while I may not know what was going on in Spicer’s head, there does appear to be a morphological similarity between the two dimensions of his personhood.

Though Spicer was never quite the outspoken activist anthropologist in the same vein as Boas (Baker 1998; Darnell et al. 2016) nor was he a covert radical like Leslie White (Peace 2008), his life and career saw the lines of knowledge and politics blurred
time and time again. From his Quaker upbringing to his youth spent amongst the countercultural thinkers of Arden to his collegial flirtations with socialist utopia to his position with the WRA, Spicer’s pursuit of knowledge was forever entangled with the politics of the time. I suspect that these experiences predisposed Spicer to become a certain type of anthropologist—one with left-pluralistic politics and a penchant for aiding society’s marginalized communities. It was this disposition that would come to serve him in his engagements with the Pascua Yaqui. Or perhaps, one might say that this disposition would serve the Pascua Yaqui.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented two distinct overviews of two dynamic histories. On the one hand, there is the Pascua Yaqui, a federally recognized tribe whose past is embedded in the dexterous engagements of Indigenous brokers and thinkers with different incarnations of imperial power. On the other hand, there is Spicer whose anthropological pursuits developed within a pluralistic politics that placed a premium on cultural difference. With these overviews and themes in minds, the following chapters proceed to explore moments in which these dual histories came to intersect in the formation of assemblages laden with the imperial tensions.
Chapter Two: Assembling Pascua Village: Place-Making at the Intersection of Anthropology and Imperialism in Tucson

Introduction

Driving down from the Midwest in their less than reliable Ford Model-T in the sweltering summer of 1936, Edward and Rosamond Spicer entered Pascua Village as graduate students from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Chicago. Shortly after their arrival in the small, dirt-road village of 400 Yaqui Indians on the outskirts of Tucson, the budding ethnographers were greeted by a man of small stature but great influence. Lucas Chavez would become one of Edward’s primary “informants” whose insights into Pascua life served as the foundation for a career in anthropology. The Spicers’ journey to Pascua, which doubled as their honeymoon, must have been a great contrast to their colleagues. For most early 20th-century American anthropologists, the Indian reservation was the paradigmatic field site. Though not a Native American reservation, Pascua Village was a place engulfed in rhetorics of “Americanness,” “Indianness,” and “tribalness.” As Edward noted, local discourse placed the Yaqui “in the category of the ‘American Indian’,” which he hypothesized was based on Anglo Tucsonan’s dealings with reservation Indians (Spicer 1988, 75). For nearly a decade, local newspapers had been reproducing this image by reporting on the “Yaqui tribe” and referring to influential community members as “chiefs” (e.g., *Tucson Citizen* April 3, 1923). Spicer assumed these characterizations to be examples of both stereotyping and ignorance of the historical specificity of the Yaqui of Pascua who he knew did not have ancestral connections to US territory nor a tradition of supra-group government reducible to the vague concept of “tribe.” What Spicer did not fully realize at the time was that this discursive assemblage was, in many ways, the construction of Chavez and his associates,
who labored for years to invest an urban neighborhood of Tucson with deep cultural and
historical significance.  

The meeting of the Spicers and Chavez in Pascua is a historical node of analysis
that indirectly demonstrative of three interconnected phenomena: Indigenous place
making, empire building, and anthropological knowledge production. Using Pascua
Village as a point of inquiry, this chapter explore the ways in which modern spaces
imbued with the culture and history of an Indigenous group are constituted within
competing forces of sociopolitical incorporation and differentiation. In the case of the
Pascua Yaqui, I argue that their ability to carve out and claim space amidst urban and
suburban sprawl was made possible by individual community members who effectively
and creatively engaged the imperial networks that crisscrossed their lives.

Additionally, I contend that a significant node within these networks was
comprised of anthropologists and their textual productions. This aspect of the story
speaks to both past and present concerns with the discipline’s relationship with
colonialism (e.g., Asad 1973; Gough 1968; Lewis 2014; Simpson 2014; Stocking 1992)

The narrative I present contrasts with C.L. Sonnichsen’s characterization of the Yaqui
in Tucson. In his otherwise illuminating overview of the history of Tucson, Sonnichsen
provides a misleading view of Pascua and the role of the Spicers.

In 1936 anthropologists Edward H. Spicer and his wife spent a year at Pascua
immersing themselves in Yaqui ways and traditions, opening the door for later
professional and amateur enthusiast, but in 1931 nobody knew or cared much
about the Yaquis, and their ceremonials were described as ‘wild and eerie.’
Interest was growing, however, and several hundred Tucsonans went to watch in
1932. The visitors, of course, did nothing to put food in the mouths of the Yaquis,
and food was badly needed. (1987, 240)

As illustrated in this study, it is a misconception to say that it was the Spicers who opened
up the door to future enthusiasts. The door had been open since the inception of Pascua.
Moreover, it was the Yaqui who opened it. To argue that no one knew or cared about the
Yaqui is too ignore the entire 1920s (as depicted in this chapter).
as well as the constitution of ethnographic authority (e.g., Clifford and Marcus 1986; Fabian 1983). However, whereas much of this literature has relied on vaguely defined notions of “the colonial,” I refer to more specific concepts that account for the protean and context-dependent nature of this historical phenomenon. Namely, I invoke the literatures on place-making and imperial politics of difference. Furthermore, whereas others have highlighted the ways in which anthropological objectification of Indigenous peoples services the reproduction of a colonial hegemony (Deloria 1998; O’Brien 2010; Wolfe 1999), I show how anthropologists and the objects of knowledge they produced could be and in fact often were enrolled in Indigenous political projects. These projects did not so much either reproduce or oppose normative colonial processes as much as they took advantage of the “niches and fissures within systems of control and constraint” (Cooper 2005, 203) in an effort to materialize new places.

After introducing several analytics and briefly characterizing the history of the Pascua Yaqui community in Tucson, I want to home in on the life and work of a specific Yaqui intellectual and his engagements with anthropologists within a “politics of difference” (Cooper 2005). At the risk of appearing to make one life history stand for the group, I follow ethnohistorians (Richter 1988; Conell-Szasz 1994), social historians (Thompson 1964), historical anthropologists (Sahlins 1990), and practice theorists (Bourdieu 1977) who insist that individuals and what they do cannot be easily bracketed away from accounts of the formation of historical objects. This orientation does not embrace “the Bad King John” or “Good Queen Mary” “view that what matters in history is the character and behavior of individuals” alone (Carr 1961, 54-59) nor does it deny the conditioning force of political-economic structures (Wolf 1982). Rather, as the
historical anthropologist Marshall Sahlins suggests, it reminds us that “structures interact in the medium of people’s projects” (Sahlins 1991, 83). I would add that this approach is doubly important in the context of Indigenous individuals in and of North America, whose lives and heterogeneous identities are often obscured by the ethnonational monikers that permeate popular and official, bureaucratic and anthropological discourses.

In closing, I want to consider the textual byproducts of these engagements and how they continue to articulate with imperial dialectics of incorporation and differentiation in the present. They do so, I argue, not as inert vestiges of events gone by but as the potential tools of a regenerative politics that seeks to turn the “debris” of empire (Stoler 2013) into pillars of subaltern projects.

Place and Empire

Working within the frameworks of historical ontology and imperial formations, this chapter draws from and contributes to studies of the sociopolitical construction of place in a larger effort to explore the early stages of the mutual assemblage of anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. By drawing from and adding to these literatures, I hope to show how the reconstruction of a particular space as a distinctly Yaqui place was made possible by Indigenous intellectuals who navigated an imperial politics of difference as they enrolled anthropologists and their textual productions in their own political projects.

As social theorists have long argued, symbolically differentiated places do not inhere in nature. Rather, they are constructed by actors through their quotidian engagements with the world (de Certeau 1984; Lefebvre 1991). Though these associations appear natural and unmediated, their comprehensibility and vitality are
dependent upon situated articulations (Basso 1988; Connerton 1989; Halbwach 1992; Smith 1999) that “frame” perceptions of and subsequent doings in the world (Goffman 1974). In the realm of American anthropology of Native North America, Keith Basso has advanced discussions of place through his work with the Western Apache and their ability to invest the natural landscape with culturally specific meanings. Basso argues that there are three modes of involvement with geographic landscapes: observation, use, and communication about the land. In the latter mode, Basso tells us that semiotic materials “wrought with words” are likely to be the most effective means of rendering a given space meaningful, within “flexible constraints” that bear the mark of a “common cast of mind” (1988, 100-101). A major source of inspiration for Basso was the sociologist of interaction Erving Goffman. In an effort to conceptualize the ways in which perceptions of and behaviors in the world are loosely structured, Goffman offered the term “engrossables”– “materials which observers can get carried away with, materials which generate a realm of being” (1974, 57). Engrossables, according to Goffman, are vital means of anchoring meaning and, in turn, guiding future actions within a meaningful environment.

In the Pascua Yaqui example, I will be looking at several anthropological representations of Pascua Village, not as passive unmediated windows into the life of a people, nor as pure ideological constructions of anthropologists foisted upon an Indigenous group. Rather, I will approach them as engrossables–constituted through the negotiations among Indigenous intellectuals, anthropologists, and other interlocutors–that are vital to people’s engagement with space and subsequent construction of place.
Basso and Goffman provide the means to analyze the micro-level engagements that reconfigure space as place. However, anthropologists and others are still in need of analytics that help account for the larger and shifting (social, political, and economic) context in which such situated articulations of place occur. As Henri Lefebvre himself noted, “The history of space cannot be limited to the study of the special moments constituted by the formation, establishment, decline and dissolution of a given code. It must deal also with the global aspect—with modes of production as generalities covering specific societies with their particular histories and institutions” (1991, 48). This need to reckon with the larger structural forces in which place-making occurs is compounded in light of Arjun Appadurai’s thoughts on the contemporary “global cultural economy” that fetishizes “locality,” obscuring “the globally dispersed forces that drive the production process” (1990, 307).

Historians working in the realm of “new imperial history” (Howe 2010) have proffered useful concepts for understanding the effects of these engagements and situated articulations within large, expansive, and composite political entities (i.e., empires) that rely on tactics of direct and indirect rule. In such cases, the construction of place occurs within what Frederick Cooper terms a “politics of difference” (2005). Within their imperial repertoires, empires oscillate between incorporating and maintaining (if not producing) categories of difference. As these strategies come to overlap, domineering states, ironically, codify the distinctions of their subject populations as they subsume these groups under their overarching authority (Burbank and Cooper 2010, 12; Cooper 2005, 27; Sider 1987). Rather than acting as an interruption of empire, this selective recognition of difference becomes a point of transit through which imperial as well as
colonial authority “orients and replicates itself” (Byrd 2011, xiii; see also Coulthard 2014; Merlan 1998; Povinelli 2002; Simpson 2014). As becomes plain in the Yaqui example, these patterns appear in diasporic Indigenous groups of uncertain status as well.

Importantly, the categories of difference that emerge from such practices, as well as the bodies and spaces to which they are linked, are not naturally occurring phenomena but the products of power-laden human labor. This labor is itself composed of dense assemblages of rulers, agents, and subjects (Burbank and Cooper 2010, 14; Cooper 2005, 27).

From these assemblages, objects, ideas, and subjectivities are constituted and made to endure into the present as what Ann Stoler calls the material “debris” of empire (2013). As conceptualized by Stoler, imperial formations leave behind “fragile and durable substances and signs, the visible and visceral senses in which the effects of empire are reactivated and remain” (2013, 196). Stoler is less interested in the description of such remains then she is in their “reappropriations and strategic and active positioning within the politics of the present” (2013, 196). It is this “reappropriation” and “strategic and active positioning” that I emphasize when examining ethnographic productions and their impact on the assembling and representing of Pascua Village.

In recounting the making of this distinctly Yaqui local, I also unpack the process of constructing Indigenous place through anthropological debris by focusing on the life and work of a Yaqui intellectual, which (as I have already noted) is informed by Gramsci, ethnohistorical studies of cultural brokerage, and historical and sociological accounts of nationalist and ethnonationalist mediation. Particularly relevant to this chapter is Smith and Hutchinson’s assertions that a key component of the work of such individuals is the
making of “ethnoscapes,” i.e., territory invested with the history and culture of a people (Hutchinson 1999; Smith 2009, 149-157). From such symbolically laden swaths of land (real and imagined), national identities can be territorialized and, therefore, materialized in places where they might not have existed before. Hutchinson argues that these projects are most readily carried out by historicist sciences (2016, 79). As I will show in the following example, anthropology, as the science of the supposed “people without history,” served a similar role in the case of Yaqui political formation and territorialization in early 20th century Tucson. Methodological focus on these Yaqui intellectuals is a means to empirically analyze the construction of community and place. Put in relation to the politics of difference and the construction of imperial debris, the work of these individuals appears as a means of navigating the overlapping forces of incorporation and differentiation by leveraging anthropological representations.

Institutional Context: Indian Reorganization

The Spicers and Lucas Chavez encountered each other during a critical moment in US-Indian relations that appeared to be shaping perceptions of the Yaqui. Though the community of Pascua lacked recognition, the city of Tucson and the state of Arizona had been treating them as if they were “American Indians” in the same mold as neighboring Western Apache and Tohono O’odham who were then experiencing political reconfiguration under the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). Heralded by John Collier, the cultural pluralist Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the IRA was a piece of reform legislation designed to reconfigure Native communities and their relationship with the US. Implemented in opposition to forty-plus decades of explicitly assimilatory federal Indian policy (e.g., the Dawes General Allotment Act), the IRA had four major
provisions: (1) foster Indian cultures and traditions, (2) place reservation land owned by Indian individuals into tribal ownership to be held in common, (3) create tribal courts, and (4) create a system of tribal government on reservations. The version of Indian life that Collier was trying to “preserve” was a deeply romantic one (James 1988; Schwartz 1994; Taylor 1980), which assumed the ideal community to be one “in which men of all ranks were bound one to another by their sense of community and shared obligations” (Kunitz 1971, 215). As others have argued, Collier’s perspective on Native groups was an effect of a long-standing mode of indirect colonial rule largely conceived under British imperial regimes (Collier 1963, see also Biolsi 1991; Guerrier 2007; Perry 2011; Reinhardt 2005).

Though it was by no means accepted by all natives and non-natives, the IRA and the version of Indigenous groups that it sought to institutionalize was becoming increasingly hegemonic when the Spicers arrived in Tucson. Hence Edward’s observation (noted at the outset of this chapter) that local discourse placed the Yaqui “in the category of the ‘American Indian’” (Spicer 1988, 75). Given the pervasive nature of the IRA, it is likely that Spicer’s assumptions were correct: Anglo-Tucsonans viewed the displaced Mexican Indians through the same prism as reorganized peoples such as the Tohono O’odham and Western Apache. But again, Spicer was relatively unaware of instrumental role that his associate, Chavez, had played in this process.

The Secretary

Born in 1871 in a small, predominantly Yaqui village in Sonora, Chavez was raised in an ethnically mixed household. His mother was a Yaqui who still possessed close relationships with local family members while Chavez’s father was a Mayo Indian.
who traveled frequently throughout the state transporting tobacco and various food staples to larger cities (Spicer 1988, 110). From a young age, Chavez accompanied his father on these travels. However, by the time he turned fifteen his parents and three older brothers had been killed amidst renewed Mexican-Yaqui conflicts. Chavez proceeded to find work on haciendas further north before taking a job with the Southern Pacific Railroad, which brought him to Arizona for the first time in 1891. Working on haciendas and railroads provided Chavez the chance to learn how to read and write Spanish and develop basic English. He spent another two decades moving throughout Arizona as a “trackwalker” before taking up permanent residence in Tucson in 1910 where he lived as a squatter in Barrio Anita, an ethnically mixed Yaqui, Tohono O’odham, Mexican, and Mexican-American neighborhood (Spicer 1988, 114). It was here that he found a position in the developing political-economic relationship between the disaggregated Yaqui and the Anglo-American leadership of Tucson.

Chavez became a close acquaintance of Juan Pistola, a Mayo from Sonora who had himself become acquainted with Kirk Moore, a lawyer and president of the chamber of commerce. Chavez began to “[accompany] Pistola to meetings with…Moore… and he received [Tucsonians] who came to Barrio Anita to talk about” what Pistola and Moore began to call “the nation within a nation” (Provinse 1934; Spicer 1988, 116). Through their work with Moore, Pistola’s regime managed to provide certain services to the Yaqui of Barrio Anita, namely legal counsel.26 However, they also served a niche for the settler

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26 Moore’s services to the Yaqui community of Tucson ran much deeper than occasional legal representation. Even after the securing of Pascua Village, he acted as a mediator between the Yaqui and city. Regarding proper etiquette at the Easter ceremonies, he could be called upon to mediate relations between the Yaqui, Anglo residents, and tourists. In 1924, there was at least one day in which tourists had behaved in a particular
colonial establishment. Much to the pleasure of the Arizona Cotton Growers Association, Southern Pacific Railroad, and Tucson Water Company, Pistola ensured a steady supply of Yaqui laborers (*Arizona Daily Star* Sept 28, 1921; “Pascua Village Notecards” 1936). Additionally, Pistola and company reported the whereabouts of Yaquis to immigration officials, who were becoming increasingly concerned with the policing of what had been, up until that point, a relatively porous US-Mexico border (Moisés 1977, 62-63; Spicer 1988, 125).

By far, their biggest accomplishment was the formation of a new village in Tucson specially for Yaquis. In 1922, Pistola and Moore, in collaboration with a local real estate agent, A.M. Franklin, and banker, John Metz (or Mets), reserved plots of land northwest of Tucson where the Yaquis could relocate and aggregate. The new settlement

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rude and meddlesome manner. According to Moore, visitors “frequently crowded around the Yaquis, wandered in and out of their little church on the plaza—many talking loudly and not even removing their hats” (*Arizona Daily Star* April 19, 1924). Moore communicated the Yaquis’ disapproval of this to the wider public by contacting the *Arizona Daily Star* with an official statement for how visitor should comport themselves (*Arizona Daily Star* April 19, 1924). On at least two occasions, he used the paper to remind people to donate to the Yaqui during the ceremony to cover the time and resources expended (*Arizona Daily Star* March 30th, 1923; *Arizona Daily Star* April 19, 1924).

In the local newspaper, Moore was referred to as both the “mentor of the Yaqui tribes” (*Tucson Citizen* April 3, 1923) and “patron of the Yaqui tribe” (*Arizona Daily Star* March 30th, 1923). The slight difference in characterization can be attributed to the different styles of journals. The *Tucson Citizen* was always more sensational in its reporting on the Yaqui (and conservative in its politics). Unlike the *Star*, the *Citizen* did not have a designated reporter that would cover the day-to-day Easter ceremonies. The *Citizen* was also quick to gloss the Yaqui as a single “tribe.” However, likely because of their desire for a sensation story, the *Citizen* often did a better job of capturing factionalism within the community surrounding the publicization of the Easter ceremonies (see the Moissant film debacle [*Tucson Citizen* April 2-3, 1923]).

27 In one of many discussions between Spicer and Chavez during his 1936-1937 fieldwork, Chavez and others discussed how Pistola organized Yaqui labor to dig irrigation ditches for the water company (*Pascua Village Notecards* 1936).
held the promise of land ownership. Up to that point, the majority of Yaquis living in urban Tucson did so as squatters. More importantly, for Chavez, this was a place where the Yaquis could carry out their elaborate and meticulously performed Easter ceremonies, a Yaqui interpretation of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection developed under the influence of Jesuit missionaries in Sonora. As Chavez later recounted to Spicer:

Kirk Moore said that this would be the place where we would build our church, and there would be a fence around it. Then the Yaquis would have their Easter ceremonies here unmolested…They would follow the old customs here unmolested and here they could do just those things which had always been according to legitimate Yaqui custom. (Quoted in Spicer 1988, 62)

Chavez’s reference to molestation is somewhat unclear. The city appears to have already been quit accepting of the Yaqui’s Holy Week ceremonies. For example, in 1920, the Arizona Daily Star advertised the event as it was practiced in the neighborhood of Barrio Anita:

Pale face visitors are welcome as spectators at the ceremonies and dances. To quote Capt. Pistola, [all] “will be cordially treated provided no remarks concerning the dances are made.” The Yaqui village each year is the mecca for tourists during the days the festival is in progress. Last spring it is estimated two thousand visitors spent portions of Saturday, Saturday night and Sunday as onlookers at the ceremonies. (Arizona Daily Star April 3, 1920)
It is more likely that Chavez was referring to pressure from local Protestant and Catholic missionaries, who viewed Yaqui religion as “pagan” and “barbaric” (Spicer 1980, 250). Moore dubbed the new village “Pascua” in recognition of the Easter ceremonies. He also lobbied the Chamber of Commerce to subsidize the events in the new village, which became a significant tourist draw (and remain so today), portrayed as an untouched, ancient Indigenous practice (Arizona Daily Star March 25th, 1937; Tucson Chamber of Commerce 1927). Additionally, through Pistola and Moore’s lobbying, the Marshall Foundation, a local philanthropic organization, would come to purchase the majority of the plots of land on behalf of Yaqui residents who would, ideally, pay installments on their individual properties (Windsor 1954). Either out of good will or lack of interest, the foundation neglected to collect payments on the land after a certain point. In fact, when the primary collector died in 1936, attempts to collect payments stopped (Spicer et al. 196[8], 2). The remaining Yaqui could technically be classified as squatters.

According to Chavez, Moore’s associates reasoned that the Yaqui needed to maintain separation from other ethnic groups. In doing so, they articulated an imperial ideology that valued the preservation of difference and race-based nationalist thinking of the early 20th century. Chavez reported to Spicer:

Metz and Franklin said that where the Yaquis were [in 1921] there were Chinese, Negroes, and Mexicans who had different customs from the Yaquis. It would be a good thing if the Yaquis went all together somewhere else where they would not

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28 Another motivation for the move to a concentrated settlement may have also been the respect that Tucson Yaqui’s had for Pistola. In 1918, nine Yaqui men were arrested for apprehending by the US Cavalry for transporting weapons overland to aid the Yaqui fight in Sonora. Pistola successfully pleaded with US prosecution to drop the charges. His negation skills and the case of “the prisoners” became oral legend (Spicer 1980, 247).
be molested by others and where they could have Pascolas and other dances where [we] would not be interfered with. Metz said: *yo me tomo ese cargo y voy recibir el dinero*. We want you [to] live apart from the Mexicans and Chinese; they are not pleased with you. (Chavez Jan 28, 1937)

In the eyes of Moore and company, the Yaqui need to be a discrete category of people.

This desire to keep the Yaqui separate from the “Chinese, Negroes, and Mexicans” is reflective of a broader pattern of deepening racialization in the US.

The previous decade saw the popular resurgence of the Klu Klux Klan, immortalized in their 30,000-member march on Washington, DC in 1925 (Leuchtenburg 1958, 205-2011; Coben 1991). Relatedly, this was also a period that saw the institutionalization of eugenics in the form of the Eugenics Records Office, which trained a generation of researchers in the malevolent arts of race-based science (Kelves 1985, 55). Perhaps less sensational, but more systemic and relevant to the Yaqui case was the racialization of nationality and immigration. The combination of the Immigration Act of 1917 and the Emergency Quota Act of 1921 implemented literacy tests, created an Asian Barred Zone (excepting Japan and the Philippines), and allocated a three percent quota on immigration in proportion to how the inhabitants of the US traced their origins to a given geographical area (Ngai 2005, 17-20). The latter policy effectively favored immigration from “white” northern and western European countries. The compounding interest from these policies would reach its peak in the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924, which imposed stricter immigration quotas on Europe. More consequential, the law effectively racialized the concept of nationality itself and limited “Americanness” to an almost exclusively white and northern European category. The new law stated that “inhabitants in the
continental United States” did not include immigrants from the Western Hemisphere and their descendants; aliens ineligible for citizenship, which coded for Chinese, Japanese, and South Asians; descendants of slaves; and descendants of Native Americans (Nai 2005, 26). In the same year, the federal government established the border patrol as part of the Land Appropriation Act, making the movement of bodies along the imaginary line between the US and Mexico a point of consternation.

Moore’s words to Chavez are less of an overt endorsement of this vision of America but more of a reflection of the growing differentiative politics of the time. At the level of federal policy making, it was deemed important to construct a neat and discrete racialized map of the world in order to better police the borders of “Euro-American, white Americanness.” Moore’s statement to Chavez bears the mark of this history.

While Moore and others might have articulated the importance of Yaqui isolation from other groups and while they might have couched this in terms of a racialized Yaqui “nationhood,” they maintained an incorporative perspective. “Mertz and Franklin made one condition,” Chavez later told Spicer, “they said that anyone who wanted a lot would have to get a permit from Metz” (Chavez Jan 28, 1937). Relatedly, the village would be a site for annual performance of traditional ceremonies, free of the type of religious persecution and control being waged against Pueblo Indians by the BIA during this period (Jacobs 2001). However, the ceremonies operated under the authority of County Attorney’s Office, which gave Pistola and the greater Yaqui community a permit to hold

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29 Select aspects of Pueblo ceremonies were allowed to be performed as part of the Santa Fe Fiesta during this period of BIA prohibition. Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997). It is worth noting that tourism was a common feature of both the Fiesta and the Pascua Easter ceremonies.
such events (Spicer 1936-1937). As envisioned by these influential Tucsonan Anglos, the Yaquis of Pascua would be a distinct people—but that distinction would operate within the limits and dictates of the settler establishment.

Though only a fraction of the Yaqui population of Tucson relocated to Pascua and some of the new residents were not Yaqui, the neighborhood became synonymous with the community in the eyes of others as the village population grew to approximately 400 residents. When Spicer arrived in 1936, he noted that Anglos commonly believed that there were only two villages of Yaquis in the entire state—one in Guadalupe (outside of Phoenix) and the village of Pascua (1988, 74). As a result, the Pascua Yaquis became the sole recipients of charitable services designated for the Yaqui of Tucson (Spicer 1988, 75). Those still residing in Barrio Anita and other areas were cut off from the Yaqui-Anglo network of services and, in turn, bracketed out of the Anglo philanthropic and political-economic imaginary.

Though Pistola, the “chief” of the Yaqui, and Moore, their advocate, were the main mediators and public faces of the networked construction of Pascua, Chavez served several vital positions. Pistola may have been deemed the “Chief of the Yaquis,” but Chavez served as the official scribe and translator for all of Pistola’s dealings (Pistola, like many relocated Yaquis, was illiterate). This put Chavez at the center of major political activities. He kept track of documents relating to the Pistola regime earning him the cumbersome title “the Secretary of State of the Arizona Republic of Yaquis” (Spicer to Cole Sept. 20, 1936; Spicer 1988, 116). His fluency in multiple languages and secretarial duties put him in contact with Anglos who were becoming increasingly fascinated by the ceremonial practices of the Yaquis of Pascua Village (Spicer 1988,
This proved incredibly valuable after Pistola’s regime began to fizzle out in the mid-1920s. Rather than losing his stature, Chavez was able to rely on his connections with amateur and professional anthropologists to maintain his position as a mediator within a localized imperial network. It is worth noting that when the Spicers arrived in 1936, it was Chavez who sought out the young anthropologists (not the other way around). In a letter to his department head, Edward Spicer recounted his initial encounter with Chavez:

Two weeks ago we were pleasantly surprised to have [the secretary] walk into our house and ask us if he could be of help in teaching us Yaqui. We jumped at the chance and ever since he has been spending from three to five hours a day with us, not only drilling us in Yaqui, but gladly discussing the history of the village (which he knows well), the social organization and the religious ideas of the group here. He has many documents and letters which he is glad to show us and which are gladly making clear the succession of events for the past twenty years… With his aid I believe we shall be able to get detailed accounts of the personal disputes and community participation of almost everyone in the village.

