

THE FOLK CATHOLICISM OF THE TUCSON PAPAGOS
by

William S. King

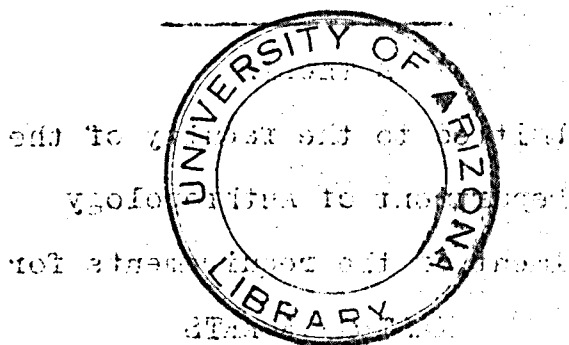
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William S. Kuip

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INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis, "The Folk Catholicism of the Tucson Papagos," is not what the writer originally set out to investigate. The first subject chosen was "Papago Integration into an Urban Catholic Church."

The writer was aware that in 1927 a mission church was dedicated by the Franciscan Fathers, as part of their overall mission activities with the Papagos, to serve the more than 400 Papago Indians residing in Tucson. When San Jose Church was originally built, it was in a sparsely settled area to the south of urban Tucson. After the church's establishment, the city grew up around it; and members of other ethnic groups also began to make use of the facilities. The writer hoped to trace any changes which might have altered the relations of the Papagos with church officials and to assess the degree of their interaction with members of other ethnic groups within the congregation. In short, the project was to be directed at observing the process of urbanization of Tucson Papagos from the point of view of their integration into what was essentially an urban Catholic parish. But as field work proceeded, it became increasingly apparent that, while Papagos made some use of the church for religious devotions, their overall activities were limited and their contacts with non-Papago parishioners were

superficial--facts which seriously limited the potentialities of the original study.

It was soon discovered, however, that, quite apart from the sphere of orthodox services and parish activities, many Papago Catholics participated in a fairly rich and undeniably interesting series of folk Catholic practices largely unsupervised by the clergy. Convinced that an investigation of these hitherto largely undescribed Papago religious activities would make a useful contribution toward an understanding of Papago adjustment to Catholicism, we directed our attentions away from their activities in the orthodox church to their folk Catholic practices. The present study is a descriptive analysis of the nature and scope of these activities and of their relative importance in the lives of Tucson Papago Catholics.

Methods of Investigation Employed

The initial approach to the actual field work was made through regular attendance at the services of San Jose Mission Church, where we were able to make, almost from the beginning, limited contacts with some of the Papago parishioners. At the same time, introductions were secured to several Catholic Papago families residing in South Tucson with whom the writer and his wife established increasingly close relationships. Several weeks after the investigations began in February, 1951, we moved our household to South

Tucson where the majority of the Papago Catholics reside.

Directed field investigations were started slowly and were at first based wholly on observations made at a distance in an effort to roughly block out the composition of the Indian community and to establish the identity of Papago Catholic leaders. By degrees, largely through the instrumentality of our original contacts, the number of Papago acquaintances was increased and the scope of our field activity broadened. By late spring our interest in Indians was more or less generally accepted, and we were beginning to be identified with persons active in folk Catholic activities. This rather close identification with a highly selected group of persons continued for the entire time we were in the South Tucson Papago community.

With little conscious attempt on our part, a role was defined for us by our Indian neighbors: we wrote letters, furnished transportation, and acted as advisors about and liaison with the Anglo community. In this role we were invited to participate in activities which included birthday parties, family dinners, and folk Catholic ceremonies.

In September, 1951, we moved from the periphery to the heart of the Indian community; and with this closer proximity to Indian life, our acceptance increased and our integration into Indian activities became more pronounced. The writer and his wife became "auxiliary members" of two groups, the Indian sodality of the mission church and an

organization composed of a lay priest and his small group of followers. Occupying these positions, we were asked to accompany people on visits to critically ill persons, attend wakes and funerals, and participate in various other sorts of folk Catholic activity.

From the time our investigations commenced until May, 1952, when we left the South Tucson community, field work was carried out on a part-time basis in conjunction with other activities. The writer attended classes or worked at the University, and his wife worked in downtown Tucson. As a result, our activities in the Indian community were sufficiently limited so that we were not thought of as persons who were "studying the Indians" so much as merely friendly and interested Anglo neighbors.

The field approach used was that of participant observers insofar as was possible and practical. Formal interviews were employed to only a minor degree and then limited to not over half a dozen persons. Narrative style notes, typed on 5" x 8" cards in accordance with Gila-Sonoran File form, were kept to record daily activities and observations. A large amount of additional information, principally to clarify personal observations, was obtained through informal conversations with persons with whom we were most closely acquainted.

The study is largely based on the activities of 64 persons (see Appendix I for information concerning the

makeup of this group). Observations were also made on at least an equal number of persons with whom the writer was less well acquainted.

Limitations of the Study

A statement concerning the limitations of this work must be made. It is primarily a description of Tucson Papago folk Catholicism and not a study of Papago folk Catholicism in general. Where the writer feels that there is sufficient evidence for generalizations about the group as a whole, he has done so; these are found at several points in the body of the thesis and are summarized in the concluding chapter. We repeat that this work is almost wholly limited to personal observations of the members of an urban, hence atypical, Papago community plus evaluated statements mainly gained through informal conversations. Any generalizations suggested for Papagos as a whole must be considered as no more than hypotheses until their universal applicability can be established through additional field work of a broader scope.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

Since this thesis is mainly devoted to an investigation of what we have chosen to term Papago folk Catholicism, a brief consideration of the nature and scope of past Catholic contacts by members of the group is in order. Summaries of the mission history of the area and the nature of Papago contacts with these institutions have been covered in other studies, so we will concentrate our discussion on more recent developments.¹

Despite a period of over 250 years' contact with Catholic institutions, beginning in the closing years of the seventeenth century when priests of the Jesuit Order established missions close to the Papagos, the evidence suggests that the general Papago acceptance of the folk Catholic practices described in this work is recent. They seem, in fact, possibly no older than the last third of

¹Summaries of the history of Papago contacts with the missions can be found in Underhill, 1939, pp. 13-30, and Joseph, Spicer, and Chesky, 1949, pp. 16-20. For a detailed discussion of the initial phases of the mission development affecting the Papagos, the reader is referred to "The Rim of Christendom," by Herbert E. Bolton, New York, 1936.

the nineteenth century.

The period beginning in 1853 was one of great cultural change for the American Papagos. The acquisition of Arizona by the United States, the contact of Papagos by representatives of the American government, and the influence of Mexicanized Papagos who began to settle north of the international line in increasing numbers during this period were all instrumental in modifying the culture of the