(Spicer to Cole September 20, 1936)

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30 Chavez’s linguistic abilities are not entirely clear. It would appear that he and Spicer largely communicated through Spanish. Ned often recorded Chavez’s interviews in Spanish and later translating them to English. In his own journal, Chavez appears to have only written in Spanish. Spicer suggests that Chavez was not proficient in English. “Throughout these contacts he has never learned English, except for a few words of greeting. He is not literate in English and therefore reads neither newspapers nor magazines which would put him in touch with Anglo-American culture. Spanish remains the medium through which he deals with all Anglos as well as Mexican Americans” (Spicer 1988, 134). This assessment presumes that Chavez’s previous Anglo interlocutors such as Kirk Moore spoke Spanish well enough to negotiate legal transactions.
While the Spicers consulted with various members of the Pascua community, “the interviews with [Chavez] were the only formal, regular interviews [they] held. All other talks were on an informal, irregular basis” (Spicer 1988, xxxiv). Eventually, Edward, who was quite taken with Chavez and his archive of documents, brought him to the University of Arizona in the late 1930s as a guest lecturer giving him an even bigger platform upon which to disseminate his conception of the Yaqui of Pascua as a “nation within a nation” (Spicer 1988, xlv).³¹

It is not entirely clear how Chavez understood the “nation within a nation” concept and what he felt it said about the relationship between the Yaqui and the US. It is safe to say that he saw the two as distinct cultural entities that should not be merged. That being said, he did not advocate complete isolation, especially if it meant a return to Mexico. As Spicer noted, “Lucas…desires mergence with Anglo Americans no more than with Mexican Americans, although he believes that it would ‘be better for Arizona Yaquis to learn English and move out of the villages than it would be for them to go back to Mexico’” (1988, 137). Though the Mexican government began a policy of agrarian reform in the 1930s, which provided the Yaqui with land, the prospect of a return to Mexico was for Chavez, who had seen his family members slaughtered and his community disrupted, a death sentence. While he would have preferred people to remain in communities like Pascua, he was open to strategic engagements with US society if it

³¹ For the less politically ambitious members of Pascua Village, the Spicers served other menial roles such as transportation and access to medicine and healthcare. They became so central to Pascua life that members of the community encourage Spicer to be a “kovano,” a sort of town mayor (Spicer January 27, 1985; Schechner 1990, 102).
meant avoiding total assimilation or worse—extermination. Thus, his sense of nationhood had distinct borders, but those borders appear to have been strategically elastic.

Another indication of his thinking can be found in his gratitude for the local authorities that enabled the Yaqui to settle in Tucson and revive their cultural practices. He appears to have even felt a degree of obligation to local institutions.

After all are we not foreigners here? If the Chamber of Commerce says that it needs Yaquis to dance at the [Tucson Rodeo] then we must go. Didn’t we go last year? Didn’t Tomás and Molonko and I go and didn’t we carry bows and arrows in the rodeo parade? Of course, we went because they needed us. That is the way it should be. Doesn’t the Chamber of Commerce help us out each year with the [Holy Week ceremonies]? Why shouldn’t we dance for them if we are needed? Angel [a Matachin Monarca] may object, but he has never been grateful to the Americans for anything. He is always against the Americans when they need something. He has always been rebellious. (quoted in Spicer 1988, 134)

This suggest that, for Chavez, “nation within a nation” was a less a form of subordination or subnationalism in which the Yaqui were subservient to US authorities and more of a relationship predicated on a reciprocal exchange of favors between distinct but interconnected entities.

The fact that Chavez so ardently supported Pistola as a “chief” also suggests that his conception of a Yaqui “nation” contained a political as well as a cultural dimension. This is certainly how he thought about the Yaquis in Sonora whom he felt still faced state oppression in the late 1930s. As he relayed to Spicer, “The Yaquis [of Mexico] will not be safe until they have the strength to fight back, their own soldiers and their own
government. They have always known that and they only want to have their own
government on their own land” (Quoted in Spicer 1988, 137). With the exception of the
standing army, these signs of vitality—government and land—are the very things that
Chavez helped establish in Tucson.

This articulation of Yaqui nationhood in the US rings of two contemporary
theories of Indigenous sovereignty. What Audra Simpson calls nested sovereignty in
which one polity is embedded in another (2014, 19-21) certainly conforms with the visual
of a “nation within a nation.” I suspect this is what Moore had in mind. However, the fact
that Chavez does not perceive the Yaqui as subordinate but reciprocally tied to the US is
more reminiscent of Jessica Cattelino’s notion of interdependent sovereignty, which
describes sovereignties as emerging out of relationships between different (sometimes

Though it may be unclear exactly how Chavez defined a “nation within a nation,”
it is undeniable that he thought and spoke about the relationship between the Yaqui and
the US. In doing so, he was more than a mere broker working towards his own
glorification (although that may have been part of the equation). Through his interactions
with people like Moore and Spicer, he transmitted ideas about the Yaqui through civil
society and local settler government—like an intellectual.

To be sure, Chavez does not quite fit the mold of the national mediator as
conceived by Smith and Hutchinson. He was not part of the same type of “secular
educated professional middle class” that gave rise to 19th century European nations nor
was he a carbon copy of the “creole pioneers” of the late 18th and early 19th century Latin
America (Anderson 1991, 47-66). That being said, his literacy, travel, and close
association with local civic and governmental figures put him in a position where he—as an organic intellectual rubbing elbows with more tradition intellectuals like Spicer—could become an active constructor of a “nation within a nation” like his 18th and 19th century European and Latin American counterparts.

Enrolling “Anthros”

Spicer’s encounter with Chavez was no accident. Their meeting had been foreshadowed by decades of previous proto-anthropological engagement with the developing community of Pascua. Following close on the heels of the establishment of Pascua Village, a local woman named Phebe Bogan took a keen interest in the Yaqui and their ceremonial dances. In 1922, Bogan composed a thesis on the Yaqui for the Department of Archaeology (now Department of Anthropology) at the University of Arizona, which was later published by the Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society in 1925 as *The Yaqui Indian Dances of Tucson, Arizona* (Sands 1993, 147). Couched in Victorian language and lacking specific references to Pascua Village, Bogan’s account focused more on romantic characterizations of “the fine independence of action and love of liberty of the ancient traditions of these people” (1925, 68).

Despite (or perhaps because of) its lack of ethnographic substance, Bogan’s work was later converted into a pamphlet by the Tucson Chamber of Commerce to be distributed amongst tourists (Sands 1993, 147). While these depictions contain echoes of local sensational newspaper journalism and the pulp westerns of Willard F. Baker (1922), Bogan’s work was infinitely more sympathetic, choosing to see the Yaqui more in the vein of Jean Jacques Rousseau’s “savages” known for “the calmness of their passions, and their ignorance of vice” (1992, 36) than Thomas Hobbes’s “masterless men” mired in
a “perpetual war, of every man against his neighbor” (2006, 103, 171). Similarly, though her work had many of the touches of the arm chair anthropology of the time that characteristically lacked sustained presence in Native communities, Bogan did spend a great deal of time in Pascua Village working with community members, as evidenced by the forward to the 1925 version of The Yaqui Indian Dances:

This little booklet is an attempt to interpret the ceremonial dances of the Yaqui Indians which are held each Spring at the Indian village of Pascua, near Tucson, Arizona. The writer wishes to acknowledge her indebtedness to the deceased chief of that portion of the Yaqui tribe in Arizona, Juan Pistola, and to the Secretary of the tribe, Lucas A. Chavez. (Bogan 1925)

The dedication to Pistola and Chavez suggests several things. First, even early ethnographic representations of the Pascua Yaqui were mediated by a small cohort of Indigenous leaders, a cohort so small that, in the case of Lucas Chavez, the same leader could shape the formation of anthropological representations in different decades. Second, it suggests that when the Spicers arrived in Pascua Village in 1936, Chavez was already quite familiar with anthropologists, what they did, and how they could benefit the Yaqui.

In 1932, the Yaquis of Pascua found another anthropological advocate in the form of John Provinse. A recent graduate of the University of Chicago, Provinse took his degree under Robert Redfield and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. His arrival in Tucson at the University of Arizona marked a shift in focus for the Department of Archaeology, which, as the name suggested, was not particularly keen on social anthropology or living Indigenous peoples. Provinse soon became bored with “the antiquarian sterility of
Tucson” and began throwing himself into applied work (Provinse to Redfield October 17, 1936). As he wrote to Redfield, “I am very much alone here in my interests. Though this year I have had some success in stirring up a bit of enthusiasm for things not buried” (Provinse to Redfield [1936]).

His success in stirring up interest in his newly adopted home came when Provinse stumbled upon the Pascua Yaqui. In his first year of teaching, Provinse began working with Thamar Richey, a school teacher working in Pascua Village, and Isabella Greenway, a Congressional representative and influential, local business person, to secure federal support for the Pascua Yaqui. In 1934, the three attempted to illicit support from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to relocate the Pascua Yaqui to a new neighborhood in Tucson (Collier to Greenway May 14, 1934; see figures 6 and 7).

Figure 6. Provinse’s site for resettlement (marked with red pencil) was northwest of Pascua (marked with blue pencil). The map of is drawn looking at the city from an eastward angle. Edward H. and Rosamond B. Spicer Papers, Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona.
Figure 7. Blueprint for Provinse's relocation project. Edward H. and Rosamond B. Spicer Papers, Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona.\textsuperscript{32}

As discussed in a formal proposal to John Collier, Provinse’s plan appears to have been to “rehabilitate” the Yaqui through the construction of a “local experiment in self-government” (Provinse 1935) that would (as he asserted in an early draft of the proposal) also double as an “laboratory in anthropology” in which researchers from the University of Arizona and University of Chicago, would explore “problems of physical anthropology, social anthropology, and linguistics” (Castile 2002, 393-395; Redfield to

\textsuperscript{32} “Blueprints from John Provinse’s Resettlement Plan,” 1935, Edward H. and Rosamond B. Spicer Papers, Box 90, Folder 380, Arizona State Museum.
Provinse January 27, 1936). This would involve the purchasing of “cultivable land,” “held in trust by the Government for the Yaquis”, upon which the Yaqui could reestablish their “self-respect and character” thereby “[relieving] a considerable charity burden” (Provinse 1935).

It is unclear from the historical documentation whether or not Provinse consulted Yaquis in his design. However, what is clear is that Provinse imagined the project as a joint research endeavor partially financed by the BIA, the University of Arizona, and the University of Chicago. In exchange for their support, the universities would be able to employ several of their anthropology graduate students in various aspects of the project. Edward Spicer would be the graduate student from the University of Chicago. His selection for the project was not a matter of chance. As noted in the previous chapter, Spicer had met Provinse as a graduate student at the University of Arizona in 1932. The elder anthropologist instructed Spicer to pursue a PhD at Chicago with an eye toward studying the Yaqui of Pascua. Spicer and Provinse conceived much of the original project together with editorial input from Redfield (Redfield to Provinse January 27, 1936). However, by 1935, Provinse had grown tired with his archaeologically dominated home institution as well as with life in academia in general (Provinse to Redfield September 17, 1936). The fact that the BIA had rejected the project on account of the Yaquis’s immigrant status, likely also quelled his enthusiasm (Collier to Greenway May 14, 1934). Coincidentally, Provinse relocated to a job in the Soil Conservation Corp working in

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33 In the mid-1930s, Refugio Savala, a Yaqui poet from Pascua Village, began sharing his writings with Provinse (Evers and Molina, 134; Savala 1980, 45). Savala and Provinse had a mutual friend in Thamar Richey. However, it is unclear whether or not they collaborate on the rehabilitation project.
conjunction with John Collier’s BIA. Eventually, the University of Arizona’s involvement in the project dissipated. All that was left was Edward, whose dissertation and first ethnographic publication (1940) were derived from this failed attempt at relocation and community development, and his new spouse and collaborator Rosamond, whose thesis would be based on her observations of the Easter ceremonies. Therefore, the Spicers’ chance encounter with the Secretary of the State of Pascua on that summer day in 1936 was no chance at all. It had been shaped by decades of prior anthropological intervention, cultural brokerage, and Indigenous intellectual engagement that made the Pascua Yaqui an entextualizable anthropological object of study. This prior history of intervention, brokerage, and engagement had been one in which Chavez was intimately involved.

Making Debris

By enrolling the Spicers and others in his network of Pascua “patrons” (the term rooted in the patron-client systems of Spanish and Mexican rule that Yaqui commonly used for local “do-gooders” and “philanthros” [Spicer 1970]), Chavez helped lay the

34 It is important to recognize that the Spicers were by no means the only anthropologists being drawn into the Yaqui sphere of influence in the mid to late 1930s. Muriel Thayer Painter, an east coast social worker, began attending the Easter ceremonies in the 1920s. Though she appears to have had no background in anthropology and was not initially affiliated with the university, Painter quickly fell in with the local anthropological community in Tucson (Sands 1993, 148). Without any specific end goal, Painter began taking detailed notes of the ceremonies year after year. She would eventually take on a researcher position with the Arizona State Museum giving her anthropological pursuits institutional grounding. Painter’s involvement in Pascua life could be both academic and practical. For example, in 1941, using funding set aside by the Chamber of Commerce, Painter provided new costumes for the Easter ceremony participants (Arizona Daily Star April 11, 1941). Other anthropologists kicking around Pascua Village during this period included Carleton Wilder, a graduate student at UA, and Tad Nichols, an ethnographic documentarian and graduate of UA.
foundation for a series of mobile and engrossing representations that rendered the Yaqui and Pascua Village virtually indistinguishable. Though Bogan first began writing about the Yaqui of Pascua in the 1920s, the arrival of the Spicers and the years 1939 to 1941 served as high watermarks for ethnographic representation of the Pascua Yaqui. During this short period, anthropologists and others engaged in emplaced and embodied description of the Yaquis produced several graphic representations of life in Pascua. The making of nearly all of these representations revolved around the Spicers who, through their previous engagements with influential community members like Chavez, had become an “obligatory point of passage” (Callon 1986; Law 1992) for all those interested in studying the Yaqui of Pascua. Like the obligatory points of passage long studied by historians and sociologists of science and technology, the Spicers’ position was fortified through the construction and circulation of different graphic artifacts (Hull 2012; Latour 1988; Law 1986; Shapin and Schaffer 1989).35

The first major graphic representations that the Spicers worked to materialize were their own. In 1940 Edward’s first book—*Pascua, A Yaqui Village* (1940)—was

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35 Additional evidence of the Spicers’ status as an obligatory point of passage can be found in a letter from the Selective Service sent to Edward during WWII prior to official U.S. involvement:

Dear Dr. Spicer,
It has been suggested to us that you may be willing to assist us in reaching some Indians, who gave their address as Pascua Village. We understand that these Indians are now—or were—picking cotton in various places, but would return to the Village for the Christmas Holidays. The men have been sent their questionnaires, which have been returned to us, and we would like to have them come in to our office (which is in the basement of the Postoffice) and fill out these questionnaires... (December 20, 1940).

Whether or not offered his services is less relevant than the fact that street level bureaucrats in the federal government so closely associated the name “Spicer” with the terms “Pascua Village” and “Indians” that they would even consider writing such a letter.
published on the University of Chicago Press. The book was a reworked version of his dissertation, which was itself based on his 1936-1937 fieldwork. At the same time, Rosamond completed her thesis, a version of which would later be published in an edited volume in the 1990s (Spicer and Crumrine 1997). However, as they wrote and revised their own research using the standard avenues of academic publishing to represent the Pascua Yaqui, the Spicers made great efforts to facilitate the work of others who were working in less rigidly academic arenas, which were more accessible to a general audience. Although, these arenas were often equally as institutionalized and far more commercialized.

For instance, the Spicers supervised the production of a massively popular pamphlet that entextualized and circulated the events of the Easter ceremonies for a wider audience than ever before. Five months after completing their first bout of fieldwork in Pascua, Rosamond wrote to the Chamber of Commerce on behalf of their Yaqui interlocutors:

As you may know my husband and I spent last year (July 1936-July 1937) living in the Yaqui Village of Pascua and studying the life and customs of the Yaquis, under the auspices of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Chicago. While we were there we observed the whole course of the Easter Dances and talked to the Yaquis about their interpretation of what they were doing. They also expressed to us a desire that the white people should have some means of understanding the dances they do; they said that white people ask many questions which they would like to answer but cannot because they do not speak English well enough, nor do they have time during the ceremonies. They suggest that we
write something to tell the white people what was going on... (Spicer to Secretary of Tucson Chamber of Commerce January 17, 1938, emphasis added)

Rosamond went on to suggest what this “something” might look like.

If, for instance, we should write a short summary of the dances, the approximate times of events, who takes part, the meaning of what is happening, a short sketch of the different types of performers and their activities, and add some information as to the background of these Indians. It seems to me that something of this sort, which could be easily referred to, would be welcome to many of the thousands or so who see these dances each year…(Spicer to Secretary of Tucson Chamber of Commerce January 17, 1938)

Though she presented the plan as something of an afterthought, Rosamond had already put a great deal of effort into developing a plan of publication, distribution, and compensation.

Perhaps some plan like this could be worked out: we write the material and send it to you. You publish it in pamphlet form, say twenty-five to fifty pages. You have it on sale in your headquarters and also at the village during the dances by the Yaquis or by one of your representatives. Sell it for fifty cents. Give half of the money to the Yaquis and the Chamber of Commerce keep half. This would help the Yaquis and it would probably pay the expenses of printing before long. We would only do it under the assurance that the Yaquis would get something. (Spicer to Secretary of Tucson Chamber of Commerce January 17, 1938)

In her letter, Rosamond acknowledged that there had been some precedent for such a graphic representation. “Phebe Bogan wrote and published a small book on the
subject but it is not exact and it is very hard to get the information out of it” (Spicer to Secretary of Tucson Chamber of Commerce January 17, 1938). By the late 1930s, Bogan’s text had become hard to find. She died the year after its publication, and it is unclear how many were printed or where they were circulated. Additionally, its 68 pages did not exactly make for easily digestible reading for Tucson’s tourists.

While some aspects of the events are unclear, what is clear is that over the next few years the Chamber of Commerce and Spicers came to work with each other to produce the intriguingly titled *The Passion at Pascua* (1941a). Ultimately written by Emily Brown, a staff writer for the *Arizona Daily Star*, and financed and distributed by the Chamber of the Commerce with a foreword from Edward and hand-drawn figures from Rosamond, the pamphlet became an immediate success. At a brisk 28 pages, *The Passion at Pascua* made for a light read compared to Bogan’s text. Rosamond’s figures, which were repurposed from her thesis, effectively mapped the proceedings for visitors and potential visitors. The Chamber of Commerce produced 1,000 copies it in first run, which sold out quickly with many purchases coming from people living outside the city limits (*Arizona Daily Star* March 21, 1940). The booklet, along with Brown’s day-to-day newspaper coverage of the event and the *Arizona Daily Star*’s willingness to reprint selections from the booklet prior to the proceedings (April 7, 1941), brought in “un unusually large number of spectators” (roughly 2,000 people) the following year (Brown April 10, 1941). Crowds became so large in 1941, the Chamber of Commerce provided

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36 It is likely that the Spicers’ move to Dillard University in 1938 and their return to Pascua Village in 1939 on a SSRC grant interrupted their intentions to write the pamphlet themselves. Brown had been covering the ceremonies since at least 1939, which likely made her a conceivable surrogate.
“two set of bleachers” (Brown 1941b), which were “filled to capacity” (Arizona Daily Star April 13, 1941). In retrospect, we can see that the packed bleachers and demand for Brown’s pamphlet are evidence of the engrossability of the mobile and iterative anthropological entextualization of the Yaqui of Pascua.

The list of productions from this time period goes on to include glossy magazine profiles (Bowen 1939a, 1939b); a dissertation written by a close associate of the Spicers and, later, published by the Smithsonian Institute (Wilder 1963); and an ethnographic film, which Edward helped produce and continues to be screened in Tucson for interested audiences (Portillo Jr. 2007; Spicer 1995). During their first stay in Pascua, the Spicer’s made friends with Richard Sortomme, an artist and transplant from Wisconsin, who came to the Southwest following in the footsteps of others drawn to the artist colony of Taos, New Mexico. Eventually, Sortomme found his way to Tucson, painting a series on the Easter ceremonies. Though the Yaquis of Pascua actively encouraged him to paint the events, giving him explicit permission (Brown December 16, 1937; Bowen 1939, 14), at first, Sortomme found it difficult to find an interested audience willing to purchase his work. As he recounted to Rosamond and Edward in his letters during the winter of 1938, “Things have been going disappointingly slow this season; hence, I must try to “cash in” in all possible ways during the Rodeo. Do you think the that the sales value of

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37 In December of 1937, Sortomme managed to secure a gallery showing of his work at the Arizona Inn. As recounted in his letter to Roz, the showing proved unsuccessful. This was despite the fact that Brown spotlighted Sortomme and the showing in the Arizona Daily Star (Arizona Daily Star December 16, 1937). The fact that this was shown in the Arizona Inn is significant. The Inn was owned by Isabella Greenway. It had been her primary profession in Tucson before entering politics and advocating for the Yaqui at the federal level. One can assume that the owner’s appreciation of the Yaqui helped secure the space for Sortomme’s work.
the series will be damaged, should the *Arizona Daily Star* run cuts of them in its special edition” (Sortomme to Edward and Rosamond Spicer January 27, 1938)? Recognizing their associate’s difficulties, the Spicer’s suggested Sortomme include black and white reproductions of his work in their proposed pamphlet to which he agreed. Luckily, the year before the publication of *The Passion at Pascua*, the struggling artist had a stroke of good fortune when *Desert Magazine* ran a full profile on him and his Yaqui art, referring to him as the “unassuming little man who won the confidence of these primitive, half-pagan Indians” (Bowen 1939, 14). The profile focused on Sortomme’s engagements with the Yaqui of Pascua, neglecting the presence of the other Yaqui communities present in the city and state. The publication of *Passion at Pascua* the following year helped to elevate Sortomme’s position as a respected local artist, which in turn helped to elevate people’s awareness of the Yaquis of Pascua—his primary subjects.

Though they would have likely been unenthused with the loaded language of the magazine article (e.g., “primitive, half-pagan Indians”), the Yaqui appeared to have been quite pleased with Sortomme’s work. This is evidenced by their willingness to offer up their labor and help him build a home in Tucson (also a favor they offered to the Spicers) (Bowen 1939, 14). Their satisfaction with Sortomme seems to have been partially conditioned by the ways in which the artist made his representations of the ceremonies specific to the residents of Pascua. As recounted in the magazine profile:

Recently he [Sortomme] painted a mural of the Passion Play dancers and invited the Yaquis over to view it. The Indians’ reactions were interesting. Their beloved Maestro was the first figure they identified in the mural. “And that,” they
gleefully indicated a dancing Indian in the lower part of the panel, “is Juan.”

“How do you know that?” the artist inquired.

“He holds his gourd rattle so!” the Yaquis pantomimed elaborately, “and he goes about the world so–always with his eyes looking wide. Oh, we know all right!” the Indians nodded sagely, to the delight of their desert artist. (Bowen 1939, 14, emphasis added)

Who exactly these approving “Yaquis” were is not made explicit in the article. However, what is interesting is that the article suggests the active and self-conscious representational work the Yaqui of Pascua performed. Sortomme was not allowed to paint the ceremonies simply because of his artistry–although that may very well have been a criterion for the people in the community. Community members who were already strapped for time and income likely did not help him build his house simply out of friendship–once again, that may have very well been part of the equation. The Yaquis recognized in Sortomme and his paintings another prop in their public presentation of self (to invoke Erving Goffman [1964]). He became “their desert artist”–not just anyone else’s. After Sortomme, the Yaqui of Pascua would continue to play with different mediums of representation.

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38 According to Brown, Sortomme spent six weeks amongst the Yaqui of Pascua to “authenticate his work by close study of the tribal customs and ceremonies” (Arizona Daily Star December 16, 1937). What exactly that six weeks of authentification looked like is difficult to determine. Brown indicates the process only began after Sortomme had observed the Easter ceremonies and produce his “sketches.” Therefore, it is unclear exactly what “customs and ceremonies” he would have been observing for those six weeks. Given that the Yaqui of Pascua were now quite familiar with the anthropological project (this would have coincided with the Spicers’ first significant period of fieldwork), it may have come down to elite men (like Chavez) explaining Yaqui culture to him.
Born in Springfield Ohio but raised in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Tad Nichols was a relatively new arrival to the Southwest when he encountered the Spicers and the Yaqui in the late 1930s. While Sortomme had been drawn to the region by the pull of art, Nichols was drawn in by another common theme, asthma. The young man became so taken with the region that he enrolled in the University of Arizona in 1932 seeking a dual degree in geology and archaeology. It was his association with the Department of Archaeology that probably put him in touch with the Spicers.

Likely already aware of the Pascua Yaquis through Brown’s pamphlet, Sortomme’s art, and the Spicers’ work, Nichols began filming the Easter ceremonies in 1941. According to Rosamond, it was the Spicers who obtained permission for Nichols to capture the events. Although, it would have to be done secretly with Nichols “hiding around corners, covering his camera with his hat, dodging behind some of use, and sitting cross-legged with the camera in his lap” (Spicer 1995). The reason for such secrecy may have come from multiple sources. To be fair, the Yaqui of Pascua had been regulating photography for some time. However, there was something of a politics of authenticity at play. As Spicer notes, Yaquis in other parts of the city looked down on the Pascua Yaqui for commercializing their ceremonies (1988, 103). Perhaps the regulation of photography (and in some ways Sortomme’s paintings) was a way to regulate authenticity. The Spicer’s continued to offer Nichols assistance over the years as the footage was slowly shaped into a documentary. Spicer along with Muriel Thayer Painter, a researcher with the Arizona State Museum and patron of the Pascua Yaqui who would become a key player in the community in the following decades, participated in the editing and, later narration of the film.
This period was so charged with anthropological involvement in and objectification of Pascua Village that the famous Polish social anthropologists Bronislaw Malinowski came to visit in 1939. While serving as a guest lecturer at the university, Malinowski used the Easter proceedings as a means to demonstrate field research methods for his students (Troy 1998). Malinowski’s visit marks an important transformation in both local anthropology’s position in institutional anthropology. Up to that point, the Department of Archaeology at the University of Arizona was a relatively marginal institution on the fringe of anthropology’s strongholds (e.g., Chicago, Columbia, and Harvard), especially with respect to sociocultural anthropology. Even in the context of the greater Southwest, Arizona lagged in notoriety behind the institutions built by Edgar Lee Hewett in New Mexico (e.g., the Department of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico and the Laboratory of Anthropology at the Museum of New Mexico) and Charles Lummis in Southern California (e.g., Southwest Museum) (Stocking 1982; Snead 2001; Thompson 2001). The arrival of Malinowski carried great symbolic weight. The fact that he chose to visit the Yaqui would have marked Pascua as an ideal site for the implementation of the ethnographic method.

Though Chavez was not necessarily at the center of each of these productions, without his initial engagement with Spicer, it is unlikely that these representations would have developed the way they did with Pascua Village as a central site for Yaqui analysis. For instance, Brown could have just as easily covered the Yaqui ceremonies in Barrio Anita or Guadalupe, which the Arizona Daily Star did for a brief period in the early 1920s (Arizona Daily Star March 27, 1921). However, a path had already been carved out by Chavez and Spicer that made it so that all ethnographically substantive Yaqui
roads appeared to lead to Pascua. Through the onslaught of these representations, the village became linked to all things Yaqui in the city of Tucson. To speak of Pascua was to speak of the Yaqui. For Chavez, who had worked for decades to construct “a nation within a nation,” such representations were indispensable as they ensured the Yaquis would be understood (and treated) differently even as they grew more imbricated in the social, economic, and political flows of Tucson.

Conclusion: Regenerative Debris

The textual debris of these processes of anthropological enrollment continues to articulate with the longstanding dynamics of incorporation and differentiation. However, they do so in novel ways. A central site for these dynamics is the Old Pascua Museum and Yaqui Cultural Center established in 2013 in Pascua Village. The museum has been actively displaying photographic and textual representations of Pascua’s history. This strategy has developed in relation to a subtle disjuncture between Pascua Village and the Pascua Pueblo Yaqui Reservation. The reservation, or “New Pascua” as it is commonly called, was established in 1978 when the Yaqui achieved federal recognition before Congress (to be explored further in chapter three). As noted briefly in chapter one, it has since blossomed into a site of centralized politics in that the Pascua Yaqui Tribal Council resides there; of cultural representations in the well-financed tribal museum and the Easter performances that have eclipsed Pascua Village in the eyes of many tourists; and of economic development funded by not one but two popular casinos as well as a world class golf course and massive amphitheater. In contrast, Pascua Village, now called “Old Pascua,” has become (or remained) a relatively underdeveloped urban neighborhood surrounded by auto shops and warehouses.
In order to combat its increasing invisibility, Yaquis residing in Old Pascua have taken it upon themselves to construct their own tribal museum. Whereas the reservation has largely abandoned any reference to the anthropological representations of the past made possible by Chavez and Spicer, the volunteer staff at the Old Pascua Museum has embraced this legacy. Their museum features an interactive exhibit, called “The Spicer Desk.” Visitors can sit and read copies of Spicer’s books and photocopied selections from his archive. Much of this material was forged out of Spicer’s relationship with Chavez. In explaining the impulse behind the project, the tribal museum director notes, “[Spicer’s] writing today are oftentimes the only connection [for] some young tribal members who yearn for historical knowledge of their people” (Quiroga 2015). The purpose of the desk, as envisioned by the director, is to provide Yaquis with a means to actively engage their past in the present so as to create community for the future.

The museum is even working to curate an online exhibit of the Nichols film. This is a complex project since the Old Pascua community has maintained a strict ban on the filming of the Easter ceremonies since the 1970s. However, even here, the museum is not simply looking to put culture and history on display. The museum has been researching the production of the film and is hoping to integrate it into a narrative that explains how and why the community came to ban filming. As with the Spicer Desk, the goal is to help young people understand how the ban came to be.

The Yaquis of Old Pascua can be said to have taken what Robert Moore terms a “regenerative” stance (2006) toward the ethnographic debris of empire. This is to say, they do not necessarily approach such objects as “a domain of culture set apart from mundane life” nor “as a resource to be salvaged, systematized, [and] disseminated…”
(Comaroff and Comaroff 2009, 75). Rather, these objects are taken as both “records of past pronunciation” and “recipes for future (re)production” (Moore 2006, 300). Building upon Moore’s characterization, I suggest that the regenerative stance with its forward-looking mentality is consistent with the processes of recognition and heritage construction examined by Thomas Guthrie (2013). As Guthrie describes:

In order for a group to be recognized, it must first make itself visible, differentiate itself from other groups, present itself as more or less cohesive, and, oftentimes, demonstrate ‘authenticity’ and cultural continuity through time… Heritage development makes cultural difference more recognizable. It brings culture, identity, and the past into consciousness and into view, lifting people, places, and social practices out of everyday existence and holding them up for inspection.” (2013, 9)

Understood in this manner, the Yaqui’s regenerative stance is not so much a matter of deciphering ethnographic debris as much as it is re-assembling it to further codify a sense of distinction in the present.

Though some might see the regenerative work of the museum as being new and innovative, which it is, one can also see that it is deeply imbricated in a longstanding “tradition” of enrolling anthropological knowledge and objects into a local assemblage of self-conscious political representation that works to turn space into a distinct place saturated with the history and culture of a people. Therefore, operating at the intersections of empire and anthropology, individuals like Lucas Chavez and the director of the Old Pascua Museum do not simply represent Native place; they assemble it.
The assembling of Pascua Village is without a doubt a significant and early marker of the creative means by which Yaquis engaged anthropology; however, it would not be the only moment in which Yaqui leaders engaged anthropologists in an effort to stake a claim to place and identity in Tucson. Moving toward the mid-20th century, the fluctuating field of imperial incorporation and differentiation generated new opportunities and needs for the Yaqui to assemble a new Pascua.
Chapter Three: Assembling New Pascua: The Paradoxes of Anthropological Activism

Introduction

In 1970, *Human Organization*, the leading journal in applied anthropology, published an article by Edward Spicer titled “Patrons of the Poor.” Written in relation to the emergent literature on the “culture of poverty” concept (Lewis 1966, see also Bourgois 2001), the article addressed the ways in which the linkages between poor and wealthy segments of the United States affect the internal organization of poverty-stricken communities. Spicer centered his discussion around the case of one ethnic group in a Southwestern city of 250,000 which has been undergoing industrialization over the past forty years. The group consists of some 400 descendants of immigrants from Mexico who have maintained a sense of identity as Indian during this period. They live in a *barrio*, or district of the city, which we shall call Navidad. (1970, 12)

Spicer’s article addresses the “Navidaders” attempts to use grant money from the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to build a new community on the southern outskirts of the unnamed “Southwestern city.” The article goes on to explain that upon learning about the project, various local “patrons” of the “Navidaders” including missionaries, schoolteachers, and social workers “promptly became active in opposition to the program” (1970, 14). Spicer details how these patrons “operate effectively to destroy, to inhibit, or to subvert internal organization in communities” like Navidad (1970, 18).

What the article does not mention is that “Navidad” was a pseudonym for Pascua Village. The OEO project to which Spicer refers was in fact the Pascua Yaqui Development Project (PYDP), which led to the construction of the Pascua Pueblo Yaqui
Reservation also known as New Pascua. New Pascua is the cornerstone of contemporary Pascua Yaqui culture and politics. Its existence is remarkable as it was constructed when the Yaqui lacked federal recognition altogether and the government at large was oriented toward tribal termination. While the history of New Pascua’s making has been examined from a variety of angles (Castile 2002; Meeks 2004; Miller 2004), few have focused on the role of anthropologists. As the head of an advisory committee to the Yaqui leadership and director of the OEO project, Spicer was more than an academic observer.

In this chapter, I explore the ways in which anthropologists like Spicer were incorporated into the construction of New Pascua. I argue that anthropologists acted as the conduits through which the Pascua Yaqui developed new modes of political organization. While anthropologists enabled the persistence of a distinct community, their activism and intervention would prove to be paradoxical as they reproduced practices and ideologies relating to what I will call “indirect colonialism.” Following historians and historical anthropologists of colonialism, I understand indirect colonialism to be an asymmetrical relationship of power between a political entity and a nominally sovereign entity, which justifies its existence with a veneer of self-determination and cultural preservation (Beidelman 2014; Dirks 2002; Fisher 1991; Iliffe 1979; Ranger 1983; Mamdani 1999). I begin this analysis with a more detailed discussion of the term. I then move to an overview of the process by which New Pascua came into existence highlighting the foundational role of anthropologists as advisors to the Pascua Yaqui leadership. I proceed by describing the ideologically loaded discourses of “preservation” and “advisement” that anthropologists used to frame peoples’ perception of the project. Along the way, I complicate this discourse by detailing the ways in which anthropologists
became the mechanism by which new, transformative ideas and practices entered the Yaqui community—sometimes against the will of Yaqui leaders. The disjuncture between discourse and practice reveals how anthropological activism became awkwardly embedded in patterns of indirect colonialism. With these opposing outcomes in mind, I conclude with a discussion of the paradoxical nature of anthropological intervention, arguing that while the discipline has a longstanding activist tradition, this tradition does not necessarily constitute an unmitigated good.

Indirect Rule and Native North America

Typically, indirect colonialism is not noted in the literature on Native North America and anthropological complicity with variants of coloniality in the U.S. This is surprising as the history of US relations with indigenous peoples has made significant contributions to the history of indirect coloniality, and anthropologists have on occasion been mediators between these two sets of actors (Biolsi 1991; Reinhardt 2005). At its core, indirect colonialism (also known as indirect rule or indirect administration) refers to an “exercise of determinative and exclusive political control by one corporate body over a nominally sovereign state” (Fisher 1991, 6-7). The practice has its roots in the

39 Two notable exceptions that have framed 20th century U.S.-Indian relations as indirect colonialism include Biolsi (1991) and Reinhardt (2005).
40 Indirect colonialism (also known as indirect rule or indirect administration) has its roots in the expediencies of the British colonial empire. In the late 19th century, the high commissioner of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, Lord Frederick Lugard was in need of cost-effective systems of control. His work lead to the institutionalization of indirect modes of governance (Beidelmann 2014; Luggard 1922). However, historian Michael Fisher argues that the system has even deeper roots in the British experience of the Residency system in colonial India, dating back to the mid-18th century (1991). Still others focus on Dutch implementation in places like Burma (Furnival 1948). While the exact origins might be difficult to pin down, the content of indirect colonialism is much clearer thanks to decades of scholarship in African and Southeast Asian colonial history.
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In theory, indirect rule is essentially “empire on the cheap” for it requires the colonial metropole to expend less personnel and resources (Cooper 2005, 157). Moreover, as Frederick Cooper argues, it reveals the “central paradox of the history of colonialism”: “Colonial states…were thin: they needed the legitimacy and coercive capacity of local authority to collect taxes and round up labor, and they needed local knowledge” (Cooper 2005, 184). Foreign powers needed to rule through local political authorities, implicating themselves in what Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper have identified as an imperial politics of differences (2011, 11). Depending on the time and place, empires (or states with imperial ambitions) ruled through shifting strategies of differentiation and incorporation (Burbank and Cooper 2011, 11-12). Because it required the preservation or construction of a distinct political system, indirect rule occupied the differentiative end of this imperial dialectic. These societies would need their own distinct political bodies to control day-to-day management. As a result, “the structure of rule reinforced and rigidified the distinctiveness of subordinate political units within the empires” (Cooper 2005, 184). Therefore, in an interesting turn of events, colonial rule of the indirect kind contributed to the reified differentiation of ruled subjects so that they might more readily fit into an imperial order of thing (Cooper 2005, 184).
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Obviously, New Pascua does not exactly fit this definition as the PYA was not recognized as an autonomous (or semi-autonomous) political entity. However, as I will show below, those involved consistently referred to the Pascua Yaqui as a “tribe,” positioned the PYA as a corporate body representative of the community, and leveraged the discourse of self-determination in a manner that is inextricably tied to the history of indirect colonialism on an ideological level.

Moreover, the justifications for indirect rule mirrored the making of New Pascua quite closely. Historically, proponents of indirect rule defended it on the grounds that it was less invasive than direct rule and, relatedly, that it functioned to “preserve” the pre-existing social and political structures of the colonized (Beidelman 2014, 16-18; Fisher 1991, 11). Historian Michael Fisher argues that while “[i]ndirect rule obviously preserved
more elements of the traditional authority than did direct rule...the very fact of imperial
rule fundamentally distorted the indigenous political institution and therefore ‘preserved’
an altogether different institution” (1991, 11). Others are more cutting in their
assessments, arguing that the placid surface of “self-determination” concealed “a deeper
penetration of society by the state, and a most important standardization of [colonized]
life” (Iliffe 1979, 325; see also Ranger 1983; Mamdani 1999). Regardless of scholarly
temperament, most agree that indirect rule involves a rhetoric of preservation and self-
determination (or self-help) behind which the transformation of subject populations
exists. As I will illustrate below, the rhetoric of indirect rule would be woven throughout
the making of New Pascua in significant ways. Thinking about this rhetoric as indirect
rule illuminates the paradoxical nature of anthropological activism with respect to the
making of New Pascua. While anthropologists were used to negotiate with various
branches of the federal government bringing about vital political transformations in the
process that enabled Yaqui autonomy and persistence, they did so in a manner that
reproduced colonialist ideologies of difference.

Historical Overview

In examining the process by which New Pascua became a material reality, it
becomes apparent that anthropologists were involved from the very beginning. Between
1948 and 1968, certain Yaqui individuals made great efforts to perpetuate their existence
as a distinct community within the urban landscape of Tucson. Throughout this period
and even before, anthropologists offered their services in one form or another. As
discussed in the previous chapter, by the early 1940s, Pascua Village, known most for its
Easter and Lenten ceremonies, was a well-established point of interest in Tucson’s
tourism industry (see figure 8). Funding from the Chamber of Commerce and proceeds from the sale of informative pamphlets ensured the local Yaqui ceremonies would have a steady financial support system. However, despite being a vibrant component of the city’s conception of itself, Pascua Village was far from an affluent domain for its residents. Relying heavily on seasonal agricultural work, the inhabitants of Pascua Village eked out a meager existence on the city’s northwestern outskirts where overcrowded shacks, dirt roads, and a lack of running water and indoor plumbing were the norm (see figures 9 and 10). The village was also plagued by persistent concerns over land title. The vast majority of the village’s plots had been purchased during the 1920s by the Marshall Foundation, a Tucson-based philanthropic organization. As noted in chapter two, the foundation originally intended for the Yaqui to purchase individual plots on installment. However, this plan fell by the wayside after 1936 leaving many of the residents of Pascua as squatters.
Figure 8. From the 1939 Tucson Visitors’ Guide published by the Tucson Chamber of Commerce. Just to the northwest of blackened city center, Pascua Village is marked as “Yaqui Indians.”  

There had been an early attempt to rescue the Yaqui from the poverty and precarity of Pascua Village and relocate them to a new community. Led by John
Pronvise, Thamar Richey, and Isabella Greenway, the project sought to enact a “local experiment in self-government” that would effectively “rehabilitate” the Yaqui of Pascua (Provinse 1935; see chapter two). Despite strong local support, the project ran aground due to lack of support from the BIA and, eventually, Provinse himself. Attempts to drastically improve the situation in Pascua Village would not emerge again until the late 1940s.

During this period, a charismatic Yaqui named Anselmo Valencia began to devise ways to ameliorate the immediate problem of inadequate housing and the longterm issue of ambiguous property ownership. Born and raised in Pascua Village, Valencia was a prominent Deer Dancer who began to take on an unofficial leadership position in the community upon his return from WWII. As the godson of Lucas Chavez, the secretary to Juan Pistola, the “chief” of Pascua Village during the 1920s, Valencia was no stranger to local politics and community dynamics. Following the path of his godfather, Valencia came to rely on local anthropologists to help secure the existence of Pascua Village. He began to work most closely with Spicer, who was at that point the leading scholar of the Yaqui and professor of anthropology at the University of Arizona, and with Muriel Thayer Painter, a researcher with the Arizona State Museum. As a means to immediately reckon with the need to clarify Yaqui property rights, Spicer located his class in applied anthropology in Pascua Village in the fall semester of 1949. He assigned two graduate students to measure property lines and determine to whom deeds should be made (Painter
Spicer and Painter would keep close watch over this work and report to Valencia.

The need to determine the Pascua Yaqui’s legal standing was compounded in the early 1950s. For reasons that are still unclear, the previously discussed Marshall Foundation, the owner of many of the plots of land in Pascua Village, pressured the city council to rezone the district as an industrial space (*Arizona Daily Star* 11/21/1953). Given that the Yaqui had long been using the area as a residential site, rezoning could mean the demolition of Pascua Village. This was a particularly surprising development, as Painter, Spicer, and Valencia were under the impression, as I have noted, that the Foundation had originally purchased the land for the Yaqui in philanthropic goodwill.

Negotiations with the Foundation meandered for several years. Painter, Spicer, and Valencia attempted to gain control of the land through the right of adverse possession, which would involve the Yaqui paying for the plots that they had long occupied as squatters (*Muriel Thayer Painter Diary 1962-1968*). However, the purchasing power of the group was severely compromised during the 1950s as seasonal agricultural labor began to dissipate in relation to the increasing mechanization of cotton picking and the commercialization of Southern Arizona more broadly (Meeks 2007, 143).

The housing issue continued to languish for several years with little progress. In 1959, the district in which the community resided was formally incorporated into the city

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43 Diary entries from June 28, 1968. As Painter noted in her diary on April 12, 1957, this all became a non-issue in 1957 when the foundation’s Board of Trustees decided not to sell the land to the Pascua Yaqui after all (Painter Diary 1962-1968).
of Tucson (Brophy 1959). This generated a new round of concerns. Would the Yaqui with their dilapidated homes and lack of plumbing be able to meet basic city building and sanitation requirements? In an attempt to gain funding for improved housing, Valencia focused his attention upon boosting the popularity of the Easter ceremonies. In the early 1960s, he signed a contract with John Govorko, the editor of the *Mexican Holiday Press*, who promised to promote the ceremonies. Valencia hoped this promotion would increase attendance and donations thereby generating a steady revenue stream for the community (Painter Diary 1962-1967). With that money, Valencia imagined that they could re-develop Pascua Village. Unfortunately, the deal was deeply exploitative. Govorko claimed 50 percent of all proceeds from the ceremonies (Painter Diary 1962-1967). When Valencia refused to pay, Govorko became even more persistent in his efforts to collect the money often showing up at Pascua unannounced and harassing Valencia (Painter Diary 1962-1967).

Reflecting on this period, Painter recounted,

> At this point I felt that I could press the point that I had long wanted to, the advantage of having an Advisory Committee for Pascua housing. I had broached the subject before, and had told Anselmo about the Committee on Papago Indian Affairs. He had not been interested, being as he is very independent. (Painter Diary 1962-1967)

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44 Diary entry from June 17, 1962.
45 Diary entry from November 21, 1962.
46 Diary entry from June 17, 1962. The committee on Papago Affairs had also been staffed with local applied anthropologists including Edward Dozier and Edward Spicer, both of whom would come to serve on the Yaqui committee.
Perhaps it was the stress of his deal with Gavorko or the perennial threat of eviction. Whatever it was, Valencia finally complied with Painter’s suggestion when she presented it for a second time in June of 1962 (Painter Diary 1962-1967).47

The following week, Painter held a meeting at her home with Valencia and several other men from Pascua. From the meeting came the Pascua Yaqui Housing Committee, which would be led by Painter as chair and Spicer as co-chair. Soon other local, sympathetic non-Yaquis would join their ranks including anthropologists Carleton Wilder and Edward Dozier. During the 1940s, Wilder had composed a dissertation on the Yaqui ceremonies of Pascua under the guidance of Edward and Rosamond Spicer, which was later published by the Bureau of American Ethnology (1963). Dozier was a colleague of Spicer’s in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Arizona. The two scholars worked closely on theories of cultural change in Native American communities (Spicer 1961). Dozier was himself a Tewa Indian from Santa Clara Pueblo in New Mexico who spent much of his career studying his own people (Eggan and Basso 1972; Norcini 2007). He and Spicer both took an interest in local Indigenous politics beginning with their involvement in the University of Arizona Indian Advisory Committee, which formed in 1958 (Norcini 2007, 117). While the Pascua Housing Committee was never exclusively composed of anthropologists, an anthropologist always held a high-ranking leadership position throughout the committee’s existence.

A mere six days after the meeting at Painter’s house, Valencia called Painter to tell her that he had abandoned plans to improve existing housing. All efforts should be devoted to relocating the Yaqui, not preserving life in Pascua. In the days following the

47 Diary entry June 17, 1962.
meeting, Valencia contacted the office of the congressional representative of Southern Arizona, Morris K. Udall, about the possibility of purchasing several hundred acres of land on the southern outskirts of the city (Painter Diary 1962-1967). This marked a major leap in Pascua Yaquis’ political dealings, for it appears to have been the first time that a representative of the community negotiated directly with a representative of the federal government. Prior to this, the group had mostly dealt with city officials and members of immigration services. Valencia’s leap proved useful. In 1963, Udall began to circulate plans for Bill H.R. 6233. The bill promised to purchase 202 acres of land identified by Valencia and the Bureau of Land Management for the relocation of the Pascua Yaqui. The land would be controlled by the newly formed Pascua Yaqui Association (PYA), a non-profit corporation, led by a board of Yaquis, formed to administer the land and residency (Painter Diary 1962-1967). The housing committee became the PYA Advisory Committee, maintaining close ties between Painter, Spicer, and Valencia. On October 8, 1964, the bill successfully passed Congress thereby securing the land for a “New Pascua.”

The Advisory Committee quickly realized that without funding, the new community would become subject to the same degree of destitution as Pascua Village. In December of 1964, Painter and Valencia attended an orientation meeting at Safford Elementary School concerning the recently passed Economic Opportunity Act, designed to eliminate urban and rural poverty (Painter Diary 1962-1967). This meeting marked the committee’s first exposure to the possibility that the mounting “War on Poverty”

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48 Diary entry from September 26, 1962.
50 Diary entry from December 8th, 1964.
might be made useful for the Yaqui. However, it was not until 1966 that the committee formally applied to the OEO for funding to facilitate housing on the newly acquired land.

The OEO was the cornerstone of President Johnson’s epic and quixotic speech-turned-policy-program known as “The Great Society.” As he imagined:

It is a Society where no child will go unfed, and no youngster will go unschooled. Where no man who wants work will fail to find it. Where no citizen will be barred from any door because of his birthplace or his color or his church. Where peace and security is[sic] common among neighbors and possible among nations.

(Johnson 1964)

Through the department’s Community Action program, the OEO operated under a principle of “maximum feasible participation.” Largely developed and enacted by sociologists within the organization, “the concept was generally taken to mean some degree of representation and empowerment of the rural residents of urban ghettos and rural poverty pockets, to enable them to act for themselves rather than to remain passive recipients of local government and private charity largesse” (Castile 2006, 80). In an interesting turn of events for Native American communities, the OEO “turned out to be the key to the emergence of self-determination as a new direction in Indian affairs” (Castile 1998, 25). This was in part because the OEO made funds directly available to tribal councils.51 While the OEO did not last long (Nixon essentially closed its doors in

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51 The program was not without a heavy dose of bureaucratic intervention in Native communities. As George Pierre Castile, an anthropologist and former OEO employee highlights, “Almost uniquely among federal agencies, rather than acting as a filter, much OEO staff time was spent helping people to find a way to qualify for funds. They also went outside the agency for ‘explainers’” (1998, 32). Many of these “explainers” included university-based anthropologists such as Alfonso Ortiz from the University of New Mexico whom Castile, who held a bachelor’s degree in anthropology, contacted as
1973), it made a significant change in Indigenous political formations. As unintended as it might have been, “here was a new model for a government-to-government relationship between tribes and the federal government” (Castile 1998, 33).

On May 25, 1966, the OEO assigned George Pierre Castile to the Yaqui case. A former marine with an undergraduate education in anthropology and archaeology, Castile joined the OEO in the summer of 1965 as a grant reviewer for the organization’s inaugural program–Head Start. Or, as Castile recalls in a somewhat less grandiose manner, “They hired a gazillion people to do grant review. I was one of the gazillion” (Castile January 9, 2018). Following the disbursement of Head Start funds, Castile was transferred around the organization. He worked for a new unit of “Special Projects” dealing with Chicano and Indian communities. In the eyes of his superiors, to have studied anthropology was to know something about Indians. “Somebody discovered that I had an undergraduate degree in anthropology, also in…archaeology. And they said, ‘Oh you can do this’” (Castile January 9, 2018). With his reputation as the “Indian guy,” Castile eventually landed under the supervision of Sanford Kravitz, who was then head of the Community Action Program (CAP). The CAP was designed to distribute federal aid part of a larger effort to put together a university-based anthropological brain-trust to consult the OEO (Castile January 1, 2018).

52 Johnson “The Forgotten Indian” (March 6, 1968): “I propose a new goal for our Indian programs: A goal that ends the old debate about ‘termination’ of Indian programs and stresses self-determination; a goal that erases old attitudes of paternalism and promotes partnership self-help…I promote, in short, a policy of maximum choice for the American Indian: a policy expressed in programs of self-help, self-development, self-determination” (Johnson 1968). “Passive acceptance of Federal service is giving way to Indian involvement. More than ever before, Indians needs are being identified from the Indian viewpoint–as they should be. This principle is the key to progress for Indians–just as it has been for other Americans. If we base our programs upon it, the day will come when the relationship between Indians and the Government will be one of full partnership–not dependency” (Johnson 1968).
to poor communities giving them the tools and training to self-improve their economic status. In time, the program established an “Indian Desk” to work specifically with Native groups. “So I was there, and mostly what I was supposed to worry about was Indians” (Castile January 9, 2018).

Castile was charged with traveling to Tucson to help Spicer, the author of the original application, and the rest of Advisory Committee revise their proposal (Painter Diary 1962-1967). Specifically, Castile’s job was to take what was essentially a housing project and to message it into a more ambitious “community development” initiative in order to keep with the expansive intentions of the OEO. Once revised and resubmitted, the Pascua Yaqui were awarded an OEO grant of $99,000. After four years, that number would balloon to $433,000 (Miller 2004, 100). Funding jumpstarted a housing construction demonstration, which trained the Yaqui to build homes. Though no one knew it at the time, this would literally be the foundation for the future reservation.

Despite support from local, state, and federal government, New Pascua was plagued with opposition and controversy. Because the initial land acquisition was done so quickly, most Tucsonans were not made aware of the deal until after it received congressional approval. When the news finally broke, some segments of the city responded with fervent criticism. Monte Seymour, writing on behalf of the land owners in the area where the community would be built, wrote to Udall insisting that the construction of a Yaqui “slum” would cause the value of the land to depreciate exponentially (Seymour to Udall August 10, 1964). In a more overtly racist tone, A. Turney Smith, a local attorney, informed Udall that the Yaqui were a historically violent

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53 Diary entry from May 25th, 1966.
bunch, a blight on the Mexican government, and the village would essentially be a “[l]eprosy colony” (Smith to Udall August 11, 1964). That being said, the Yaqui had the support of significant local civic leaders including the mayor and Chamber of Commerce (“Petition in Support of Yaqui Recognition” [1964]). The vast majority of Tucsonans were likely unaware of the development.

Shortly following the distribution of funds from the OEO, a new group of individuals attacked the plans for New Pascua but this time from different angles. Protestant missionaries, school teachers, and social workers claimed that the project was a veiled form of segregation. Some of these critics singled out anthropologists whom they accused of trying to preserve the Yaqui as an ethnographic specimen for the local tourist industry (Swank to Udall August 5, 1964). A local missionary expressed concern that Valencia was actively working to prevent Protestants from reaching out to the Yaqui by isolating them on a reservation where the Catholic priests, who were already planning the construction of a church, would have privileged access to the souls of the Pascua Yaqui (Painter Diary 192-1967). These critiques came to a head in a public hearing before the Tucson Committee on Human Relations in 1966. During the proceedings, it became apparent that the project’s detractors held deeply prejudiced views regarding life in Pascua. Most of them argued that Yaqui ceremonial systems were responsible for the rampant poverty in Pascua Village (Spicer 1970, 16). Spicer and Valencia defended the project assuring the critics that this was not an institutionalized form of ghettoization predicated on religious prejudice nor was it a case where the Yaqui had been coerced into moving (Maxwell 1966). The two ultimately proved successful. The Committee

54 Diary entry from November 14th, 1963.
determined that “there is no evidence to indicate that there is any discrimination practiced by the Yaquis on the basis of creed and further that the resettlement plans are entirely voluntary for those who wish to qualify” (Maxwell 1966). As a result of the efforts of people like Valencia and Spicer, the making of New Pascua continued with OEO and local support until the end of the decade, enabling the formation of a new Yaqui community in Tucson.

Advisement and Preservation

Throughout the process of bringing New Pascua to life, non-Yaqui supporters maintained a discourse of “preservation” and “advisement.” From the beginning, Painter feared that others might see New Pascua as an essentially Anglo idea with little actual Yaqui support, which ultimately happened. Painter referred to this nagging thought as “[her] own private nightmare” (Painter Diary 1962-1967).55 She also worried that Anselmo was being forced into the deep end of US politics before he learned to swim. When developing the bylaws for the PYA, Painter expressed concern that “Anselmo was being thrust into a complicated structure of Anglo-American culture for which he was not prepared” (Painter Diary 1962-1967).56 In her eyes, Valencia would need guidance and protection, but that guidance and protection could not appear paternalistic to Valencia or the public. Sensitive to this situation, she emphasized the importance of the Advisory Committee operating in the “background so that Anselmo could feel that this was his project” (Painter Diary 1962-1967).57 When formalizing the committee and its role in the

55 Diary entry from December 5th, 1962.
56 Diary entry from June 28th, 1963.
57 Diary entry from February 5th, 1963.
project, Painter insisted “the committee would be purely advisory and at the request of the Yaquis” (Painter Diary 1962-1967, emphasis added).58

This aversion to intervention dovetailed with the anthropological fear of disrupting life in one’s field site. This of course became complicated as anthropologists like Painter and Spicer took on an overtly applied role, which meant deploying anthropological skills and knowledge to bring about a desired effect. According to Castile, Spicer preached “non-directed change” in his applied work (Castile January 1, 2018). Adapted from Ralph Linton’s theory of acculturation, non-direct change referred to the changes in sociocultural life that result from the interactions between members of different groups when “there is no control of one society’s members by another” (Spicer 1972 [1961], 53). Spicer appears to have viewed his applied work as a form of non-directed change that would preserve Yaqui self-determination.

One finds echoes of this rhetoric in Rosamond Spicer’s introduction to the one-year progress report on the PYDP submitted to the OEO in 1967 (Project Staff 1967). Writing in the voice of an imagined collective Pascua community, she states,

“We want to help ourselves.” This is the key. Yet how do “we help ourselves” when we have never been in the complex of offices, are shy and bewildered, or even quite unaware of the intricacies of government and agency, public and private?... In no uncertain terms they [requested] the services of Anglos whom they knew and trusted to be the liaison and coordinating staff. (Project Staff 1967)

58 Diary entry from March 20th, 1963.
As portrayed by Spicer, the involvement of “Anglos” was simply a matter of “helping people help themselves” (Project Staff 1967). More precisely, it was a matter of helping supposedly “shy and bewildered” people help themselves.

In a more public presentation of the project, the Advisory Committee also produced a series of pamphlets that buttressed the rhetoric of minimal interference for an indigent and naïve group. These short reading materials were designed to elicit financial contributions from potential donors. One particularly striking pamphlet combined the rhetoric of “self-help” with an oddly nationalistic narrative (see figure 10). The inside flap is prefaced with the following statement in bold blue lettering, “Pascua Village Was A Lot Like Plymouth Rock. Its Inhabitants Came Here Seeking Freedom” (Pascua Yaqui Association n.d.). The side of the page is emblazoned with “Truly a ‘self-help’ endeavor” (Pascua Yaqui Association n.d.) Replete with pictures of Yaquis building new homes and examining a map of New Pascua, the pamphlet says nothing about the involvement of anthropologists. Through the pamphlet, potential donors came to see New Pascua as a self-help endeavor that is part of “the American story” of freedom and self-determination. If others were involved, they were simply advising.
The Advisory Committee would also insist that it was formed with the goal “to preserve the Yaqui culture as it is found in the State of Arizona” (Scheff to Udall March 5th, 1963). Some Pascua Yaqui supporters went so far as to suggest that without intervention and relocation, Yaqui culture would simply die out. For instance, as Udall wrote to Reverend Francis J. Green, a Bishop of Tucson and Yaqui supporter, “It is my feeling that without special legislation such as is now proposed, the members of the Yaqui Tribe would ultimately be dispersed and their culture would die out.”

For many

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59 Author’s personal copy.

60 Green required little convincing of the Yaqui re-location. During this same period, he was waging his own local war on poverty amongst the African American, Native American, and Latino communities of Tucson. He may have also been compelled to support the Yaqui for other reasons. In conjunction with his philanthropic work, Green began the campaign to have Father Padre Eusebio Kino canonized. The fact that Kino was of the Jesuit order and the Yaquis had found Catholicism through the Jesuits in Sonora may have made the Yaqui all the more relevant to Green during this period. Rhonda Bodfield, “Bishop Green ‘Gentle, Quiet’ Man,” *Tucson Citizen*, May 12, 1995.
supporters, the project hinged on the belief that the Pascua Yaqui were nearing their demise. The anthropologists on the Advisory Committee found ways to play off these sentiments of impending social and cultural doom. When developing pamphlets, Painter selectively photographed homes in Pascua that would serve as a “horrible example of housing” (Painter Diary 1962-1967). With these images of impoverishment, the Advisory Committee portrayed the relocation project as a matter of maintaining a community on the edge of total destitution.

On the rare occasion when anthropologists close to the project wrote about the making of New Pascua for an academic readership, they avoided acknowledging their consistent mediatory role. An example of this is Spicer’s article “Patrons of the Poor” mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (1970). In the piece, Spicer pays particular attention to the Tucson Commission on Human Relations and the attempts of local “patrons” to undermine the project. He discusses the efforts of a Protestant missionary, the principal of a local public school, and functionaries in the office of juvenile probation to disrupt the project. When describing the more exploitative interest groups who benefit financially from their support of Navidad (a.k.a., Pascua Village), Spicer suggested, “perhaps we should include in this category social scientists such as anthropologists. Navidad, during its long existence, has had its share of such patrons” (1970, 17). Spicer’s tone grew closer to home and more critical:

Anthropologists from the university in the city have derived a supply of information from Navidad for theses and publications which were used for their own professional advancement, which provided no return to the Navidaders, and

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61 Diary entry from December 2nd, 1962.
which resulted in the establishment of small clienteles of “informants” who were the recipients of small gifts. (1970, 17)

Though Spicer noted that “an anthropologist who assumed an administrative role in the new program” was also present for the Commission meeting, this hint of critical self-reflexivity was quickly abandoned. Spicer never pursued the analysis of anthropologists in the article. He did not even mention that the anthropologists present for the hearing was him!  

Anthropological Intervention

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62 Another instance in which Spicer briefly addressed the OEO came in 1974 at the American Anthropology Association conference. Spicer presented a somewhat unconventional paper titled “Anthropology in the Society of the 1990s.” In this paper, Spicer gives himself the task of “imaging society [twenty years in the future] in terms of five well-established, if by no means well-measured tendencies of the twentieth century.” Spicer’s five trends include: “(1) increasing intercommunication the peoples of the world, (2) increasing occupational specialization with accompanying organic differentiation within societies, (3) increasing failure of technological solutions for the resolution of human problems in acceptable ways, (4) increasing assertion and self-expression of ethnic groups within nation-states, and (5) increasing reaction against centralization in political and administrative structures” (Spicer 1974).

From these trends Spicer envisioned a “society more heterogenous than it was in the nineteenth or any previous century, more aware of its heterogeneity with stronger-than-even tendencies to compartmentalization, with increased awareness of and interest in non-technological and non-economic factors affecting human life, and with a growing tendency to view the nation-state in a wholly new light, especially with reference to its ethnic components and its political and administrative units” (Spicer 1974).

Spicer’s fifth trend explicitly invokes the work of the OEO. With the disintegration of the largest European states following WWI, Spicer argues that the tendency toward political decentralization has gained substantial momentum. “This work is connected with what has become known as ‘community development.’ This involves a high valuation of the policy-making functions of local community within the larger political structures in which they participate and techniques aimed at stimulating the growth of local group initiative. During the 1960s in the United States several new kinds of organization were instituted at the local level, under Office of Economic Opportunity auspices, together with new kinds of relationship between the centralized national and the local government structures” (Spicer 1974).

These statements suggest that Spicer viewed the OEO and the type of work it was doing as part of a larger global pattern of local self-governance.
Contrary to their rhetoric of advisement and preservation, local advisors—including anthropologists—acted as the conduits through which new modes of political organization came to the Pascua Yaqui. In some instances, they even exercised significant control over the project.

A notable marker of anthropological brokerage can be observed in the rise of Valencia as the “chief” of the Pascua Yaqui. Initially, Valencia was not a particularly noted figure in local politics. However, in the late 1940s, he became an increasingly visible representative of Pascua. This occurred through a combination of his own efforts and the support of his primary anthropological interlocutors—Spicer and Painter. As mentioned above, Valencia came to exert influence during the late 1940s amidst concerns over potential eviction in Pascua Village. As early as 1959, local newspapers and magazines identified him as the “chief” of Pascua, a position that had never officially existed within the Yaqui community of Tucson and was often more an imagined post on the part of prominent Yaqui cultural brokers and their interlocutors in the Tucson establishment (Brophy 1959, Spicer 1988, 46–47). As Refugio Savala, a noted Yaqui poet and resident of Pascua Village once communicated to Spicer, “In Arizona the Indians don’t want chiefs because this has been the cause of their separation in Tucson into the north and south side. It has been similar in the Salt River Valley. There shouldn’t be chiefs and it probably happen that when a Yaqui tell you he is chief, he isn’t one” (quoted in Spicer 1988, 194, emphasis added).

Through his relationship with Painter, Valencia also became the primary cultural representative of the community often speaking for the Yaqui in their dealings with the city’s cultural and touristic institutions. For example, Painter had long served as the
representative for the Yaqui in the annual Tucson Folk Festival. However, in 1950, she stepped down from this position informing the city that Valencia would heretofore represent the Yaqui in all Festival dealings (Painter to Tufts November 11th, 1950). In 1967, she also made him the “go-between with the Chamber of Commerce” a position that would involve making financial arrangements for the annual Easter ceremonies (Painter to Valencia March 8th, 1967). Thanks in part to Painter, as head of the PYA and de facto cultural representative, Valencia would become the face of Pascua politics and culture in manner that had never existed previously.

While there had been some precedent for chief-like figures in Pascua history (see chapter one), the PYA would come to represent an even more significant departure from traditional Pascua politics. Prior to this period, Yaqui dealings with the federal government had been relatively few and far between. In his autobiography, Rosalio Moisés, a Yaqui resident of Tucson, recalls that it was not unheard of for Yaqui leaders to coordinate with immigration officials and report on the whereabouts of immigrant Yaquis (Moisés 1977, 62-63; Spicer 1988, 125). However, due to their lack of federal recognition, the Yaqui had no direct interactions with organizations like the BIA. The formation of the PYA was the first time that the Yaqui of Pascua developed a formal representative political body to coordinate with the federal government. It is worth noting that the PYA would become an official tribal council in 1978 when the Yaqui ultimately achieved federal recognition.

Building upon these political transformations, the process of constructing New Pascua indirectly contributed to the introduction of blood quantum as a means to determine who was and was not legitimately Yaqui. The idea of using “blood” as a
determinant of one’s ability to reside at New Pascua came not from the Yaqui, but from their advisors. Leonard Scheff, the only lawyer sitting on the Advisory Committee who was brought into the organization by Painter, stressed the need for “a more precise definition of what is a Yaqui,” and he felt that blood quantum would be the most effective way of determining identity and membership (Painter Diary 1962-1967).63 While at least one anthropologist on the committee, Edward Dozier, noted that Native conceptions of groupness are “not always on the basis of blood,” the need for blood quantum continued to resurface in committee meetings (Painter Diary 1962-1967).64 Valencia was most explicit about the Yaquis’ lack of interest in blood as a system of classification. As he expressed to Scheff and the rest of the committee, “Any Yaqui knows who is a Yaqui” (Painter Diary 1962-1967).65 Even Udall’s office cautioned against the use of the concept, suggesting that it would create more problems than it would solve (Scheff to Udall March 5th, 1963). Despite these reservations, in the final version of the PYA articles of confederation, blood quantum became one of several criteria including ceremonial participation that would be used to determine one’s legitimate right to reside at New Pascua and by association, their right to claim Pascua Yaqui identity (Miller 2004, 91-92). As the chair and co-chair of the Advisory Committee, Painter and Spicer could have conceivably prevented Scheff from pushing the issue all together, but they did not.

We should also not ignore the ways in which the very nature of New Pascua represented a shift away from the type of socio-political organization to which the Yaqui

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63 Diary entry February 18th, 1963.
64 Ibid.
65 Diary entry from January 18th, 1963.
of Tucson had grown accustomed. Historically, Yaquis had lived in barrios embedded in the urban landscape. These communities were ethnically and racially diverse. Yaquis of Pascua counted Mexicans, Mexican-Americans, and (in a few instances) Anglo-Americans as their neighbors (Spicer 1988). There were no formal criteria for regulating residency. People appear to have been relatively free to move into these areas. Therefore, these barrios were far from autonomous, internally homogenous socio-political units.

New Pascua was something different altogether. Located 12 miles from the city’s center, the new village was relatively isolated. Residence would be determined by strict criteria of blood and ceremonial participation. From an outsider’s perspective, it would appear as though the Pascua Yaqui were being reconstituted in the mold of an American Indian Tribe. Udall insisted that this was not the case. “In this bill I am asking for simple grant of land for a group of Mexican Indians who [arrived] in this country too late to [receive] recognition by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I am not asking that this tribe be accorded any status as a ward of the federal government” (Udall to Aspinall May 14th, 1963).

However, in January of 1964, August M. Fennerty, an agent with the BIA, wrote to Udall asking to be considered to head the new Yaqui “reservation” (Fennerty to Udall January 9th, 1964). Despite Udall’s cautionary note, New Pascua very much looked like a reservation.

In addition to these transformations, advisors—and anthropologists in particular—devised ways of covertly managing Yaqui affairs. A particularly overt illustration concerned Valencia’s leadership. As noted above since the project began, Painter and Spicer expressed concern privately that too few Yaquis were actually involved in the planning process. Valencia regularly told the two not to worry and that he had been given
the power to speak for the community in all dealings (Painter Diary 1962-1967). However, this did not diminish their fear that at some point the project might be labeled an imposition if more Yaquis were not visibly involved, and this is precisely what happened in 1966 with the Committee on Human Relations. After several attempts to encourage Valencia to involve more people in the project, Painter and Spicer held a secret meeting with Carlton Wilder. The three anthropologists decided not to include the rest of the committee, perceiving themselves as being the “most conversant in Yaqui culture” (Painter Diary 1962-1967). The three decided to write to Udall’s office explaining their concerns. They requested that Senator Udall (or someone in his office) send a letter to Valencia explaining the need not only for the inclusion of more Yaquis but also to include the Advisory Committee. Apparently, the Committee also felt that they were starting to be boxed out of Valencia’s decision making. The three even drafted a version of the letter for Udall to send and insisted that under no circumstance should Valencia know about their private dealings. A few days later, Theodore Heyl, a member of Udall’s staff, sent the letter with minor modifications. When Valencia presented it at the next Advisory Committee meeting, Spicer, Painter, and Wilder said nothing about their involvement—just as they had planned (Painter Diary 1962-1967). The next day, Valencia, Spicer and a bus-load of 40 Yaquis made a field trip to the new site (Painter Diary 1962-67). Despite the rhetoric of advisement, anthropologists maintained a quietly controlling relationship with Valencia.

67 Diary entry from November 28th, 1962.
68 Diary entry from December 5th, 1962.
69 Diary entry from December 6th, 1962.
While the PYDP was presented to the public as a glorious experiment in “self-help,” much of the project’s beginnings involved little to no direct Yaqui involvement. As Castile recalls of his dealings with the PYDP, “I remember vaguely running into Anselmo,” but “at no point were there any Yaquis sitting down with us” (Castile January 9th, 2018). This is not particularly surprising, for Valencia was skeptical of government involvement in general because of its potential to remove the project from Yaqui control and slow down the process. As Painter noted in her journal in 1964, “[Valencia] does not want to work through a government agency because they [the Yaqui] want to build as they choose” (Painter Diary 1962-1967). When Castile came to Tucson to instruct the committee regarding the changes that would need to be made to the application for it to be successfully funded, Valencia appears to have grown impatient with the bureaucratic slowdown. At the close of meeting, Painter noted, “Mr. Valencia expressed the fervent hope that all involved do all they can to speed up the planning. The Yaquis have hoped to hold next year’s Easter ceremonies at New Pascua. Building time is running out” (Painter Diary 1962-1967). Valencia’s impatience was not entirely surprising. His only direct involvement with the federal government up to that point would have been the congressional purchase of the land for New Pascua. From his initial contact with Udall in March of 1962, it was a full 18 months before the bill was approved. Given the intensity of Yaqui desperation, this must have seemed interminable. Thus, Valencia’s impatience

70 Painter Diary entry from August 18th, 1964.
71 Painter Diary entry from May 25th, 1966. Direct Yaqui involvement would have also been tempered by the very basic system by which funds were distributed. Funds were first directed to the Tucson Council of Economic Opportunity, a local OEO office. Technically, the PYA was “under the supervisory administration of the TCEO” (Willard and Vislock 1987).
with Castile’s very presence suggests that, at least during the early stages of the project, the Pascua Yaqui avoided direct involvement in federal negotiations in order to avoid interrupting their progress. Paradoxically, this created opportunities for increased federal and anthropological oversight and control over the Pascua Yaquis’ future.

Valencia, ultimately, had good reason to fear the institutionalization of the development project. In 1968, he was fired from the project by the newly appointed director, William Willard. At the time, Willard was a graduate student in anthropology at University of Arizona studying under Spicer. The budding scholar took over for his mentor as director of the New Pascua Project. According to Valencia, he was removed because Willard felt “he could not handle the internal strains of the project” following public controversy regarding accusations of mismanagement of government funds (Miller 2004, 103-104). Valencia viewed his removal from the project as a takeover. “Once they had me out of the way, the Board lost all control–once the OEO and the Anglos took over” (Miller 2004, 104). Therefore, in contrast to the straightforward rhetoric of preservation and advisement, advisers—including anthropologists—played a transformative part in the making of New Pascua. In some instances, their influence may have even usurped the authority of Valencia.

The Paradoxes of Anthropological Intervention

The case of New Pascua suggests that anthropological intervention and activism was a double-edged sword. While their involvement contributed to the maintenance of a Yaqui community, their efforts were not without their imperial entanglements. Drawing from the work of postcolonial studies scholar Achille Mbembe (2001), Osage anthropologist Jeanne Dennison uses the concept of “entanglement” to refer to the ways
in which colonialism is “at once devasting and full of potential” (Dennison 2012, 7). More precisely, the concept addresses the ways in which anti-colonial struggles are inextricably bound to colonialism itself. The same can be said of imperial repertoires in which colonialism is but one paradoxical manifestation of power.

While people have the ability to maneuver and bring about more positive futures for their communities within this relationship, they do so in a manner far from ideal or free of the possibility of reproducing aspects of the very structures of oppression they seek to evade. Under the leadership of Spicer and Painter, the Advisory Committee clearly coordinated with Valencia and a variety of institutions to secure land and fund the initial efforts to build a new community. This ensured that the Yaqui would persist as a distinct and identifiable people in Southern Arizona for many years to come. However, these endeavors were inextricably linked to the ideologies and practices of indirect colonialism as they veiled the active participation of anthropologists in the reconfiguration of the Pascua Yaqui community. These practices moved along the twisting continuum of an imperial politics of differentiation and incorporation, which came to mirror an indirect form of colonialism.

As noted above, indirect colonialism refers to a relationship of power between a dominant polity and a nominally sovereign state. Historically, the dominant polity justifies this situation by claiming that it is less invasive than other forms of more direct control. Talk of “self-determination” and cultural “preservation” buttress this logic. Though far from an exemplary case of indirect rule, the construction of New Pascua certainly bears a resemblance, especially when we consider the ways in which anthropologists veiled their participation behind a discourse of preservation and
advisement effectively downplaying the ways in which Yaqui politics were being altered by the outside world. Pamphlets, public testimony, and government reports that emphasized the self-help nature of the project obscure the ways in which anthropologists and other outsiders guided the project. It obscures the fact that the PYA was only formed at the behest of Udall’s office. It obscures the fact that blood quantum came to the Yaqui through an Anglo lawyer who appears to have little understanding of Indigenous notions of belonging. It obscures the fact that Painter and Spicer shaped Valencia’s action through Udall to make the project more democratic. Not only does this discourse diminish our understanding of the efforts of anthropologists, it also diminishes the complexity of Yaqui participation in the project. Simplified rhetorics of advisement and preservation downplay the ways in which Valencia learned to engage local patrons and navigate the looping routes of the emergent welfare state. Ultimately, we can identify a paradoxical position for anthropologists, one in which their efforts to ameliorate the impoverished conditions of Pascua Village took on a colonial form—albeit a highly indirect one.

Conclusion

Contemporary anthropological activism in the name of Indigenous causes may appear to be a relatively recent rupture in a long history of exploitation. One finds this narrative in several influential, contemporary works (Barker 2011, 2014; Simpson 2014). Such a presumption follows from the criticism of Deloria in *Custer Died for Your Sins* (1969), which I briefly addressed in the introduction. Deloria famously castigated Native Americanist anthropologists for their lack of attention to the real-world struggles for
cultural and political survival of their research subjects. Nancy Lurie, an anthropologist and close interlocutor of Deloria, responded to this accusation by highlighting the efforts of anthropologists such as Sol Tax, D’Arcy McNickle, Alexander Lesser, and Phileo Nash (Lurie 1973, 1999; see also Arndt 2017). Without necessarily dismissing Deloria’s comments, Lurie simply pointed out that anthropology already had a long tradition of engaged activism. The case of New Pascua is part of this tradition.

As discussed above, anthropologists were involved in the attempts to secure new housing for the Pascua Yaqui from the very beginning. They acted as important mediators between the Yaqui, politicians, and federal organizations like the OEO. Moreover, they became the means by which drastic political transformations came to the Pascua Yaqui. Valencia’s position as chief, the formation of a council-like representative body, the introduction of blood quantum, and the construction of a reservation-like community were all markers of a new mode of politics for the Yaqui of Tucson. These transformations enabled the Pascua Yaqui to persist as a distinct community. This all tracks well with Lurie’s observations. However, the case of New Pascua complicates the activist application of anthropology. By obscuring their efforts behind a discourse of “preservation” and “advisement,” anthropologists like Spicer and Painter unintentionally mirrored the logic of indirect colonialism as they simultaneously retained the classic

\footnote{A more recent and complex instantiation of Deloria’s thesis can be found in Patrick Wolfe’s discussion of settler colonialism in Australia. Wolfe argues that Radcliffe-Brown’s brand of structural-functional anthropology—with its emphasis on “a synchronic mode of representation” that presented aboriginals as “self-generating entities”—“belied the material impact of colonization” (1999, 52-53). As Wolfe cautiously notes, “there was nothing intrinsically oppressive” about Radcliffe-Brown’s work (1999, 197). However, when it was ultimately “appropriated by the Australian state for the purposes of delimiting Aboriginal entitlement,” such a method “became a means for invalidating the present” (1999, 197).}
anthropological fear of unnecessarily impacting the lives of the studied. New Pascua was a drastic transformation in Pascua Yaqui life, and it involved a great deal of outside influence and control. This suggests that anthropological activism while certainly not a purely contemporary phenomenon with little connection to the history of the discipline it is also not an unmitigated good. Rather, anthropological attempts to mediate Indigenous affairs are at least deeply paradoxical, if not contradictory.

While the case of New Pascua reveals the subtle and not so subtle ways in which anthropological activism shaped the Pascua Yaqui, one should not presume that change was confined to the Yaqui alone. In the next chapter, I move from the material to the more the ideational dynamics of assemblage to see how anthropological implication in Indigenous political formations shaped the very constitution and articulation of anthropological thought. The next case explores the understudied dimension of Yaqui intellectual participation in the history of anthropology and the ways in which anthropologists can be bound by the same political norms as their Indigenous interlocutors.
Chapter Four: Assembling “Enduring Peoples,” Mediating Recognition: Edward Spicer, the Pascua Yaqui Indians, and the Construction of Politics and Ideas

Introduction

In 1978, the Yaqui Indians of Arizona accomplished a seemingly impossible feat. Despite being the descendants of Indigenous immigrants from Mexico, a contingent of the US Yaqui living in urban Tucson successfully lobbied Congress to be recognized as an American Indian Tribe. In their efforts to bring about this shift in political status, the Pascua Yaqui called upon the discipline of anthropology to support their case. More precisely, they secured longtime ethnographer and ethnohistorian Edward Spicer to testify before Congress in support of their newly adopted political subjectivity. In an interesting historical conjuncture, alongside his political advocacy, Spicer formulated some of his most definitive theoretical treatments of indigenous identity via his assessment of Yaqui history and identity, which he ultimately organized under the general concept of “enduring peoples” (1980).73

Examining Spicer’s concurrent theoretical developments and congressional testimony, this chapter builds on the previous discussion of the paradoxes of anthropological activism and more thoroughly explores the limits of politically engaged anthropology with respect to Indigenous groups in the US. Through this case, I illustrate how nuanced and empirically-driven scholarly conceptions of indigeneity dissipate in the face of the exigencies of recognition, becoming subordinate to more politically expedient

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73 Spicer used the singular enduring people (1980). Following his death in 1983, Rosamond Spicer began to publish portions of his unfinished manuscript Enduring Peoples or Ten Against the State. Rosamond adopted the plural version of the phrase. When the concept was later incorporated into the Paths of Life exhibit at the Arizona State Museum, the plural was also used. To avoid shifting back and forth, I use the plural.
narratives. This suggests, contrary to noted critiques (Deloria 1969) and historical investigations (Ray 2016) that anthropological immersion in Indigenous politics does not necessarily equate to more “accurate” or more “liberatory” views of the dynamic lives of Native individuals and groups. This is, in part, because anthropological ideas and Indigenous politics are dialogical constructions, interacting with each other in intellectually and politically consequential ways. Thus, tracing these interactions through a specific case study provides a means to better conceptualize anthropology’s imbrication in the “politics of recognition” (Taylor 1994).

Anthropological Theory and Recognition

In the context of governmental recognition, anthropological interpretations of Indigenous history and identity tend to fall into one of two broad categories: neo-evolutionary and primordialist. In settler colonial states as disparate as the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, neo-evolutionary models have been deployed by governmental researchers to delimit Indigenous claims to territory and other resources (Dinwoodie 2010; McMillen 2007; Ray 2006, 2016). For example, beginning in the 1950s, the cultural ecological approach of Julian Steward and his students was infamously deployed by the Department of Justice in the Indian Claims Commission to suggest that many pre-colonial North American Indigenous groups had not reached a “level of socio-cultural integration” that would allow for the maintenance of collective property (Pinkoski 2008). In this approach, contemporary Indigenous political subjectivities are often viewed as recent historical developments whose claims to the past should be met with suspicion on the part of state-level bureaucracies and academic inquiry alike.
Subsequent research has actively moved to undermine these neo-evolutionary perspectives and confirm the ancientness of Indigenous claims to identity and territory. Such a counter approach takes on a primordialist view of modern Indigenous polities (see Smith 2009 for a discussion of primordialism). According to Anthony D. Smith, “proponents of this view claim that nations and ethnic communities are the natural units of history and integral elements of the human experience” (1986, 12). For anthropologists working in this tradition, Indigenous collectives are portrayed as linguistically and culturally distinct and bounded entities with corresponding political subjectivities. More extreme, advocacy-oriented versions of this literature adopt biological and ecological metaphors to characterize the plight of the Native communities, which are believed to be on the road to a cultural or linguistic death (e.g., Nettle and Romain 2002; Maffi 2002). In a more tempered form, scholars leverage the historical and oral historical record to trace the roots of modern Indigenous groups and their associated cultural practices so as to underwrite their historical continuity (e.g., Asch 1982; Campisi 1991; McMillen 2007; Ridington 2014; Shorter 2009). By and large, the emphasis is often on the continuous symbolic articulations of identity as opposed to the political-economic impact of colonialism and subsequent forms of ethnogenesis.

These opposing narratives share common ground in so much as they are considered by their proponents to be irreproachable, empirical realities. However, as Western ideological inventions, neither of them is fully equipped to account for the

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74 Elsewhere Anthony D. Smith further specifies three kinds of primordialism (Smith 1999, 4-5). The first sees social collectivities as natural elements. The second views them as extensions of kinship units. The third speaks of blood, language, custom, religion and territory as the “cultural givens of human existence (e.g., Shils 1971).
complexity of Indigenous history and identity. Outside of the political arena, however, anthropological interpretations are not limited to these two perspectives.

Since at least the 1960s, the ways in which anthropologists approach the study of Indigenous peoples has changed significantly. As discussed by Orin Starn, motivated by a confluence of occurrences ranging from the Vietnam Way to Vine Deloria’s now canonical publication of *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (1969), a new generation of anthropologists began actively distancing themselves from “the real and imagined sins and crimes of their predecessors” (2011, 184). However, in the process, Indians moved from the center to the periphery of the anthropological lens. “If Native America no longer seemed much to want anthropology, if it ever had, anthropologists now no longer needed Indians either” (2011, 184). New geographic regions and subjects took center stage as Native Americans became seen increasingly as part of the discipline’s troubled past (Yanagisako 2005).

However, Indians were never fully omitted from anthropology’s lens. Despite their divergent theories and dispositions, emergent political economic analysis and post-modern self-reflexive strands of thought actively revisited, deconstructed, and challenged extant essenitalized conceptualizations of Indigenous peoples within the discipline (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Clifford 1988; Wolf 1982). More recently, Indigenous peoples and their socio-political struggles have begun to reassert themselves in the discipline’s mainstream thanks in no small part to Native anthropologists themselves. These scholars identify the ways in which Indigenous polities and epistemologies interact with and (sometimes) refuse persistent colonial systems of power (Ramirez 2007; Simpson 2014; Sturm 2002). This more recent push to re-engage anthropology and
Indigenous peoples in a de-essentialized manner finds complement and inspiration outside of the discipline. New Western History (e.g., Limerick 1988; White 1988, 1991), ethnohistory (e.g., Clifton 1979; Denson 2004; Harmon 2000; Fisher 2010), American Studies (e.g., Denetdale 2007, 2014; Goldstein 2012), and Indigenous Studies (e.g., Deloria 1998, 2004; Smith 2009) have done much to challenge the primordial orthodoxy in anthropology as they show Native communities to be the contingent products of colonialism, “modernity,” and cosmopolitan flows of people, ideas, and structures of power.75

Many of these recent (and not so recent) changes fit within explicitly relational views of Indigeneity articulated most explicitly by Marisol de la Cadena and Orin Starn in their influential volume *Indigenous Experience Today* (2009). Turning away from “the image of natives rooted always to their original territories” and toward “diasporic indigenous experiences, and the global circulation of the discourse and politics of indigeneity,” de la Cadena and Starn arrive at a dynamic understanding of Indigenous peoples and their engagements with the world. Indigeneity, under this perspective, is not an “untouched reality” lying in a primordial state of nature; rather, it is a “process” taking shaping in “larger social fields of difference and sameness” that are “at once historically contingent and encompassing of the nonindigenous” (de la Cadena and Starn 2007, 4,

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75 One might see this contemporary moment as a continuation of what William Adams call’s American anthropology’s “indianology” (1998). Adams argues that the study of Indians during the late 19th and early 20th century caused American anthropology to cultivate and retain a four-field orientation as researchers required and leveraged linguistics, ethnology, archaeology, and physical anthropology in their attempts to better know these “exotic” others. The desire of Native anthropologists to better understand the experiences of Native peoples in a de-essentialized manner appears to be shaping some strains of contemporary anthropology in a similar manner. I thank David Dinwoodie for directing me to this connection.
11). Echoing postcolonial theorist Mahmood Mamdani, de la Cadena and Starn conclude, “there can be no settler without a native, and vice versa” (quoted in 2007, 4; see also Sahlins 1993). Thus, anthropologists (and everyone else for that matter) must recognize indigeneity and colonialism as deeply intertwined phenomena. Due to their relational and historical views of indigeneity, many of the previous contributions to political economic analysis, postmodern self-reflexivity, cultural studies frameworks, and Indigenous Studies criticism retroactively find a home under this broad correlation. Directly relevant to the subject matter at hand, Edward Spicer’s largely forgotten work on the Yaqui represents an early anthropological attempt to pursue an alternative line of analysis more capable of capturing the shifting and situational nature of indigeneity.

Conceptualizing the Yaqui

Though it would be difficult to reduce any individual living in an interconnected world of ideas to a single mode of thought, one can say with relative accuracy that Spicer’s approach to the Yaqui developed within the paradigm of acculturation studies. Anthropological interest in the study of acculturation developed in a post-WWI milieu. This period was charged by the mounting influences of both racism and nativism, two impulses which were of course by no means new to the US. For instance, in addition to numerous other indicators of rising racist tensions, the 1920s saw the popular resurgence of the Klu Klux Klan, immortalized in their 30,000-member march on Washington, DC in 1925 (Leuchtenburg 1958, 205-2011; Coben 1991). Alongside the intensifying conflict of the color line, immigration became a worrying preoccupation of the federal government. The passage of the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924 imposed more stringent immigration quotas on Europe, which favored the flow “white,” northern and
western Europeans. In the same year, the federal government established the border patrol as part of the Land Appropriation Act, making the movement of bodies along the imaginary line between the US and Mexico a point of consternation (Ngai 2005). As FDR’s New Deal policy went into effect, a notable shift in federal Indian policy also unfolded. What had once been a relationship predicated on overt assimilation now took the form of pluralistic recognition and indirect rule (Reinhart 2005; Taylor 1980). This is not to say that pre-1930s US-Indian relations were exclusively assimilatory. As the imperial pendulum swung back and forth between integration and differentiation, Indigenous sovereignty experienced moments of partial recognition prior to the Indian New Deal (Anderson 2014). Of course, indirect rule could still entail the reproduction of US authority over Indigenous communities often behind a veil of “self-determination” and cultural “preservation” (as discussed in chapter three). Despite the relatively positive nature of the shift in federal-Indian relations, all of these developments signaled an accelerating obsession with the management of racial and cultural difference in post-WWI, American, political discourse.

In the midst of these developments, the discipline of American anthropology began exploring issues of cultural contact and change as opposed to the reconstruction of pre-colonial lifeways. Steadily, these novel and politically salient interests were grouped under the broad heading of “acculturation.” In 1935, the Social Science Research Council commissioned several leading anthropologists to trace the parameters of this new field of inquiry. In their seminal memorandum, participants Robert Redfield, Melville Herskovits, and Ralph Linton, proffered what would become the leading definition of this emergent topic: “Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups
of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups” (Redfield et al. 1936, 149). With this definition, the memorandum worked to guide the anthropological study of culture change in a new direction. Previous traditions such as the culture area approach of Alfred Kroeber were not prepared to account for the complexities of change amongst Indigenous peoples due in part to a lack of conversancy in historical analysis and attention to colonial processes (e.g., Buckley 1996, 273). To be sure, the discipline was by no means universally or categorically uninterested in diachronic transformations (e.g., Boas 1920, 315-321; see also Golub 2014; Lewis 1998, 724). However, this has not prevented some from suggesting that American anthropology’s inattention to the mutable nature of social life presumed the inevitable and total absorption of Indigenous communities within the “modern” world, even if individual scholars opposed assimilation on political grounds. Bruchac goes so far as to claim that “early anthropologists…depicted virtually all Native peoples of North America as inherently naïve, uneducated, primitive, and helpless to resist the inevitable fading away of traditions and assimilation into mainstream (white) society” (Bruchac 2018, 178). In contrast to this supposed disciplinary orthodoxy, Redfield and company specified that assimilation was but one potential facet of acculturation (1936, 149). According to these scholars, the results of such a process eventuate in a variety of outcomes more effectively grouped under three distinct categories: “acceptance” (most reminiscent of popular notions of assimilation), “adaptation” (“where both original and foreign traits are combined so as to produce a smoothly functioning cultural whole”) and “reaction” (where “contra-acculturative movements arise” due to “oppression, or because
of the unforeseen results of the acceptance of foreign traits”) (1936, 152). With this outline of the field of possible historical trajectories, the SSRC memorandum laid the foundation for the next several decades of acculturation inquiry. While Redfield (1953), Herskovits (1938), and Linton (1940) would lead this charge, they would not be the only contributors.

Spicer, a student of Redfield, came of age as an anthropologist amid the rise of acculturation studies. Unsurprisingly, his career-long historical and analytical exploration of the Yaqui Indians fit neatly within the general definition of acculturation as laid out by his mentor. As previously noted, Spicer’s relationship with the Yaqui Indians began in the summer of 1936, when he and his wife Rosamond moved to Tucson to being dissertation fieldwork. Captivated by the community’s ability to maintain a sense of ethnic distinction in the face of urban assimilation, Spicer would position the Pascua Yaqui as his primary case study for the next four decades as he examined issues of acculturation in the greater Southwest (1940, 1961, 1962).

Over the course of his 40-plus year career, Spicer continuously approached the Yaqui from different ends of the acculturation spectrum. Unsurprisingly, these different orientations contributed to different interpretations of Yaqui identity. In his first analysis of Pascua Village, Spicer framed the Yaqui as an exemplary case of “adaptations under conditions of acculturation” (1940, xviii-xiv). He sought to understand how the Yaqui had managed to maintain a sense of socio-cultural distinction despite their immersion in the Anglo-American economy. Far from being an example of assimilation, this was to be a study of the relationship between the dynamic forces of “stability” and “change” (1940, xvii). While others would come to see issues of acculturation through Boasian notions of
culture and diffusion, Spicer funneled his initial study through the functionalism of his other mentor Radcliffe-Brown (1940, 301-302). Radcliffe-Brown, the progenitor of what has often been labeled “structural functionalism,” encountered Spicer during his brief stay at the University of Chicago from 1931 to 1937. Under the mutual guidance of Radcliffe-Brown and Redfield, Spicer argued that Yaqui acculturation presented a case of “functional inconsistency” (1940, 302). This interpretation stemmed from Radcliffe-Brown’s suggestion that a society in a state of disunity “will not die;” rather, it will “struggle toward some….kind of social health, and may, in the course of this, change its structural type” (quoted in Spicer 1940, 302). Though Spicer believed that the Yaqui were devising ways to maintain their existence, he did not see this as a uniform process. While the Yaqui were able to successfully modify certain religious practices to meet the conditions of their new environment, a different “resolution” was being reached in terms of the “conflict” between the ceremonial leadership and the wage-labor economy. On an individual by individual basis, Yaquis resolved this conflict by reducing their participation in Yaqui culture (1940, 304). This “resolution of conflict,” Spicer predicted, would eventually result in the persistence of Yaqui society but “the extinction of [Yaqui] culture” (1940, 306). Thus, Spicer initially framed Yaqui identity as a series of individual adjustments to Anglo-American society, which despite examples of fusion, would most likely culminate in cultural extinction.

The decision to frame his study in terms of Radcliffe-Brown’s brand of functionalism was a late addition to the project. After reading the first draft, Redfield reportedly commented, “This is fine as an ethnographic field report, but where is your thesis?” According to Rosamond Spicer, Ned, “devasted,” began a complete rewrite “guided far more by R-B’s ideas than by Redfield” (Spicer 1990, 13).
During the 1950s, Spicer, continuing in the acculturative frame of mind, shifted gears. In his essay “European Expansion and the Enclavement of Southwestern Indians” (1959) and his complementary monograph *Cycles of Conquest* (1962), Spicer approached the Yaqui through a comparative study of European colonization of the Southwest. During this phase in his thinking, Spicer suggested that the Yaqui and the various other Indigenous groups of the region are bound by the experience of “enclavement”—the confinement of Indigenous peoples to lands regarded as undesirable (1959, 132). In a more socio-politically conscious tone that diverged from his previous work, Spicer acknowledged that many people in the mid-20th century regard these enclaves as “[contradictions] to natural law” in need of “political integration” or “cultural assimilation” (1959, 132-133). Spicer felt that due in part to a lack of proper historical education, these critics naively believed in the “inevitable movement toward cultural assimilation” for Native peoples (1959, 144). Such a belief was abhorrent to Spicer, who, as I detailed in chapter one, carried an ardent faith in cultural pluralism.

By comparing the experiences of enclaved groups, Spicer identified general patterns in the intertwined history of European expansion and enclavement, which complicated the notion that assimilation is inevitable or more natural than the persistence of pluralistic peoplehood. More specifically, he argued that contact between Europeans and Natives involved cycles of peace and armed resistance, leading to the preservation of subaltern communities within the ever-expanding borders of empire (1959, 144). Therefore, in these works, Yaqui identity appears as a response to a global historical process of colonial enclavement, which “civilized” Indigenous groups without necessarily fully assimilating them into the conquering culture.
In the following decades, Spicer delved deeper into comparative social theory in his explorations of Yaqui acculturation. This appears to have coincided with a year-long sabbatical spent in Ireland, Spain, and Israel where Spicer reignited his interest in Jewish identity and cultivated an appreciation of the history of Irish and Basque nationalism. In a paper published in the widely circulated *Science*, Spicer contributed to the acculturation paradigm by offering the concept of the “persistent cultural system” (1971). Rather than detailing unchanging “patterns” of culture to determine the elements of change, Spicer turned to what he called “identity systems”—integrated “beliefs and sentiments, learned like other cultural elements, that are associated with particular symbols, such as artifacts, words, role behavior, and ritual acts” (1971, 795). “Persistent identity systems” (which he alternatively called “persistent cultural systems”) are specific subtypes that refer to “a system of beliefs and sentiments concerning historical events” (1971, 799). Moreover, they are products of an “oppositional process” that is comprised of conflicts between the state apparatus and the “peoples” inhabiting a state over issues of incorporation and assimilation (1971, 797). According to Spicer, this tension between states and peoples gives meaning to a variety of “symbols,” which undergird a given persistent identity system (1971, 797). Unlike the relatively static and ahistorical cultural trait list and culture area patterns collected by salvage anthropologist of the early 20th century (Buckley 1996, 272-274), a symbolic system, as envisioned by Spicer, exists in a state of flux. As he specified, “What is most characteristic of these symbol systems is that there is great flexibility with regard to the kind of cultural element which can be included” (1971, 787-797). Influenced by his sabbatical spent abroad, Spicer’s article continues with a “preliminary investigation” of “ten instances of persistent cultural system” that span the
globe including “the Jews, the Basque, the Irish, the Welsh, the Catalans, the Mayas, the Yaquis, the Senecas, the Cherokees, and the Navajos” (1972, 797). Therefore, at the beginning of the 1970s, Spicer came to portray Yaqui culture and identity as products of a global story of state-subaltern opposition and flexible symbolic systems. While remaining within an acculturation school of thought in which contact, change, and adaptation reign supreme as analytical themes, it is clear that Spicer’s oeuvre involved devising a variety of ways of conceptualizing Yaqui acculturation.

“Enduring Peoples”: Ethno-symbolism

Near the end of his career (and life), Spicer complied his thoughts on the Yaquis’ acculturation into a final theoretically-driven, ethnohistorical account. In The Yaquis: A Culture History (1980), Spicer reconceptualized the group as an “enduring people”—a universal “human type existing within the political unit of the state” that persists in opposition to assimilatory forces (Spicer 1980, 337). Enduring peoples, Spicer went on to write, are not necessarily pure inventions of the modern state. In many cases, they have traceable premodern antecedents that precede the states in which they reside (1980, 337). However, continuity between contemporary groups and their proto-national roots is never straightforward. Spicer rejected theories of cultural persistence that rely on vague invocations of “race,” “homeland” or a “way of life” (1980, 340-346). Even language, a

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77 Spicer would go on to develop these ten comparative cases in a manuscript alternatively titled Enduring Peoples and Ten Against the State. At the time of his death in 1983, the project was incomplete. Rosamond Spicer later published a selection from this manuscript in the journal boundary 2 (1992).
commonly accepted marker of historical peoplehood, does not suffice in the case of enduring peoples like the Yaqui:

Unquestionably the Yaqui language has had continuous existence for at least 350 years, but it would be going too far to maintain that the speaking of the language is the essential or the only feature of Yaqui continuity. One would not have dealt with the full nature of the continuity if one omitted from consideration the facts that a majority of those who call themselves Yaquis in the Arizona barrios use Spanish by preference in their family and daily lives and that many do not actually employ Yaqui at all. (1980, 290)

Rather, enduring peoplehood, Spicer argued, is honed through “common understandings” built around (at least) four prominent categories of symbols: ethnic terminology, place names, sacred laws, and dances/songs (1980, 347-356). Explicitly invoking Ernest Renan, a foundational figure in critical examinations of nationalism (1882), Spicer implicitly joined a modernist historiography with a Durkheimian interpretation of ritual practice to argue that ethnic symbols must be enacted regularly by individuals to give them a palpability, thereby enabling the group to endure (1980, 346-356). While Spicer explicitly referenced Renan, one cannot overlook the inherently Durkheimian nature of this view as well (1912). Thus, like Renan and the modernist historians of nationalism that followed in his wake (e.g., Breuilly 1993; Hobsbawm 1987, 1992), Spicer questioned primordialist narratives of modern sociopolitical entities.79

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79 While Spicer’s thinking contains modernist roots in Renan, he did address the writings of Johann Gottfried Herder in his cultivation of the concept of enduring peoples. Herder is often credited with being a key figure in the rise of a primordialist conception of the nation (Appiah 2005, 244; Barnard 2003, 45). In his earlier formulations, Spicer explicitly distinguished his thinking from Herder’s presumption that “national
In addition to being situated within the paradigm of acculturation studies, such a view of Yaqui history and identity, I argue, operates within the tradition of ethnosymbolism. As described by the Anthony D. Smith, “ethnosymbolists…stress the importance of treating the history of collective cultural identities and ideologies…over long time spans” (2000, 63). While ethno-symbolists acknowledge the historical novelty of certain collective identities, they too believe that these entities possess important and analyzable pre-cursors (Smith 2000, 63). Moreover, as Durkheim did with his discussion of the fetish (1912), these scholars stress the importance of “symbolic cultivation” for the production and reproduction of self-conscious ethnic communities (Smith 2009, 45-46). Thus, like Spicer, ethno-symbolists are concerned with the subjective and iterative deployment of symbolically charged practices and ideas. Of course, this approach is not without its limitations. For example, the tendency to deploy a broad, comparative historical lens, makes individual assertions of collective identity less central to these theory-driven discussions (e.g., Smith 1981, 1999). That being said, ethno-symbolic

groups…possess some capacity kind of capacity for eternal existence” (1971, 796). However, as Spicer’s thinking progressed, the boundary between his conception of enduring peoples and Herder’s “geist” of the nation appears to have softened. In *The Yaquis*, Spicer writes: “We have thus far used the term ‘nation’ for designating the type [i.e., enduring peoples], and this usage conforms to that of Herder and those other Europeans whose ideas in the 18th century were influenced by the reality around them” (1980, 337). The meaning of this passage is somewhat cryptic. Did Spicer think that Herder accurately described an 18th-century Europe populated with discrete “nations”? Or did he consider Herder’s works to bear the politically motivated marks of 18th-century interstate competition? Since his engagement with Herder appears to have been confined to *Ideas for Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (1969), it is possible that Spicer was only somewhat familiar with the scope of Herder’s thinking and the context in which he wrote.

80 Others have even suggested that because Smith leaves open the possibility for a connection between modern nations and antecedent ethnic communities, ethnosymbolism ultimately succumbs to essentialist thinking (Özkirimli 2003).
interpretations present a path to a historically grounded view of the changing and enduring nature of ethnic identities. While we can see that Spicer cultivated a dynamic ethno-symbolic framework in the later stages of his academic writing, his advocacy for Yaqui politics presented a noticeably different perspective.

Recognizing the Pascua Yaqui

After years of successfully maintaining their existence in Tucson through a combination of local philanthropy, tourism, and seasonal agricultural labor, the Pascua Yaqui began to face increasing dire economic straights in the 1950s and 1960s as much of the state’s economy turned to a growing service industry and mechanization generated a steep decline in seasonal agricultural labor. Accelerating poverty in Pascua Village motivated Yaqui leaders to pursue other means of financial support. As discussed in chapter three, Yaqui desperation coincided with the establishment of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), a bureaucratic cornerstone of the Johnson administration’s “War on Poverty.” Through the OEO and other means, the Yaqui spent much of the 1960s securing federal dollars to build a new community on the southern outskirts of the city where they might generate their own, self-sufficient social and economic institutions. As the previous chapter noted, this project introduced new elements of political organization including a chieftainship, tribal council, blood quantum, and reservation that enabled the Yaqui to work with the federal government and maintain their existence as a distinct—but not federally recognized—Indian entity.

However, by the end of the decade, OEO funding dried up and the Pascua Yaqui found themselves split between a poverty ridden urban center and a half-built, limping reservation-like community. Under this pressure, the Pascua Yaqui made a bold move.
With the support of local politicians and lawyers, they decided to pursue federal recognition. If successful, they would be able to access the resources of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, federal recognition of the Pascua Yaqui as an “American Indian Tribe” presented many challenges that made for a complicated pursuit.

In the case of the US, federally recognized Indian “tribes” are imagined to be discrete, bounded entities capable of “[reflecting] their cultural consistency ‘from historical times to the present’” (Barker 2011, 37). Multilingualism, shifting political alliances, trade networks, and situationally dynamic cultural practices–hallmarks of the pre-Columbian Indigenous experience–are often obscured in this line of thinking as hybridity and discontinuity are subsumed within a story of neat cultural-political persistence and primordialism. This kind of narrative is incongruent with the history of the Pascua Yaqui, who were relatively recent “arrivants” (Byrd 2011; Jackson 2011) to Arizona in possession of hybrid religious and cultural practices rooted in colonial encounters with the Spanish and a language that had largely fallen into disuse in the US. In other words, Pascua Yaqui history and identity did not quite fit the “American Indian Tribal” mold.

Presenting their case to the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs in 1977, representatives of the Pascua Yaqui worked to reframe the community in a more recognizably “Indian” light. Raymond Cross, the tribe’s lawyer, hedged their bets and insisted that the tribe was not in pursuit of “full recognition,” which would entail the exercise of civil or criminal jurisdiction on the reservation, but “limited recognition,” which would enable them to organize under a constitution and secure federal services (US Congress 1977). However, this shift in petition did not alleviate the burden to
articulate the group’s “Indianness.” This can be gleaned from the testimony of Anselmo Valencia, the well-known Tucson-based Yaqui intellectual discussed extensively in the previous chapter. Before Congress, Valencia presented Yaqui linguistic and cultural practices as enduring marker of their “Indianness”:

The Yaquis are Indians in every sense of the word. We have our own language, our own culture, such as the Pascola Dancing, the deer dancing and the coyote dancing. These dances are Indian in origin. In the deer dance, we sing to honor the great mountains, the springs, the lakes. We sing of our father the Sun, and of creatures living and dead. We sing of trees and leaves and twigs...All of the songs sung and played are to the olden times-ancient Yaqui Indian stories. (U.S. Congress 1977, 6)

Valencia’s narrative went on to imply that “Yaquiness,” as indexed by these linguistic and cultural practices, predates colonial encounters. “The Catholic faith and the various governments under which the Yaquis have had to suffer have tried for centuries to undermine our ‘Yaquiness,’ but after 400 years they have not succeeded. We have retained our language, our culture, and our Indianness” (US Congress 1977, 6). Such an articulation of Yaqui history necessarily negates evidence of engagement with dominant societies and cultural hybridity (Folsom 2014; Hu-Dehart 1984; Spicer 1980). However, this negation enabled the Yaqui to better fit the primordialist dictates of recognition.

Valencia also reconfigured the narrative to establish a pre-colonial connection to US soil, which would in turn undermine any accusations that the Yaqui were more Mexican immigrants than American Indians.
“Yaqui Indian are, and have been, from the southwest since before the establishment of the international boundaries which divide this continent…This continent which, since its creation, has belonged to the Indians from one end to the other. After such boundaries were established[,] Yaquis were still here[.] Yes, the majority of the Yaquis stayed in Mexico after the Gadsden Purchase of Arizona Territory and other lands. But they traveled back and forth across the internal line until the 1920’s[sic]” (US Congress 1977, 6).

On the surface, this is not a particularly radical narrative. Documentary evidence indicates that Yaquis were present in the region that would become southern Arizona as early as 1796–well before the region came under US control. According to Spanish colonial records, Jesuit missionaries brought a group of Yaquis to the Tumacacori mission to help facilitate the conversion of local Indians (Whiting 1953, 6). However, Valencia’s presentation went a step further when he stated that the Yaqui remained in the region up to and after the time when it became US territory in 1854. There is no concrete evidence (documentary or oral historical) to suggest that these individuals remained as a distinct community (Officer 1987, 88, 380). Rather, it would appear that Yaquis did not start moving “back and forth” in significant numbers until the late 19th century (Spicer 1980, 158). Moreover, the seemingly out of place invocation that “this continent which, since its creation, has belonged to the Indians” did more rhetorical than empirical work. If the Yaqui are Indians and the continent is Indian, transitive logic suggests that the Yaqui can claim a temporally deep connection to virtually any part of the continent, including southern Arizona. Despite the somewhat tenuous nature of these re-narrativizations, Valencia successfully persuaded politicians like Arizona Senator
Dennis DeConcini to conclude that the Yaqui had long been a “major and unique American Indian tribe” whose “ancestors...have lived in what we call the Southwest...from time immemorial” (US Congress 1977, 2). Enough politicians agreed with DeConcini, and the Yaqui were officially granted recognition in 1978.

Testimony: Primordialism

Importantly, the Pascua Yaqui did not rely on the testimony of people like Valencia alone. When it came to reframing the community as an American Indian Tribe, the petitioners called upon their longtime anthropologist ally. With prompting from the tribe’s lawyers, Spicer submitted a succinct, two-page testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs. Given his position as the foremost scholar on the community, and that he was simultaneously composing his analysis of enduring peoples, Spicer was well positioned to speak to the variable symbolic and historical factors driving Yaqui identity. However, in the face of the limited political imaginary of recognition, Spicer’s ethno-symbolic framework shifted to a more palatable primordialism. An instructive example can be found in the opening section of Spicer’s statement:

One conclusion of my long and extensive study of the Yaqui people is that they form a distinct Indian group or tribe. The language their ancestors spoke, and the present day Pascua Yaquis continue to speak, is universally classified by linguistics as a member of the Uto-Aztecan [language family]...The present day Yaquis including those of New Pascua Pueblo in Arizona speak this same language. (US Congress 1977, 11)
Juxtaposed with Spicer’s comments from *The Yaquis* regarding enduring peoplehood, we can see that this narrative is a drastic simplification of his own thoughts on Yaqui language and identity.

Later in his testimony, Spicer continued to deviate from his ethno-symbolic interpretive work as he passively underwrote Valencia’s narrative of continuous occupation in the US. “Yaquis have resided in Arizona for more than two hundred years. They had a role in the development of the area now known as Arizona ever since the 1700s” (US Congress 1977, 11). The implication is that while the majority of Yaquis might have not arrived in the region until the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there has been a persistent and identifiable Yaqui presence in Arizona that pre-dates the arrival of Anglo-Americans. Like Valencia, Spicer provided no evidence to support this narrative of continued occupation (see Ray 2014, 49-53 for a similar case). Again, Spicer’s congressional statements stand out when compared to *The Yaquis*. In his musings on “enduring peoples,” Spicer is suspicious of talk of “continuous possession of a homeland” as a determinant of persistent identity systems (1980, 340). As he notes, “the relationship between people and their homeland exists on more than the physical level, it is more complex than is ordinarily realized” (1980, 341). Thus, it would appear that in his political advocacy Spicer leveraged the very interpretations he questioned (if not outright rejected) in his theoretically-driven scholarship.

Spicer’s decision to take up this new line of narration and support for Yaqui recognition was not an uncomplicated one. When first approached with the prospect of assisting the Yaqui, Spicer was quite reluctant to join the bid for recognition. Despite being an unwavering advocate for the community since the 1930s, Spicer had largely
removed himself from active participation in Yaqui politics by the time the community decided to pursue federal recognition. While he served as the original director for the OEO project, Spicer stepped down from this position in 1968, handing the reigns over to his graduate student William Willard. Originally, Spicer only took the position at the insistence of the OEO (Castile 2002, fn. 57). At this point, his advocacy appears to have shifted from a daily endeavor to a more distant consultant as a member of the Pascua Yaqui Advisory Committee.

Moreover, by the late 1960s, Spicer had little faith in the future of the Pascua Yaqui as a self-determining political unit. OEO funding ended in 1969, and New Pascua was far from achieving infrastructural stability (Miller 2004, 103). The future of Yaqui life in Tucson appeared ever bleaker. Additionally, local newspaper headlines were rife with accusations of mismanaged funds, which portrayed the OEO project as corrupt failure. Under this public scrutiny, Willard summarily dismissed Valencia from the project in 1968 (Miller 2004, 103-104). Spicer himself began to question Valencia’s motives. As expressed in his private notes, “I begin to have the feeling of having been taken–by Anselmo... We played ultimately into the hands of a relentless caudillo” (Spicer 2, 1970). Thus, by the early 1970s, Spicer’s view of the future of the Pascua Yaqui as a distinct political entity with an enduring future was jaundiced at best.

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81 In 1970, Tom Turner wrote a series of eight investigative article for the Arizona Daily Star regarding the mismanagement of OEO funds.
This pessimistic view was front and center in 1975 when he responded to the inquiries of Bryan Michener, a lawyer with the Friends Committee on National Legislation working with the Pascua Yaqui. Spicer admitted,

There is indeed a strong, probably dominant sentiment among the Yaquis of New Pascua for this move. Leaders like Anselmo Valencia, who was adamant during the early OEO period in the 60s, seem desperate enough in their search for financial assistance to have changed their minds entirely about coming under closer government management of their affairs. I am not sure that anyone has thought it through carefully and understands really what will be involved. They want to go on building and developing their 200 acre tract of land that is sure, and they have not been able to count on federal or private grants consistently for the last few years. Perhaps some of the new BIA policy, such as contract arrangements with community action committees will soften the restrictions on the independence that Yaquis have traditionally exercised. However, I was shocked, frankly, when I realize that they were choosing this route. Perhaps it is the only one that will enable them to fight it through as a developing corporate group. (Spicer to Michener September 8, 1975)

Even after overcoming his initial “shock” and deciding to help, Spicer remained privately suspicious of the recognition route. In a letter to Joseph Sparks, an Arizona-based attorney who helped the Tonto Apache Tribe win federal recognition in 1972, Spicer confided,

I am working with Roger [C. Wolf, another lawyer,] and the Yaquis on this matter, but I still am not sure that it will be the best course to pursue. There is no
question that the New Pascua Yaquis have found themselves stalled with regard to further development of their community. The question is would passage of Udall’s bill for making New Pascua an Indian Reservation be a good solution to the basic problems? I am still trying [to] compare alternatives. (Spicer to Sparks November 10, 1975)

Spicer never explicitly stated the nature of his reluctance to support the Yaqui in their pursuit. As discussed in chapter one, Spicer’s views cottoned to cultural–not political–pluralism. Thus, it is possible that he might have considered the reclassification of the Pascua Yaqui as a semi-autonomous American Indian Tribe to be a questionable endorsement of sovereignty. However, I suspect that his particular brand of anthropology, which was never too far removed from his pluralism, also had a role to play. Especially during his tenure as a member of the Pascua Yaqui Association Advisory Committee, Spicer had long framed his advocacy work as a means to cultural “preservation” (see chapter three). When he did consider his efforts as also facilitating transformations, Spicer often conceptualized his work as “non-directed change” (Castile January 9th, 2018). This was a reference to Linton’s brand of acculturation theory in which he identified two kinds of culture change: directed and non-direct (1940). As Spicer understood it, the first type of change involved “interaction in specific roles between members of two different societies and effective control of some type and degree by members of one society over the members of the other” (Spicer 1972 [1961], 52). The second type included similar interactions “but there is no control of one society’s

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members by another” (Spicer 1972 [1961], 53). Spicer would go on to argue that the latter cases, i.e., non-directed change, involved no discernable “interference” from the external world (Spicer 1972 [1961], 55). Given his private suspicions of Valencia as being a “relentless caudillo,” it is likely that Spicer viewed the Yaqui leader’s decision to reverse policy and pursue a government-to-government relationship with the US to be something that Valencia was imposing on the rest of the community. Valencia acknowledged as much when he expressed to historian Mark Edwin Miller his reasoning for not consulting other Yaqui communities in Arizona:

We [the leadership at New Pascua] did not notify the other communities because, simply, they are a community within themselves. I am sure that if we had gone to the government and said that seven thousand Yaquis are here and we want to be recognized, that a portion of each community would have said no and that would have killed our chances. (quoted in Miller 2004, 108).

In Spicer’s eyes, Valencia’s actions would have been an exemplary case of directed change. The irony of course being that the federal-Yaqui relationship Valencia was actively pursuing had been laid out by the work of the Advisory Committee a decade prior (see chapter three).

One wonders though if Spicer’s reluctance might have also been tied to the type of narrative he would inevitably be compelled to present to the lawyers. Decades of research had prepared him to attest to the sociohistorical integrity of the Pascua Yaqui as an “enduring people.” It had not prepared him to espouse primordialist notions of American Indianness.
Also, it is worth pausing to ruminate on why Spicer might have decided to support the recognition bid despite his initial reservations. This about-face move is reminiscent of Alfred Kroeber’s behavior in the Indian Claims Commission during the 1950s. As documented by Arthur Ray, the Department of Justice (DOJ) approached Kroeber, a seasoned figure in the anthropology of Native California, to serve as the government’s primary expert witness in the attempts to adjudicate numerous claims in the state. Kroeber initially provided the DOJ with a rudimentary outline of an approach that might help the government in “pulling claims down from billions to millions” (Ray 2006, 254). However, he ultimately turned down the offer and chose to work on behalf of the plaintiffs (i.e., the Indians). As he wrote to the DOJ’s legal team, “I have been under considerable pressure since returning here. Especially my old friends the Indians, I found, would not have understood if I had been even nominally ‘against’ them” (quoted in Ray 2006, 255). Based on this archival sliver, Ray posits the notion that Kroeber’s “underlying sympathy for the Indian was a key factor,” which “likely” shaped his decision to support their efforts (2006, 255). Spicer’s letters express a similar compassion for the Pascua Yaqui and their plight. It is quite possible that his emotional attachments were even stronger than Kroeber’s. Unlike Kroeber, Spicer was already quite invested in Yaqui socio-political reconstruction (see chapter 3). Moreover, he lived in the same city as the Yaqui! As a result, these were not only his research subjects but his political allies and neighbors. Admittedly, this interpretation is speculative. Spicer never explicitly registered his rational in writing. That being said, there is enough circumstantial evidence to postulate that anthropologists like Spicer were less the blunt handmaidens of imperial power so much as they were the sentient tools of Indigenous political navigation. Though
it might seem needless to note, anthropologists are complex thinking and feeling subjects. And their thoughts and emotions— in dialectical conjunction with the larger political processes at work in a given field—shape their decisions to enter the fray of Indian-state negotiations.

Whatever his exact thought process might have been, Spicer eventually overcame his reservations and agreed to lend his support. This decision resulted in a shift, temporary though it may have been, in his articulation of Yaqui history and identity that mirrored the Yaqui’s own shift in political representation.

Paths of Life

While “enduring peoples” does not have the caché of more widely circulated anthropological constructs, its relevance has not been confined to Spicer, the Yaqui, or the mid-20th century. The afterlife of enduring peoples, in many ways, reflects the larger dynamics discussed so far, which further suggests how anthropological interpretations are circumscribed by the normative politics of recognition. In 1996, the Arizona State Museum (ASM) premiered Life a permanent museum exhibit Paths of Life, which prominently displays 10 Indian groups of the greater Southwest, including the Yaqui. Founded in 1896, ASM has long played a vital role in the production of the state’s historical imaginary (Ferg 2014; Wilcox 2005). Under the Arizona Antiquities Act, the ASM is charged with issuing permits for all archaeological work done on state lands. Combined with the fact that the museum owns the largest collection of Southwest Indigenous pottery in the world, the ASM wields great power over Arizona’s pre-Columbian past.
During the early 1990s, the ASM led the charge of museums across the country that were working to improve their relationship with the Indigenous communities whose material culture makes up the bulk of their collections. Such practices were likely spurred by the Columbus quincentenary in 1992, which acted to provoke increased Native American activism as well as self-reflexive museuological practices. For the ASM, Paths of Life was a flagship component of such “decolonial” efforts.

Like all museum exhibits, the making of Paths of Life was equal parts materiality and ideas. As the museum staff collaborated with tribal representatives to lifecast community members (i.e., construct three-dimensional models of living human bodies) and construct enactments of ceremonial practice and daily life, they did so under a guiding body of anthropological thought. As described by former ASM director Raymond Thompson, “The planning team held marathon conceptual meetings over a two-year period to develop central themes for the exhibit based on the seminal concepts of anthropologist Edward H. Spicer, especially his ideas about enduring peoples” (Thompson, 1996 xviii). As described by Thompson and other project participants (Parezo and Sheridan 1996), Spicer’s conception of endurance was the guiding principle for the types of narratives that Paths of Life would display.

In the end, the exhibit effectively captured the spirit of Spicer’s concept. Historically, museum displays have portrayed Indians and Indian culture as vestiges of a time gone by (Lonetree 2012). In stark contrast, Paths of Life portrays the tribes of

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84 Spicer and Thompson were longtime colleagues at UA. Thompson joined the faculty in 1956 after receiving his PhD in archaeology from Harvard and temporarily teaching at the University of Kentucky. The two would later collaborate on the book, Plural Society in the Southwest (1972).
Arizona as vibrant and contemporary peoples, whose history is replete with colonial interactions and the subsequent transformation of tribal life. Quite literally framed by the concept of “enduring peoples”—the term is embossed on the entrance to the exhibit along with a picture of Spicer—Paths of Life offers a dynamic view of the Indigenous Southwest.

However, not unlike Spicer’s own attempt to develop and deploy complex conceptions of Indigenous history and identity, Paths of Life does not escape the normative constraints of recognition. This is most evident in the organization of the exhibit. Despite references to migration, colonial engagements, and culture change, each tribal history is just that—a tribal history. With these types of narratives come relatively unavoidable presumptions—namely, the legitimacy and historical depth of contemporary ethnonational polities. In other words, it presumes that Native experiences can be told in the vein of (ethno)national history, a genre with its roots in 18th century Western Europe (Breuilly 1993, 55-59; Smith 1981, 103) not the Indigenous Southwest.

But who cares if such a historical style is not technically “Indigenous” to the Southwest? Borrowing is not itself the issue. As Marshall Sahlins sardonically notes, Europeans borrowed, invented, and reinvented “their” traditions with impunity (Sahlins 1993, 3-7; see Linton 1937 for a similar take on “100 percent” US culture). The issue is that, if taken-for-granted, such narratives run the risk of naturalizing the ideological presumptions of the contemporary politics of recognition in the US and elsewhere, which would confine modern collective identities to discrete, primordial, ethno-national boxes. Ethno-nationalism is but one way to organize and articulate stories about the past. It is not necessarily “incorrect,” but it is far from a “decolonial” or “authentically” “Indian”
perspective. This reductiveness, however minimal it might appear, occurs despite the noble and progressive objectives of the exhibit’s Native and non-Native designers. Once again, the intentions of anthropologists are constrained by the political context in which they operate. Ultimately, Spicer’s retreat to a primordialist way of thinking and the deployment of enduring peoples in Paths of Life underscore the relationship between anthropological thought and Indigenous recognition more broadly.\(^85\) That is to say, it highlights how the dictates of recognition limit the anthropological imaginary causing it to shift from situated and historically-rooted articulations of identity to a primordialist multiculturalism.

Implications: The Limits of Engaged Anthropology

Spicer’s case suggests that, when it comes to Indigenous recognition, the relationship between politically engaged anthropology and dynamic narratives of Indigenous history and identity are by no means harmonious. This runs counter to recent studies of recognition procedures such as Ray’s comparative account of Indian land claims throughout the latter half of the 20\(^{th}\) century (2016). As anthropologists became committed to claims in places as disparate as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the US, and South Africa, Ray concludes that scholastic debates generated more dynamic theoretical and methodological approaches to Indigenous history, which in turn produced narratives worthy of the complex lives of actual Native peoples (2016, 253-255). These

\(^85\) I think the question that Indigenous intellectual Paul Chat Smith asks of the Natural History Museum in the city of Regina, Saskatchewan can be applied to Paths of Life: “Why are we [Native peoples] in the museum at all? The English and the Ukrainians and the German aren’t here” (2009, 24). Like Paths of Life, the exhibit was constructed with local Native input. There is much ethnic history in the state of Arizona, but Paths of Life does not engage these histories despite the fact that they intersect with the “American Indians of the Southwest.”
critiques and investigations give hope to those who wish to bring about a “decolonial” turn in Native Americanist anthropology—for those who wish to undermine ideological formations that have supported and continue to support relationships of domination (Asch 2015; Smith 2012; Smith 2015).

Contrary to Ray’s findings, Spicer’s case suggests that immersion in Indigenous politics does not necessarily equate to more “accurate” or “liberatory” views of Native groups. Once he became committed to the Yaqui campaign, Spicer pivoted away from his innovative ethno-symbolic views and at least temporarily adopted a normative, primordialist perspective. Even in cases where his conception of “enduring peoples” has been adopted wholesale as it was at the ASM, the parameters of recognition continue to constrain the types of socio-historical imaginaries that anthropologists can articulate. This would suggest that, at least in some cases, governmental imperatives circumscribe and constrain anthropological findings in a manner that is hostile to dynamic conceptions of Indigenous history and identity (see Field 2003 for a comparative case in the San Francisco Bay Area).

Recently, David Dinwoodie has addressed the implications of this circumscription for politically engaged anthropologists. Analyzing his own participation as an expert witness in a land claims case involving the Nemiah Valley Indian Band and the provincial government of British Columbia, Dinwoodie illustrates how—under cross-examination—his articulations of the history and identity of the band were subtly shaped by novel and essentialized legal conceptions of an “Aboriginal perspective.” This subtle shaping prompts Dinwoodie to conclude that “recognition is ubiquitous and multivalent,” shaping everything from “Aboriginal testimony” to “the opinions of the judges and the
legal systems of the nation states” to “the dynamics of expert testimony and cross-examination” (2018). In light of this revelation, Dinwoodie address his anthropologist compatriots who also find themselves enrolled in such entanglements: “We may not have a simple choice between the pursuit or rejection of the politics of recognition” (2018). Clearly, for Spicer, a simple choice was not on the table.

This conclusion in no way resolves the debate regarding the moral and ethical value of recognition as explored by scholars like Glen Coulthard (2014), Audra Simpson (2014), and Charles Taylor (1994). Recognition has enabled the Pascua Yaqui to develop profitable tribal institutions including two casinos, a golf course, and a popular amphitheater. That being said, recognition has not solved the problem of economic destitution for many tribal members. At 35 percent, the poverty rate for the tribe is more than twice the state average (Arizona Rural Policy Institute et al. 2010). Such factors, though by no means comprehensive, suggest that recognition has not been an absolute panacea for the Pascua Yaqui.

What this case does, I believe, is help anthropologists and the Indigenous intellectuals who engage them to better recognize the ways in which well-intentioned research and advocacy is inextricably bound by the normative dictates of recognition. Just as Indigenous groups are forced to engage and traverse the ideological twists and turns of imperial incorporation and differentiation, so too are the scholars who take up their cause. This should give pause to anthropologists who have come to believe their own (negative) hype. To read the postmodern critiques of the 1980s, one might think that anthropologist wield immense power with the stroke of their pen and the tap of their keyboards. The Yaqui case suggests what Richard Fox long ago suspected about
postmodern criticism. Anthropology operates within diffuse–but very real–systems of power that condition what gets written and what gets read. Recognizing this situation, Fox suggested that anthropologists are less the isolated craftspeople portrayed by postmodernism and more factory floor workers (1991, 8). This is not to excuse anthropology of its complicity with acts of oppression. Quite the contrary, this is to more empirically document how this complicity actually operates—not through abstract notions of textual authority but through the actual encounters between anthropologists, Native peoples, lawyers, politicians, and governmental bureaucrats in specific political fields. In instances where anthropology is being deployed for applied ends, power does not stem from the notebook or typewriter but from the political field in which the anthropologists operates. In the case of the Pascua Yaqui, hegemonic conceptions of “Indians” at work in the halls of Congress conditioned how anthropology could be used. For those who wish to operationalize anthropology for “decolonial” ends, histories of the intersections of anthropology and recognition are an opportunity to trace the ways in which engaged anthropology is delimited by broader political imperatives.

While it useful to trace these tensions in the context of official sites of recognition, as I have done in the bulk of this chapter, Paths of Life is a reminder that the dynamics of recognition and anthropology permeate less overtly political arenas of social life as well. The next chapter continues to move from the world of the bureaucratic state to the world of academic knowledge production, this time with a more overt example of recognition in unexpected places.
Chapter Five: “We hope that you will continue to teach us how best to learn”: Assembling the Pascua Yaqui Tribe at the 89th Wenner-Gren International Symposium

Introduction

Numerous principled studies have explored the ways in which anthropology is embedded in systems of recognition and subsequent articulations of Indigenous identity (e.g., Barker 2011; Clifford 1988; Field 2003; McMillen 2007; Simpson 2014). However, there have been few event-oriented, interactional accounts of the relationship between anthropology and recognition that are not confined to the courts or official mechanisms of governmental acknowledgment (e.g., the Federal Acknowledge Process in the US). By examining a case outside of the legal arena, this chapter seeks to cultivate a historically-grounded, reflexive understanding of the less overt and highly contingent ways in which anthropology is implicated in the politics of recognition. Furthermore, in keeping with the previous chapters, the following continues to trace the work of Anselmo Valencia and his creative articulations of an emergent Pascua Yaqui tribal identity as he moved from the bright lights of the congressional committee to a less visibly power-laden but equally charged terrain of recognition.

In late November of 1981, an assortment of academics gathered for the 89th Wenner-Gren International Symposium. While the majority of previous symposia had been held at the iconic Burg Wartenstein castle nestled high in the Austrian Alps, the 89th gathering was to be held in arid Southern Arizona, split between New Pascua and a conference center constructed out of the remnants of an old mining town. Organized around the theme of “Yaqui Ritual and Performance,” the event promised a public reenactment and interdisciplinary examination of the Deer Dance, a key component of
the Yaqui Lent and Easter ceremonies. A relatively forgotten event in a seemingly out-of-the-way place, the Yaqui Conference (as I will refer to it from here on) became an installment in the co-constructive history of Indigenous recognition and anthropology.

My objective in this chapter is to show how anthropologists and their institutions became consequential participants in the rearticulation of a collective Yaqui identity that built upon the previous articulations I have recounted in the previous chapters. I document the ways in which a Yaqui intellectual used the conference as a stage upon which to assemble a novel collective identity that was consistent with an emergent politics of recognition. This performance was articulated through the reframing of a syncretic, colonially-constructed ceremonial practice—the Deer Dance—as a marker of a primordial Indigenous identity. By deploying a dynamic nominalist framework (Hacking 2002), this assessment helps us address the lack of event-based, dialogical analyses in examinations of recognition and the ways in which anthropology is operationalized as a tool for navigating the inherent paradox of recognition (see Dinwoodie 1998, 2018 for notable exceptions).

Indigenous Recognition and Dynamic Nominalism

Studies of recognition typically fall along a continuum. In this chapter, I pursue an alternative, event-based analysis informed by constructionist theory, which will address what the dominant trends in the literature typically overlook—collective identities in the making. Scholars from across the humanities and social sciences have documented the ways in which collective identity rights have become the dominant means of political mobilization for Indigenous peoples living under liberal institutions (Coulthard 2014; Povinelli 2002; Turner 2002; see also Appiah 1994; Fraser 2000; and Taylor 1994 for
broader discussions of recognition and liberalism). However, this literature is by no means uniform. On one end of the continuum, scholars advocate for the wholesale recognition of cultural and linguistic difference with respect to Indigenous communities. One finds significant overlap with the primordialist approaches to Indigenous recognition, which I described in the previous chapter. While these studies are often critical of the power structures in which groups reside, they focus their attention on the unique and autonomous nature of Indigenous cultures and languages as well as ecological and political traditions (e.g., Hinton 2010; Menzies 2006; Powell 2007). More radical, advocacy-oriented versions of this literature deploy biological and ecological metaphors to portray the struggles of the Native communities, which are believed to be ever slipping toward the precipice of cultural or linguistic doom (e.g., Nettle and Romain 2002; Maffi 2002). As is the case with anthropological approaches to recognition, other scholars who are equally committed to the social, economic, and political dilemmas facing Native communities take a more grounded approach. They use the historical and oral historical record to trace the roots of modern Indigenous groups and their associated cultural practices so as to underwrite their historical continuity (Asch 1982; Campisi 1991; McMillen 2007; Ray 2016; Ridington 2014; Shorter 2009). For these scholars, emphasis is often on relatively unbroken symbolic articulations of identity and not on the intricacies of ethnogenesis.

On the other end of the continuum, we find critical examinations of the inequitable roots of recognition procedures. This body of literature is primarily and justifiably concerned with rendering recognition a cunning colonialist charade that reproduces longstanding power asymmetries (Barker 2011; Clifford 1988; Coulthard
2014; Povinelli 2002; Simpson 2014). In this mode of analysis, events and individuals are de-emphasized as the focus shifts to institutional mechanisms of control, their associated rules of formation, and the ontologies that they produce.

Despite their apparent differences and political commitments (one is supportive of recognition while the other calls for its unmasking), these two orientations share common ground. In particular, both ends of the continuum fail to address recognition through the concrete instances in which “official formulations of Indian identity [emerge] from complex, cross-cultural and intracultural dialogues” (Harmon 1998, 144). To borrow Alexandra Harmon’s terminology, lost are the micro-scale moments of communities “in the making” (1998), which enable us to see collective identities as dialogical processes as opposed to primordial essences (Fisher 2009, 9). It then goes without saying that these approaches also prevent us from understanding anthropology’s role in practices of acknowledgment. While there have been numerous efforts to critically document anthropology’s position in official and unofficial recognition processes (Barker 2011; Clifford 1988; Field 2002; Ray 2016; Simpson 2014), these studies rarely offer an event-based perspective. Even James Clifford’s now canonical account of the Masphee Indians on trial is more of an anecdotal discussion of the broader issues surrounding the case – e.g., epistemological divides between history and anthropology and the paradoxical task of performing authentic Indigeneity–than it is an examination of the reversal of roles and the rearticulation of groupness in real-time encounters (1988).

In an attempt to pursue an alternative approach, I deploy Ian Hacking’s theory of dynamic nominalism, which is rooted in the broader discussion of historical ontology framing this study so far. Nominalism refers to the stand of philosophy that presumes the
world to be devoid of essentials and universals. Things come into being through the actions of humans who name and classify the world around them including the social subjectivities that people often take to be primordial (e.g., race, gender, sexuality, nationality, etc.). Rigid nominalism would hold that nominalism occurs in a unidirectional manner with people imposing categories from above. In the case of social subjectivities, Hacking suggests a dynamic nominalism in which categories come into being from above and below. This is to say, there is a “two-way interaction” between the category and the kinds of people who are made to fit said category (Hacking 2002, 48). Thus, in contrast to primordialist and rigid nominalist traditions of ontology, dynamic nominalists stress the inherently interactive nature of identity formation wherein structure and agency must be analyzed in concert. Insomuch as this chapter is concerned with the situated construction of collective social identities in relation to broader political conditions, a dynamic view of nominalism—one that accounts for both structure and agency—is both useful and necessary. Following recent attempts to view recognition processes and subsequent articulation of Indigenous identity through an explicitly constructionist (Ens and Sawchuk 2016) and event-based prism (Dinwoodie 2003; 2018), I suggest that Hacking’s conception of dynamic nominalism is one way to begin to capture the dialogical construction of collective identities within official and unofficial recognition procedures and the role that anthropology has played in this process.

The Trouble with Recognition

At the time of the Yaqui Conference, the Yaqui Indians of Southern Arizona were in a state of significant political flux having just achieved federal recognition as an “American Indian Tribe” in 1978 (see chapter four). In the process of reconfiguring
themselves in relation to this new category, Yaqui elites began to reframe colonially-derived cultural practices as symbolic markers of an essential and primordial “Yaquiness” in order to substantiate their claims to “Indianness.” Through these activities, the Yaqui enacted the “two-way interaction” between systems of classification and the practices of social actors as described by Hacking.

Yaqui recognition was a hard-won and complex campaign, consistent with the rise of Indigenous identity movements and recognition-based politics within and beyond the US. That being said, recognition of the Yaqui came with its own unique set of complications.

As I detailed in the previous chapter, the Yaquis status as migrant Indians with roots in Mexico had long rendered them ineligible for federal acknowledge as an American Indian Tribe. Their disqualification became more definite with the advent of John Collier’s BIA and the IRA. Despite finding a home in urban Tucson as both a reliable agricultural labor force and a source of cultural tourism, the Yaqui of Pascua long occupied an uncertain position. Sometimes classified as Mexican refugees, American Indians, and colonists, Pascua Yaqui identity alluded the classifying of the federal government. In the 1970s, Congress became a site for the re-imagining of a new

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86 These transformations are indexed by creation of the International Indian Treaty Council (1974) and World Council of Indigenous Peoples (1975) in the U.S. and Canada, respectively. Also, the 1977 UN NGO conference on Discrimination against Indigenous Populations and the construction of the formal Federal Acknowledgement Process (1978) and the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (1975) in the US are indications of the turn to Indigenous recognition (Castile 1998; Karen 2010; Merlan 2009).

87 What Edward Spicer observed of the community in the 1930s could be said on the eve of federal recognition in the late 1970s. “The political status of the Yaqui [in Tucson] is wrapped up in misconceptions, neither Yaquis nor the majority of Anglo Americans understanding clearly what that status is” (Spicer 1988, 43).
American Indian identity for the Yaqui. While these efforts slightly pre-date the institutionalization of a US recognition process (Barker 2011; Cramer 2005), the Yaqui still found themselves in need of performing an essentialized and primordialized version of American Indianness (Miller 2004). Shortly after the bid for recognition, Pascua Yaqui elites suggested they were descendants of the Toltec, the ancient predecessors to the Mexica empire, and that much of what is now the United States (including Arizona) can be considered Toltec and, by association, Yaqui homeland (Castile 2002, 406-407; Pascua Yaqui Tribe 1982). One cannot underestimate the significance of this narrative shift. Yaquis of Arizona had long understood their position in the region as a product of recent migration (Spicer 1988). Their origin stories marked eight Jesuit towns in Sonora and the incorporation of Christianity as the roots of Yaqui identity (Folsom 2014, 71). Until the 1970s, no part of the present-day US Southwest was included in these narratives. By incorporating Toltec heritage and US territory into their identity, Pascua Yaqui elites staked their claim to a distinctly American Indian tribal identity.

Highlighting the Deer Dance was part of this larger attempt to re-present the Pascua Yaqui as an American Indian Tribe. In the previous chapter, I presented an excerpt of Anselmo Valencia’s testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs in September 1977. I draw from this excerpt again to show how Valencia characterized the dance as one of the most significant markers of the Yaqui’s “Indianness.”

The Yaquis are Indians in every sense of the word. We have our own language, our own culture, such as the Pascola Dancing, the deer dancing and the coyote dancing. These dances are Indian in origin. In the deer dance, we sing to honor the
great mountains, the springs, the lakes. We sing of our father the Sun, and of creatures living and dead. We sing of trees and leaves and twigs…All of the songs sung and played are to the olden times-ancient Yaqui Indian stories. The Catholic faith and the various governments under which the Yaquis have had to suffer have tried for centuries to undermine our ‘Yaquiness,’ but after 400 years they have not succeeded. We have retained our language, our culture, and our Indianness. (US Congress 1977, 6, emphasis added)

Valencia’s conception of “Indianness” displays essentialist and primordialist thinking that is typical of recognition proceedings. According to this logic, Yaqui identity can be reduced to select traits (e.g., the Deer Dance, a distinct language, songs, and stories), and these traits are imagined to have emerged in a distant past (i.e., prior to the arrival of “the Catholic faith”). Historians and sociologists of nationalism have argued that the cultivation of essentialized and primordialized symbols such as these are more than mere representations of ethnic communities; they are constitutive elements in the formation of ethnonations (e.g., Hobsbawm 1987; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Smith 1999). As described by Anthony D. Smith, the process of “symbolic cultivation” refers to “a wide range of ethnic memories, symbols, values, myths and traditions. Many of these are local in origin, but some of them may be taken up, and adapted, by “specialist elites” who then communicate these ideas to the world (Smith 2009, 38). Smith goes on to suggest that by operationalizing history and the social sciences, these elites have worked to “place their political projects on firm historical foundations and convince their kinsmen, as well as a hostile world, of the truth of their claims” (Smith 2009, 71). In the case of the Yaqui Conference, Valencia would follow a similar pattern as he enrolled an anthropological
foundation and its cornerstone conference series into his ongoing attempts to frame the Deer Dance as a symbol of the Yaquis’ essential and primordial “Indianness.”

However, the Deer Dance posed a problem for symbolic cultivation under the solidifying essentialized and primordialized logics of recognition. Contrary to Valencia’s testimony, the dance was a colonial co-construction that had long been embedded in the political-economies of settler societies. In the 1620s, following the aggregation of Yaquis in Jesuit-managed towns in what would become the Mexican state of Sonora, the Deer Dance formed in conjunction with Indigenous interpretations of the Catholic passion play, a dramatization of Christ’s crucifixion (Spicer 1980, 70). The introduction of the passion play was a common Spanish colonial practice that symbolically placed newly conquered peoples into an imperial imaginary as subjects of a Catholic crown (Brooks 2002; for a New Mexican case see Rodriguez 2009 and a Nicaraguan case see Field 1999b). Therefore, consistent with Yaqui culture more broadly, the Deer Dance formed as a fusion of Christian and Indigenous practices and beliefs.

In the early 20th century, the rate at which the dance became increasingly removed from everyday Yaqui life was equal to its immersion in local political-economies. As Edward Spicer, noted at the time of the conference, “Many of the words [in the Deer songs] are not easily translatable into current Yaqui; some words remain wholly untranslatable” (1980, 104). However, the dance was not without a purpose. As Spicer also commented, the striking figure of the costumed dancer with his antlers and rattles became a recognizable symbol in the settler colonial society of 20th-century Mexico. Northern Mexican states that had once been a locus for Yaqui extermination and exploitation (Folsom 2014; Hu-DeHart 1983) now enshrined the Deer Dancer in public
statues and hotel advertisements (Spicer 1980, 274-276). One could say the same of Arizona where the Deer Dancer became representative of the Pascua Yaqui of Tucson. In the 1920s, it was common for Yaquis to perform the Deer Dance out of season at the annual Tucson Rodeo, sometimes feeling pressure from the Chamber of Commerce to do so in exchange for the city’s annual financial support for their Easter ceremonies (Spicer 1980, 275; 1988, 134). Therefore, while the dance may very well have continued to be significant in Yaqui society (Shorter 2004), it was always enmeshed in local political-economies and broader “cycles of conquest” (as Spicer characterized it [1962]).

Distancing the dance from its Catholic and colonial roots, Valencia’s congressional testimony attempted to map a layer of essentialized, ancient “Indianness” on to the performance. In the end, Valencia successfully persuaded sympathetic politicians to see the Yaqui not as “Mexican Indians” but as a “major and unique American Indian tribe” whose “ancestors…have lived in what we call the Southwest…from time immemorial” (US Congress 1977, 2).

However, even after federal recognition was conferred, Yaqui identity remained an open question, especially at the local level where real estate developers in Tucson began to turn their sights on the newly constructed reservation. When the tribe moved to expand their reservation boundaries in the early 1980s, Joseph Cesare of Broadway Realty and Trust Inc. wrote to Congressmen and Pascua Yaqui supporter Morris K. Udall in protest: “There cannot be more than 100 Yaquis living on that reservation (who by the way came from Mexico) and it would be better to integrate them into our society instead of enlarging their reservation” (Cesare to Udall September 27, 1982, emphasis added).
Mexican refugees, American Indians, colonists, or descendants of the Toltec? As the conference began, the Yaqui of Tucson were a newly recognized tribe still struggling to figure out how best to represent themselves to a hostile world under these newly codified conditions of “American Indianness.” Echoing Hacking’s theory, there was a “two-way interaction” between an emergent category of people (i.e., the Pascua Yaqui as American Indian Tribe) and the kinds of people who fit into this category (e.g., Valencia) (Hacking 2002, 48). Valencia’s congressional testimony was not the end of these interactions, but the beginning. The Yaqui Conference and the continued reframing of the Deer Dance would prove to be another installment in the ongoing effort to re-present the Yaqui under the conditions of recognition.

Assembling the Conference

The Yaqui Conference developed out of a state of uncertainty in institutional anthropology, which caused one of the cornerstone funders of the discipline, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, to open itself to the dynamics of Indigenous recognition. This state of uncertainty came at a particular juncture with respect to the foundation’s historical rise to prominence in the field. In 1941, Axel Wenner-Gren established a foundation with the less than noble desire to shield his large financial holdings from a “vexing tax issue regarding the sale of a boat moored in the waters off Florida” (Lindee and Radin 2016, 225). An elite problem if ever there was one! At the suggestion of his lawyers, the Swedish industrialist created the “Viking Fund” (the name supposedly inspired by his Scandinavian heritage). While the organization asserted what now appear as vaguely intellectual pretensions, initial projects in Latin American settings, such as developing a news clipping service, were motivated largely by Wenner-Gren’s hopes to extend his
business interests into the global south (Lindee and Radin 2016, 225). It was only when Wenner-Gren brought Paul Fejos, a Hungarian aristocrat and avant-garde filmmaker turned nascent social scientist, into the organization as director of research that the foundation, eventually renamed in honor of its founder, took on an explicitly anthropological, not to mention less superficial, focus. Under Fejos’s leadership, Wenner-Gren became a leading patron of anthropology in the US.

In 1957, Fejos persuaded Axel to purchase the 12th-century Austrian castle Burg Wartenstein, previously owned by the royal family of Liechtenstein, which would become the site for a renowned international symposia series. The palatial estate and the symposia constituted intertwined symbols of the foundation’s regal prominence in the field of anthropology. This continued under the guidance of Fejos’s widow, Lita (formerly Lita Binns, later Lita Osmundsen) who officially and unofficially led the foundation and the symposia series until the mid-1980s.

With the dawning of the late 1970s, the foundation’s rise to prominence took a notable dip. Inflation and a shrinking endowment produced a “crisis mentality” within the organization that compelled the board of directors to sell Burg Wartenstein (Lindee and Radin 2016, 280).88 The divestiture of the castle left future conferences—and Wenner-Gren’s institutional identity—in a state of “limbo” (Osmundsen 1980, 14). The Yaqui Conference, which was held in November 1981, the year following the sale of the castle,

offered the foundation a chance to reconfigure the symposia series for the future. With its relatively novel emphasis on interdisciplinarity and the active pursuit of outside funding from a variety of sources, the Yaqui Conference would serve as a “‘mini’ symposium,” a test case, for future gatherings.89

However, the principal conference organizers had little understanding of the Yaqui or contact with Yaqui communities.90 The initial co-organizers were Victor Turner, the famed interpretative anthropologist of ritual, and Richard Schechner, a well-respected performance studies scholar. Neither man had much familiarity with the Yaqui. Similarly, Willa Appel, the appointed project director for the conference, had expertise in other areas. At the time, she would have been most readily identified as an anthropologist of cults, exploring cult ideologies and leadership practices (Appel 1983). For Turner, Schechner, and Appel, the Yaqui, despite being central to the proposed conference, were something of a mystery.

In September of 1981, a mere two months before the conference was to be held, Appel and Osmundsen attempted to remedy this problem by traveling to Tucson to meet with anthropologists Edward and Rosamond Spicer, the Pascua Yaqui Tribal Council, and Anselmo Valencia. As should be clear by now, the Spicers had been fixtures in Pascua Yaqui affairs since the mid-1930s when the two arrived to pursue ethnographic research as graduate students from the University of Chicago. Edward, in particular,

90 Planning did not begin with a specific eye toward the Yaqui or Arizona. Rather, the idea for the conference began as an epic multi-city tour in which eight distinct cultures and their unique performances would be enacted for participants. “Planning Document,” n.d., 89th Wenner-Gren International Symposium, Wenner-Gren Foundation.
made the Yaqui of Pascua a primary object of analysis until his death in 1983. Both Edward and Rosamond were also active participants in Tucson Yaqui cultural and political affairs throughout this period, starting with small attempts to secure financial support for the Deer Dance and other Yaqui ceremonies from city coffers (Spicer to Tucson Chamber of Commerce January 17, 1938; see chapter two). At the time of the conference, the Spicers’ possessed a 44-year-old relationship with the Yaqui of Tucson, made stronger by their long-term residence in the city and Ned’s position in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Arizona.

Once the name Spicer had finally been suggested to the conference organizers by participant Fred Eggan, Osmundsen and company scrambled to digest Ned’s work and the recent history of the Yaqui in Tucson. Their behavior suggests not only a lack of familiarity with the Yaqui but a relatively naïve understanding of the complexities of recognition. Following their September meeting, Osmundsen asked Spicer for a copy of his 1977 testimony before Congress in support of Yaqui recognition. She planned to circulate the statement to the other invited participants, the majority of whom had little to no experience with Yaqui issues. Osmundsen stated that she heard that it was the “the

91 Wenner-Gren was nearly done with planning the conference before they ever considered speaking with the Spicers. It was only when Fred Eggan responded to an invitation to participate that Appel and Osmundsen seemed to even become aware of the anthropological couple. Eggan assumed that Osmundsen had already spoken with the Spicers and that would be involved in some way. At the time, she had not, and they were not.

92 In his congressional testimony, Spicer goes to creative and subtle lengths to emphasize Yaqui discreteness and Indigeneity. For example, he leads with a characterization of Yaqui distinction based on language. He simultaneously emphasizes their connection to the Uto-Aztecan language family and groups like the “Aztec, and the Papagos, Pimas, Hopis, and Paiutes of American Indian language stocks” (US Congress Senate 1977). Noticeably, Spicer neglects to mention the use of English and Spanish amongst Yaqui in Arizona. A study from 1979, showed that Spanish was actually the dominant language
most cogent information [they] could obtain as preparation for this conference” (Osmundsen to Spicer September 28, 1981). What she did not realize was that Spicer’s testimony was a carefully crafted and abbreviated attempt to represent the cultural distinction and territorial attachment of the Yaqui to Arizona so as to underwrite their claim to an American Indian tribal identity. As examined in chapter four, the claims made in his testimony were more conjectural and politically pragmatic than they were rooted in empirical research. By embracing this testimony, the foundation betrayed a simplified conception of the complexities of recognition and the Yaqui case.

Spicer does not appear to have responded to this request to circulate his testimony. Perhaps this was a subtle recognition of the statement’s functional-political (as opposed to scholarly) intent. However, the couple did agree to attend the conference and provide commentary on the preliminary program, which Osmundsen credited with “Yaqui-izing the issues” (Osmundsen to Spicer September 28, 1981). Additionally, Ned agreed to be listed as a co-organizer, giving the gathering some semblance of local anthropological approval.93 Despite the aid of the Spicers, the organizers recognized that “Yaqui-zing” the proceeding would, at some point, still require the involvement of actual Yaquis.

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93 I have found no evidence of a circulated copy of Spicer congressional testimony in the Wenner-Gren papers. Larry Evers does not recall receiving any specific pieces of pre-conference information including a copy of Spicer’s testimony (Email April 5, 2017). The Spicers also agreed to provide comments on a rough draft of the program and serve as participants with Ned listed as a co-organizer.
A WWII veteran, community organizer, and dynamic political advocate, Anselmo Valencia was far from the unassuming shamanic caricature of Don Juan popularly portrayed in Carlos Castaneda’s writings on Yaqui spirituality (e.g., 2016[1968]). In fact, Valencia was no stranger to anthropology in the least. During the 1930s and 1940s, Valencia’s godfather, Lucas Chavez, served as Edward Spicer’s primary informant. As illustrated in chapter two, Chavez, a cunning political mind in his own right, was one of the first to recognize how sympathetic anthropologists could be made to serve as advocates for the Yaqui in their dealings with local government. Beginning in the late 1940s, Valencia elaborated on this strategy in his own campaigns. The Spicers once again became significant nodes of advocacy as Valencia relied on Edward to secure support from congressional representatives and federal funding agencies such as the Office of Economic Opportunity (see chapter three). These efforts manifested Pascua Yaqui recognition and the tribal reservation and elevated Valencia’s position in the community as a skilled political operator.

However, by the early 1980s, Valencia’s positionality had changed. The recognition campaign had put him on confrontational terms with other Yaqui groups who opposed his decision to speak for them as if they were a single homogenous entity (Miller 2004, 110-111). Additionally, leading up to the recognition, Valencia faced criticism from more powerful tribes of Arizona who viewed the Yaquis as “Mexican” (not “American”) Indians who had made illegitimate claims to already limited federal

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94 Valencia’s godfather, Lucas Chavez, served as Edward Spicer’s original informant. A cunning political mind in his own right, Chavez was one of the first to recognize how sympathetic anthropologists like the Spicers could be made to serve as advocates for the Yaqui in local politics (e.g., lobbying the Chamber of Commerce for funds to produce informative pamphlets about the Easter ceremonies).

Faced with opposition on multiple fronts, Valencia entered the conference with a need to re-present the Pascua Yaqui to the public as a legitimate and coherent Indigenous entity.

Unaware of this situation, following their meeting in Tucson, Appel wrote to Valencia. “We depend upon you, to decide how to present the issues... Our goal is to learn about the Deer Dance and its place in Yaqui culture. *We hope that you will continue to teach us how best to learn*” (Appel to Valencia September 28, 1981, emphasis added).

Fortunately for Valencia, teaching how best to learn would conform quite nicely with his own objectives. Thus, organizers had little sense that they would become a prop in Valencia’s performance of a primordial Indigenous identity.

“What is this word savage?”: Reframing the Deer Dance

On the morning of November 19th, 1981, the first official day of the conference, tribal representatives greeted participants at New Pascua and gave their visitors a tour of the facilities before a formal welcome began promptly at 11:30am, led by Valencia. The “welcome” is recounted in participant Edith Turner’s reflections:

Valencia began by introducing the dancers... Then he turned to his listeners and reminded them that they were Anglos, anthropologists, and that he had a lot of trouble from anthropologists. Their incessant questions made it very difficult for the Yaquis... Valencia strode up and down a little, getting indignant. “What is this word, ‘savage’?“ he asked– a word that Anglos and Mexicans used about the

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95 This may help to explain the emergence of the Toltec origin narrative, which the Yaqui tribal council officially adopted in 1981 (1981-82, 2).
Yaquis. He asked various people in his audience what the word meant. (Turner 1995, 82)

After some unsatisfying responses from Victor Turner and Edward Spicer, “[Valencia] went on to give the definition he had heard from Anglos, that savages were murderous before anything else” (Turner 1995, 82).

It was at this point that the conference slipped into the genre of “lecture” wherein Valencia, as the primary speaker, claimed “an institutionalized extended holding of the floor” (Goffman 1981, 165) that allowed him to reframe his audience’s perception of the Deer Dance. In this mode of speaking, Valencia continued by recounting the origins of the ceremonial objects on display before his audience. From flutes to drums, he claimed an Indigenous origin for most of them. Valencia even suggested that the Yaqui use of the cross had pre-colonial roots (Spicer and Spicer 1981). Later, in his summation of Yaqui history, Valencia emphasized a cunning embrace of colonial society in which Yaquis selectively pruned and incorporated elements of Catholicism while retaining their distinct religion. Mirroring his performance before Congress, Valencia framed the Deer Dance as an untouched vestige of a pre-colonial past. Such a presentation departed significantly from the ethnohistorical literature, much of which had been produced by Spicer who was present for this performance. In his notes from the conference, Spicer expressed a discomfort regarding Valencia’s “idiosyncratic understanding” of the dance, which he felt must have been “much influenced by [Valencia’s] recent intensive association (for

96 Spicer wrote about the Yaqui adoption of the cross under Jesuit influence (1954).
97 One of the ways Valencia presented these issues was by suggesting that the Yaquis conflated the Judeo-Christian God with the Sun, which he identified as a sacred element in Yaqui cosmology. According to Larry Evers, “Anselmo was talking about the Yaqui’s Father the Sun long before this meeting” (Evers to Barron April 5, 2017).
the purposes of getting federal recognition) with Plains and other American Indians in the National Congress of American Indians and various Pow-wow circuits” (Spicer to Osmundsen January 8, 1982).98

When a counter interpretation was offered, Valencia and his extended network of supporters worked to obfuscate such readings of the dance. For instance, at one point, Felipe Molina, Valencia’s ceremonial godson and budding cultural representative whose comments opened this study, suggested that the drum signified the beat of the deer’s heart (Turner 1995, 84). Heather Valencia, Anselmo’s wife, openly rejected this interpretation, which in effect underwrote her husband’s position as the “animator” and “author” of Yaqui culture (Goffman 1981, 144-146).

While the organizers worked to transpose the Burg Wartenstein model to the Arizona location over the next few days, contingencies reigned supreme. The second day of the conference saw a return to the reservation with Valencia once again acting as the master of ceremonies. Valencia’s lecture continued as participants witnessed an abbreviated performance of the Deer Dance organized specifically for the conference.99

98 This is Spicer’s full note on the matter: “The senior Deersinger’s emphasis on Sun symbolism and the concept of Sun the Father rather than on God the Father and the Trinity constitutes a re-reading of Yaqui religious tradition. His exalting of the Sun symbolism is much influence by his recent intensive association (for the purpose of getting federal recognition) with Plains and other American Indians in the National Congress of American Indians and various Pow-wow circuits. The Sun-Father concept among Arizona Yaqui had fallen into an almost lost state until these recent efforts at resurrection and revitalization. He ties it to the Deer Song content and few features of Deer-Pascola ritual which had become unimportant almost non-existent, for Yaquis generally. It is true nevertheless [sic] that among Sonora Yaquís the concept is somewhat more alive as a result of the vigor there of the Militrary Society, in the ritual of which the Sun plays still an important part. In Arizona, on the other hand, the Military Society ritual has been entirely dead for at least 60 years” (Spicer to Osmundsen January 8, 1982).

99 The Dance is typically an all-night affair.
The third day brought Valencia to a conference center located 40 miles north of Tucson in the town of Oracle—a more traditional setting reminiscent of the Burg Wartenstein days. Four different sessions were scheduled between 9:30am and 5:30pm with Valencia serving as the “primary discussants” for the opening session. This session was to be chaired by Keith Basso, an expert on the Western Apache who reluctantly accepted the invitation admitting his lack of familiarity with the Yaqui case (Basso to Appel June 2, 1981). However, betraying the contingencies of such gatherings, Basso missed the first two days of the conference, rendering him unable to speak specifically about the Deer Dance presentation or Valencia’s commentary (Basso to Osmundsen January 9, 1981). Moreover, the session was also intended to center around a pre-circulated paper by another anthropologist of the Southwest, Alfonso Ortiz; however, Ortiz canceled just prior to the start of the conference due to a family emergency (Osmundsen to Ortiz November 6, 1981). With an unaware chair and an absent presenter, this left a gaping hole in the day—one which Valencia was more than capable of filling.

Even the strict spatial layout of the proceeding fell by the wayside. When Burg Wartenstein was the epicenter of the conference series, discussions revolved around a roundtable—very much reminiscent of King Arthur and his knights, which was draped with a green cloth (Silverman 2002, 7). In the wake of the castle’s sale, the green cloth would continue to be used, carrying a certain degree of symbolic continuity across symposia. While the tablecloth may have made its way to Arizona, the roundtable did not. Valencia was able to take a seat at the head of a rectangular table. Subtle though it may have been, this would have endowed the proceedings with a spatial hierarchy that
placed Valencia in an advantageous position from which to critique competing interpretations of “Yaquiness” (Figure 11).
From this position, Valencia made a lateral move, choosing to discuss and critique Edward Spicer’s ethnographic portrayals of the Yaqui (Evers to Barron April 5, 2017).

The core of Valencia’s comments is not well remembered by participants nor is it clearly

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stated in the documentary record. It is very likely that differing conceptions of Yaqui origins and the sacredness of the Deer Dance were at play.\(^{101}\) As noted above, Valencia increasingly portrayed the community as having a primordial connection to Southern Arizona. Over the course of his career, Spicer progressively pushed the date of Yaqui arrival in the region further and further back.\(^{102}\) However, he never endorsed this autochthonous narrative. Relatedly, the year before the conference, Spicer published his epic, cumulative monograph *The Yaquis: A Culture History* (1980). Part of the book addressed the “absorption” of the Deer Dance into the tourist industries of Arizona and Sonora, (1980, 275), which did little to support Valencia’s depiction of the Deer Dance as a radically Other institution devoid of colonial or settler influence.

During the early 1990s, these anthropological interpretations would become the proverbial straw that broke the camel’s back, separating Spicer’s work and Valencia’s imagining of the Pascua Yaqui. In 1993, the tribe went before Congress again, this time in an effort to reclassify the Pascua Yaqui as a “historic tribe.” Though the community had achieved federal recognition in 1978, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) argued that they had done so as a “created tribe,” defined as a recently formulated community of adult Indians. This slight distinction created roadblocks for the Pascua Yaqui Tribal

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\(^{101}\) Another issue would be Spicer’s changing view of the Deer Dance. During this period and prior, Spicer had reached a somewhat instrumental interpretation of the Deer Dance as practiced in Arizona, seeing it more as an avenue for Yaqui representation in the tourist market than a sacred ritual (Spicer 1972, 312).

\(^{102}\) In his letter to Congress, Spicer settled on 1796 as the earliest date. There is evidence to suggest that missionaries brought a group of converted Yaquis to Tumacacori to model behavior. He also notes the use of Yaqui labor in gold and silver mines during and after this period. In *The Yaquis: A Culture History* (1980), Spicer states the despite the abandonment of the mission in 1828 and intrusion of Apache raids, “the settlement, [was] still inhabited by descendants of the earlier group” (1980, 237). However, Castile notes, Spicer provides no evidence to support this belief (2002, 385).]
Council, especially their attempt to ratify a constitution, a right that the BIA did not extend to “created tribes” (Castile 2002, 414-416). In their attempt to achieve this reclassification, the Pascua Yaqui had to contend with the fact that the anthropological and ethnohistorical literature stated that they were recent immigrants to the US. This time, Senators noted that the tribe’s primary academic advocate, Edward Spicer, had repeatedly made this point in his written work (1940, 1961, 1980). Before the Senate Subcommittee on Native American Affairs, Valencia respectfully argued that Spicer (now a decade deceased) had erred in his interpretations. Thus, in a sense, Valencia’s behavior during the conference presaged his future repudiation of Spicer’s work.

We might not know the precise nature of the conflict that emerged between Valencia and Spicer around the green cloth. However, we can see that Valencia used the conference as an opportunity to eclipse dominant anthropological interpretations with his own “idiosyncratic understanding” of the Deer Dance, which more easily conformed to the essentialized and primodialized dictates of federal recognition.

In the aftermath of the conference, Valencia continued to work to cultivate the Deer Dance as a symbol of Yaquiness, and Wenner-Gren continued to be part of this process. With encouragement from Osmundsen, Valencia submitted an application to the foundation for a grant that would help fund a book project about the Deer Dance (Valencia 1982). Because of his participation in the conference, the application was given

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preferential treatment despite being improperly filled out. Actually, Valencia left the majority of his application blank. The section reserved for a one-and-half page description of the aim and scope of the project was confined to a single sentence. In her response to Valencia, Osmundsen insisted that “the application is short on words, but succinct in intent. It is fine as it is because what you would finally do is what will have a deeper meaning” (Osmundsen to Valencia January 5, 1982).

Despite her expressed enthusiasm and confidence, Osmundsen contacted the Spicers soon after receiving the application asking one or both of them to not only write a letter of support but to “summarize” the project for grant readers. She stated, “Anselmo finally applied. Given the cultural problems, his application is understandable” (Osmundsen to Spicer January 2, 1982, emphasis added). What were these “cultural problems” that would have prevented Valencia from filling out the application? Valencia was new to the Wenner-Gren system, yes. But was this a matter of reaching across vast cultural divides? Hardly. At this point, Valencia was no stranger to US bureaucracy. What at first appears to be a limited understanding of the Yaqui is actually evidence of the success of Valencia’s performance during the conference. He had presented the tribe in a radically Other light. Osmundsen, not unlike Senator DeConcini before her (see chapter four), appears not to have questioned this depiction.

Implications: Navigating Paradoxes

On the surface of things, Valencia’s performance during the conference recalls aspects of Deloria’s foundational critique of Native Americanist anthropology (1969). References to the incessant questions that have made things difficult for the Yaqui community echoes Deloria’s characterization of “anthros” as “ideological vultures” who
“[bury] Indian communities… beneath [a] mass of irrelevant information” (1969, 82, 95). However, Valencia neither rendered anthropology “useless” to Native peoples nor did he argue, as Deloria did, that anthropologists stand behind all detrimental federal Indian policies (1969, 81). Rather, he offered his own interpretations of Yaqui culture that articulated with the community’s new federal status. By turning the conference into a lecture about the Deer Dance (and Yaqui culture and history more broadly), Valencia continued the work that he had begun before Congress as he placed a premium on the essential and primordial difference of the Yaqui.

Valencia’s continuous use of anthropology—understood within the framework of dynamic nominalism—brings some further clarity to an understanding of anthropology’s relationship with Indigenous recognition. The Yaqui case highlights the conclusion to this inquiry: when anthropologists participate in Indigenous political projects, they are always already caught between the dynamic vectors of categories imposed from above and the communities labeled by those categories from below. The limited options available to Indigenous peoples within the norms of collective identity recognition force them into a paradoxical system of representation. They must prove themselves to be authentically Indian without fully acknowledging the colonial and imperial histories that have constituted them as “Indian” in the first place. Thus, they are called upon to identify “with an impossible object of an authentic self-identity” (Povinelli 2002, 6). As a result, recognition proceedings compel Native peoples to articulate ahistorical, essentialized, and primordialized Indigenous identities.

In many cases, anthropology has been part of the process of generating typologies that naturalize federal-Indian power relations and popular imagining of ethnic groups
However, even when anthropologists work in the service of Native communities, these reductive conceptions have a way of reproducing themselves. Importantly, this is the point that Deloria failed to recognize in his assessment of the discipline. Deloria insisted that “anthros” should design their projects to meet the pressing political objects of Indigenous groups (Deloria 1969, 81). Then and only then can this antiquarian discipline be made to challenge colonial norms and ameliorate the lives of Natives. Deloria did not acknowledge that this kind of work had already been done, with mixed results in such cases as the Indian Claims Commission (ICC). Beginning in the 1950s, anthropologists worked as expert witnesses for tribes to underwrite the legitimacy of claims to land and other resources (McMillen 2007; Ray 2006, 2016). In many instances, this meant attempting to reposition Native communities as coherent, homogenous, primordial entities with an essential link to a territory equivalent to Euro-American conceptions of private property. In other words, it meant reproducing the colonial-imperial imaginary that helped render Indigenous groups segregated or landless in the first place. When successful, and they often were, expert witnesses helped secure cash settlements for tribes; the ICC was never designed to actually return land. However, this came at a cost—the naturalization of stereotyped notions of Indigeneity.

The case of the Yaqui Conference suggests that this same issue arises outside of the courts or court-like settings whether anthropologists are aware of it or not. The Wenner-Gren Foundation and its conference organizers had little sense of the complexity of the political dynamics into which they were stepping. By reconfiguring the event as more of a performance and lecture then a scholastic discussion, Valencia took the helm of
the conference. The outcome was clearly not liberatory; nor did it simply replicate relations of domination. Rather, it was consistent with the paradoxes of recognition. Valencia continued to bring cultural and political visibility to a marginalized community. However, he did so by reinstituting ideologies with a compromised past. In this case, anthropology was neither an extension of state domination nor a tool of radical Indigenous resistance. Rather, it was a means by which an Indigenous intellectual could better navigate the paradoxes of recognition in all kinds of settings, including the mundane and taken-for-granted space of an academic conference.

Conclusion

In his final days of a losing battle with cancer, Edward Spicer jotted down his thoughts on the Yaqui Conference and sent them to Osmundsen. Spicer noted a general “lack of a sense of a common understanding as to the purpose of the conference,” which left him with “a persistent sense of not communicating that bothered [him] and constituted a disappointment” (Spicer to Osmundsen January 8, 1982). Despite these drawbacks, Spicer identified at least one area in which he felt the conference to be a success.

The first two day of the conference marked an important new kind of event during which the conference was sponsored by Yaqui singers and dancers on behalf of the Yaqui community of Pascua Pueblo. This inaugurated a constructive kind of relationship between scholars and Indians. The Yaquis involved planned and carried out the presentation of a performance and a spoken introduction for the visitors and made their selections from the Deer ritual without prompting from scholars…Undoubtedly the Wenner-Gren conference established a new model
which Yaquis will seek to duplicate in the future in their relationship with all seeking to study Yaqui culture. (Spicer to Osmundsen January 8, 1982)

While the event might have marked a change in Yaqui-anthropological relations in so far as the Yaqui took on a more active role in the conference, the performance carried out over the course of those five days did not emerge de novo. As I have illustrated above, Valencia’s cultivation of the Deer Dance as a primary symbol of “Yaquiness” and “Indianness” was part of an ongoing attempt to re-present the Yaqui as a kind of people—an American Indian Tribe. The Yaqui Conference and the discipline of anthropology, which had never been too far removed from the Yaqui’s political endeavors, arrived as a means for carrying out this performance beyond the halls of Congress.

The conference and Valencia’s efforts attest to the importance of the Deer Dance in Yaqui culture and history, an importance for which a dynamic nominalist view of the event is instructive. With his historicization of the Deer Dance and Yaqui culture more broadly, Valencia was not simply displaying “Yaquiness,” he was assembling and reassembling in relation to the group’s new status as an American Indian Tribe. Thus, the category and the kind existed in conversation with one another. Most importantly, dynamic nominalism helps to unpack Indigenous engagements with broader political systems and the ways in which anthropology has been caught up in the creative rearticulation of Indigenous subjectivity. The framework illustrates how Valencia used Wenner-Gren and the conference as a platform upon which to re-assemble Yaqui culture and history. This in turn provides a means to better grasp anthropology’s consequential imbrication in the paradoxes of recognition.
Conclusion

“If there are connections everywhere, why do we persist in turning dynamic, interconnected phenomena into static, disconnected things?” (Wolf 1982, 4).

By analyzing the formation of Pascua Yaqui politics through the prism of historical ontology, assemblage, and imperialism, I have placed a spot light on the multiple creative engagements between the outside world and communities like Pascua Village, which have made the Pascua Yaqui who they are. In other words, I have shown that the Pascua Yaqui Tribe was not an inchoate vestige of a primordial past waiting to be reborn in 1978. Rather, it was the end result of a deeply contingent history of Indigenous intellectuals devising ways to maintain a sense of community and identity on the fringe of US empire. As the previous chapters have shown, an important tactic that these individuals came to develop was the deployment of anthropology. To speak of this history as anything other than relational is to miss how the Yaqui have made and remade themselves. Attention to historical ontology, assemblage, and imperial repertoires aids in the pursuit of a relational perspective.

In chapter two, I homed in on the life and work of Lucas Chavez, a key Yaqui intellectual and political mediator whose efforts contributed to the construction of Pascua Village during the early 20th century. Chavez actively engaged settler colonial institutions in an effort to carve out a space for the Yaqui of Tucson. In time, Edward and Rosamond Spicer would become an extension of Chavez’s practices. He creatively enrolled the anthropologists into his ongoing efforts to mark Pascua Village as a distinctly Yaqui place amid the urban sprawl of 1930s Tucson. Neither resisting nor succumbing to the forces of imperial incorporation and differentiation, Chavez used anthropology to navigate a shifting political terrain.
Chapter three continued the story of Pascua Village by analyzing the formation of what would become New Pascua. Centered around the efforts of Anselmo Valencia, Muriel Thayer Painter, and Edward Spicer, this chapter demonstrates how anthropological intervention in the reservation’s formation resulted in a greater degree of institutionalization and bureaucratization of Pascua Yaqui identity and political structures, which in turn extended the US’s control over the community. However, as with Pascua Village, US control did not mean assimilation. Rather, the Pascua Yaqui became ever more culturally and politically distinct as a result.

Moving away from the construction of place, chapter four turned to the formulation of Spicer’s generative theory of acculturation—“enduring peoples.” Spicer’s involvement in the Pascua Yaqui campaign for federal acknowledgement shaped his ability to articulate what was for the time a rather innovative and nuanced theory of ethnogenesis. Far from the image of the independent craftsman anthropologist working alone at his typewriter described by certain postmodern critics (Fox 1991, 8), Spicer’s theory and political advocacy were indirectly shaped by efforts of Yaqui intellectuals like Valencia.

Chapter five moved away from the politics-laden halls of the federal government to explore the relationship between anthropology, articulations of Native collective identity, and the exigences of recognition on the ground in, of all places, an academic conference. Documenting the development of the 89th Wenner-Gren International Symposium on Yaqui Ritual and Performance, this chapter shows how an anthropological conference became a site for the reconfiguration of anthropology’s institutional identity and the Pascua Yaqui as an American Indian Tribe. Valencia’s
performance of identity and history contributed to the naturalization of the community’s newfound political status and the plenary authority of the US over Indigenous peoples. In an interesting turn of events, the conference did not become ground zero for the rejection of anthropology—although Valencia used this as an opportunity to criticize prior anthropological interpretations. Rather, it became another instance in which a Yaqui intellectual used anthropology as a platform upon which to articulate a sense of culture and politics in the face of incorporation and differentiation.

Indigeneity as Relational

Told through the lens of historical ontology, assemblage, and imperial repertoires, the story of anthropology and the Pascua Yaqui has important implications for how scholars understand and discuss the much bandied about term “indigeneity.” Currently, there is an understandably salient need to stress the ontologically prior nature of Indigenous peoples in the “New World.” Under the contemporary politics of recognition (see chapters four and five), speaking of Indigenous peoples in this manner can shore up claims to embattled resources and more livable futures in nation-states riddled with histories of neglect (and much worse) towards its first peoples. As discussed in chapter five, this stance inflects the academy in surprising ways, even (in my opinion) amongst scholars who claim to reject the terms of recognition all together (e.g., Coulthard 2014; Simpson 2014). For these critical thinkers, the only logical alternative to liberalism and recognition is an anti-colonial ethnonationalism, which appears to entail some degree of essentialist thinking. From this perspective, “indigeneity” is, at some level, primordial (although that term might not be used). Such ways of speaking and thinking come at a price. They run the risk of re-sequestering Native peoples from what Eric Wolf called
“common history” (1982, 19). Writing amid anthropology’s embrace of Marxist theory and history, Wolf lamented the tendency of scholars to divvy up the past in terms of “‘their’ history and ‘our’ history” (1982, 19). Ironically, the more anthropologists explore the history of specific groups, Wolf argued, the more they come to see “there can be no ‘Black history’ apart from ‘White history,’” only a component of a common history suppressed or omitted from conventional studies for economic, political, or ideological reasons” (1982, 19). Today, Wolf’s comments are being advanced by scholars such as Marisol de la Cadena and Orin Starn who advocate for a relational view of Indigeneity (see chapter four). While conceptualizing Native peoples as ontologically separate might make political sense in the public arena for the time being, it is important to recognize that such a practice requires an obfuscation of “Indigenous history” and its interconnection with “non-Indigenous history.”

But does this strategy of “strategic essentialism” (Spivak 1985) make political sense even in the immediate future? I think this is a question worth asking even while I do not profess to have an answer. Here I err on the side of caution, provoked by the work of the cosmopolitan philosopher and critic of multiculturalism Anthony Appiah. With respect to the need to tell stories of identity in a collective and essentialist manner, Appiah states:

I see how the story goes. It may even be historically, strategically necessary for the story to go this way. But I think we need to go on to the next necessary step,

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104 It is worth noting that while the term strategic essentialism is credit to the post-colonial studies scholar Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, she has since repudiated the concept due to the ways in which it has been taken up for decidedly essentialist ends (Engle 2010, 10; Spivak et al. 1993, 35).
which is to ask whether the identities constructed in this way are ones we—I speak here as someone who counts in America as a gay black man—can be happy with in the longer run. Demanding respect for people as blacks and as gays requires that there are some scripts that go with being an African-American or having same-sex desires. There will be proper ways of being black and gay, there will be expectations to be met, demands will be made. It is at this point that someone who takes autonomy seriously will ask whether we have not replaced one kind of tyranny with another. (Appiah 1994, 162-163)

With respect to Native Americans, in the short term, the essentialist approach is no doubt better than violent and coercive assimilation. However, this project of collective self-determination appears to require that Native peoples sacrifice some degree of individual rights. For those who believe that liberalism is nothing more than a western fiction that requires the dehumanization of people of color and Indigenous folks, this is not much of a problem (Byrd 2011; Coulthard 2014, Gray 2000). Individual rights are imagined to be “white people business.” But for those Natives that would like to live less tightly scripted lives free of accusations of inauthenticity, this is very much “Indian business.”

Why Do the History of Anthropology?

In addition to its implication for discussions of indigeneity, this study contributes to the history of anthropology itself and the history of the anthropology of Indigenous peoples in particular. As I hope is now apparent, the binary view of anthropology as friend or foe to Native peoples crumbles in the face of the Pascua Yaqui story. Shining white knights and malevolent specters dissipate as dynamic engagements and complex assemblages take center stage. The seemingly convoluted and indeterminate nature of this
history directs attention to the question: why trace the history of anthropology to begin with?

For practicing anthropologists, the construction of a self-reflexive perspective has been a primary justification for the exploration of the history of their own discipline (e.g., Darnell 1977, 2001; Asch 2009, 2015; Smith 2015). This has been doubly true for Native anthropologists (and archaeologists) studying issues related to their own people for whom the stakes of research are much closer to home (e.g., Simpson 2014; Smith 2012). It is not uncommon for approaches of this variety to become entangled with presentist accounts, which can obscure the complexities of the past as they funnel the history of anthropological-Indigenous engagements through the concerns of the present. Despite their vital contributions to an ethically-minded research, attempts to determine the discipline’s complicity with colonial domination and even more nuanced attempts to identify past cases of anti-colonial struggle within the discipline for the purposes of reinvigorating modern anthropological practice run the risk of reproducing a presentist orientation. In the hands of historians, the history of anthropology has veered more towards broader findings, with implications for understanding the relationship between science and politics as opposed to the more pragmatic needs of practicing anthropologists. While they are by no means alone in their pursuit, historians have been the ones that better show that the history of anthropology has something to say about the world and the issues in it, not just the discipline itself (e.g., Baker 1998, 2010; Launay 2018).

It would be a mistake to presume that scholars must necessarily choose between one or the other orientation. Numerous anthropologists and historians have effectively
pursued principled historicist explorations of anthropology’s relationship with Indigenous peoples without naively ignoring the conditions in which they research and write about the past (e.g., Arndt 2016; Bruchac 2018; Dinwoodie 1998, 2010; Field 2003, 2013; Wilner 2013; 2015). This study has attempted to follow suit with these endeavors.

From the chapters presented here, one can extrapolate larger implications for the relationship between science and politics without losing sight of the present. Contrary to so much of the critical literature about anthropology’s past, the case of the Pascua Yaqui suggests Indigenous intellectuals have actively leveraged anthropology in their attempts to navigate US politics and maintain their existence as a distinct kind of people. Whether this involved adopting anthropologists as political mediators or enlisting conferences as opportunities for performances of identity, Indigenous intellectuals effectively deployed anthropologists to reframe the Yaqui as a coherent cultural and political entity capable of being selectively incorporated— but never fully assimilated—into the US body politic.

At some level, anthropology has been subtly and not-so-subtly shaped by colonial practices and ideologies. This is an unavoidable historical reality. To spend time sorting the past to determine what is more or less colonialist anthropology not only runs the risk of over simplification and distortion, but it also obfuscates others aspects of what the discipline’s past has to say about the connection between science and politics, including the role of anthropology in Indigenous political formations and the creative efforts of Indigenous intellectuals to make anthropology work for them. These findings both enrich our understanding of the past and provide scholars and activists working in the present with precedent from which to better understand how the relationship between anthropology and Indigenous projects can be used to facilitate or undermine political
objectives in the present. Rather than allocating the anthropological-Indigenous past into moralistic ghettos of “good” and “bad” as “static, disconnected things” (to borrow Wolf’s phrasing [1982, 4]), it is more productive to acknowledge the past for what it is—a series of “dynamic, interconnected phenomena” (Wolf 1982, 4) comprised of implications germane to both science and politics.

Microhistory from the Margins

What does this study tell us about where anthropological research might go next? I would argue that the discipline would do well to continue cultivating critical accounts of Indigenous intellectual’s engagements with anthropologists. This would constitute a type of microhistory from the margins. 105 Much of the history of American anthropology has been concerned with scholars operating in close association with a handful of (typically) elite, private, metropolitan universities. 106 Furthermore, there has been great critical attention to the personal and professional relationships between anthropologists and Indigenous peoples of North America. However, such fine-grained historical analyses have not been as consistently applied beyond such paradigmatic cases as Franz Boas and George Hunt (e.g., Berman 1996; Briggs and Bauman 1999; Wilner 2015) or Lewis Henry Morgan and Ely Parker (e.g., Michaelsen 1996; Simpson 2014).

The combination of these two orientations has contributed to a partial perspective on the history of American anthropology. There is of course nothing wrong with this in and of itself. All histories are partial! I am not concerned with writing marginalized

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105 I credit Lindsay Smith with bringing this phrase to my attention.
voices into the official history of anthropology so as to arrive at a more complete and comprehensive view of the past (cf., Lamphere 2004). However, I am concerned that such partial narratives will ultimately foreclose attempts to trace the interconnections of social science and politics on the fringes of the academy and empire—where much of this particular study has taken place. With a greater pool of microhistories from the margins—especially beyond elite institutions and select cases of informants and scholars—to compare, scholars will be better able to understand the various conditions in which anthropological knowledge and Indigenous politics have been and continue to be mutually constituted.

It is doubtful that such comparative work will result in the identification of definite, universal patterns or predictive algorithms, which can then be adopted by practicing anthropologist to ensure that they are always on the side of “right.” More humbly, but still of great importance, such efforts can produce a storehouse of data to inform similar contemporary anthropological-Indigenous interactions, thereby fulfilling the pragmatic functionality of the history of anthropology. Bruchac’s recent volume (2018) offers a nice indication of what such a study might look like and how it might contribute to present-day academic and tribal pursuits (see the introduction). I have been engaging in similar work with the Old Pascua Museum and Yaqui Cultural Center and the Spicer Foundation. While not comparative in nature, it constitutes a type of “reverse fieldwork” (to invoke Bruchac’s terminology). From the early stages of researching this

107 For a consideration of issues of historical inclusion and exclusion in the history of the discipline without ignoring “the indeterminacy of anthropology’s boundaries” see Richard Handler, Excluded Ancestors, Inventible Traditions: Essays toward a More Inclusive History of Anthropology (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000).
subject matter, it became apparent that my archival interests were intertwined with the interests of the Old Pascua Museum and Yaqui Cultural Center. As mentioned in the introduction, through the Spicer Foundation, I became involved in a project to build an interactive tribal museum exhibit that would document Edward and Rosamond Spicer’s engagements with the residents of Pascua Village during the 1930s and 1940s. With guidance from the museum director, I located a variety letters and fieldnotes from the Spicer Archive at the Arizona State Museum that illustrated the couple’s close relations with community members. The director then sifted through my notes and selected specific letters and excerpts from documents to be put on display.

The choice of materials to display suggests how focused microhistories might continue to inform contemporary anthropological-Indigenous partnerships like that of the Spicer Foundation and the Old Pascua Museum. Above the Spicer Desk, the museum displayed a banner featuring a quote from Edward Spicer written near the end of his career and life. I found the quote during one of my archival digs in a speech that Rosamond gave to promote the publication of Edward’s final and posthumously published book *People of Pascua* (1988). “In my profession, in my political participation, and in my personal relations I have tried to root my life in the principle of the primary importance of ordinary men and women… One learns from all kinds of people. One goes to ordinary people for the cultural essentials.” 

As a frame through which people view the exhibit, the quote implies that what one sees in the exhibit is not mere ephemera; they

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108 The quote was used by Roz in a talk given at University of Arizona Green Valley Campus. Rosamond B. Spicer, “Green Valley Talk,” December 1, 1988, Edward H. and Rosamond B. Spicer Papers, Box 89, Folder 324, Arizona State Museum.
are the archival remnants of the intellectual pursuit of “cultural essentials.” What is interesting is that the “essentials” on display are not particularly “essentialist.”

The letters between the Spicers and community members on display show the mobile and cosmopolitan lives of the residents of Pascua. This is presented quite colorfully in a letter from a Yaqui resident of Pascua named Joe Romero to Edward dated January 12, 1942. Romero met Spicer as a teenager during the late-1930s as he and Rosamond began research for their second ethnography of Pascua, which would become *People of Pascua.* By 1942, Romero had left home to join the army. His letter to Spicer came from Fort Lewis, Washington as the young Yaqui man prepared to enter the Pacific theater of World War II. I quote Romero’s letter in full to give a sense of his multiple and seemingly contradictory concerns, and how they relate to the work of the museum:

Dear Eddie,

How is Roz and the baby, fine I hope, Hows ole Ariz and its mt ranges which I long ever much to see, *I don’t have hopes of ever going back to my Dearest home town, I may go to Japan and settle a little argument over there across the blue Pacific, they seem to be having a little of trouble down there.*** Old man Hitler seems to be on a rampage too I’d suggest him seeing his personal Physician at once don’t you think so, Eddie? If he doesn’t we’re liable to lose a great man, again I suggest that he take after each meal a teaspoon full of acid.

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109 The publication of this second project was delayed for decades. It is a complex issue that I hope to address in a future publication. In short, Spicer shelved the manuscript in the 1950s after receiving cautionary feedback from Muriel Painter. Muriel Thayer Painter, “Muriel Thayer Painter to Edward H. Spicer,” 19[50], Edward H. and Rosamond B. Spicer Papers, Box 7, Folder 2, Arizona State Museum.
I have a few pills which I could gladly give to Mr. Hitler but I rather deliver them to him myself, you see I have here a special instrument called a ‘GARAND” perhaps you know it, it is rather effective I guess it will cure him in no time.

Well, Eddie, *How’s my people at Pascua getting alone I sure do miss my relatives and my dearest friends.* Although I may [not] be back for sometimes I sure do wish them happiness and good luck. May they remain in peace in this Powerful Land of the fearless and the free. *America proved a Paradise to my People who are without a home.* Of course the older people lone for their home in Rio Yaqui, But the rulers of Rio Yaqui forbid them from there[sic] land. Of course they could stay in the Mexican occupied land but they [heard] the same thing could happen when Calles was a President.

Well anyway give me[sic] regards to all my people especially my uncle Miguel Vasques and Joe and Lola. Tell that I will be back as soon as I finish my job *with the American boys.* So bid me god[sic] luck and help me GOD

Mando muchos saludes a mi amiga Roz and little JR. Lots of Regards to you Eddie and GOD bless you all. (Romero to Spicer January 12, 1942, *emphasis added*)

Romero’s letter is about as far from Castaneda’s Don Juan as one can get. His biting, sardonic humor eschews any sense of the classic Noble Savage. His concerns are equal
parts global geopolitics and Pascua friends and family. He is invested in the US’s fight against the Axis Powers, and he credits the nation-state with providing the Yaqui sanctuary. And yet, he does not necessarily consider himself “American.” As he says, he is working “with the American boys.” It is as if his returning a favor, from one embattled people to another. In the eyes of the museum organizers who selected the letter, these elements do not make Romero any less Pascua or any less Yaqui. Perhaps this is what it means to be a Yaqui of Pascua.

By documenting the conditions under which this ephemera was produced, the museum was able to narrate the Spicers’ relationship with Pascua Village, not as one of exploitation or unabashed liberation, but as one of intellectual curiosity and compassionate activism. The exhibit does not profess this to be an unmitigated “good” or “bad.” The quote from Edward Spicer is neither praising nor damning of the man. Rather, it presents Spicer’s own perspective on his scholarship and political commitments.

Moreover, focused attention on the relationship between the Spicers and specific members of the community undermines primordialist views of indigeneity as the museum claims the “mixed up” lives of people like Romero as evidence of “Yaquiness” and “Pascuaness.”

I find it useful to contrast the quote and the depiction of the Yaqui from the Old Pascua Museum with Paths of Life. As noted in chapter four, the Paths of Life exhibit also invokes a quote from Spicer, a definition of his concept of enduring peoples. This quote was then married to a multiculturalist display of the Indigenous Southwest where the primary actors are not individuals but collective identity groups (e.g., Apache, Navajo, Yaqui, etc.). Despite attempts to embed these collectivities in history, the exhibit
still tends toward the reproduction of the billiard ball view of cultures as described by Wolf (1982). The Spicer Desk is, I think, a bit more complicated. Though it too speaks of “essentials,” the essentials on display are deeply context-dependent and heterogeneous—they are hardly essentialist. Moreover, whereas the ASM errs on the side of narrating the experiences of what is (in the classic Andersonian sense [1991]) an imagined community known as “the Yaqui,” the tribal museum homes in on the experiences of specific individuals. Ultimately, Paths of Life seeks an expansive, synthetic model of cultural endurance and as a result loses the contingencies and individual experiences that allow cultures to endure in the first place. In contrast, with its attention to microhistories of social science and Indigenous politics from the margins of disciplinary power and empire, the Old Pascua Museum arrives at a more complex narrative reflective of Pascua Yaqui history.

Perhaps such future pursuits will lead to political reconciliation and cultural restoration as Bruchac suggests they can. Time will tell for the Spicer Desk. At the very least, they provide the means for understanding the complex conditions under which anthropological knowledge and Indigenous polities have been and continue to be constituted. In such cases, history does not predict or simplify; it informs and specifies. Such “marginal” projects, to paraphrase the historian Richard White (1998, 237), have the potential to produce anthropologies and histories equally worthy of the dense and tangled lives of Indigenous peoples. In this particular instance, microhistories from the margins effectively capture the creative, but always compromised, agency of Indigenous actors as they navigate the twist and turns of empire.
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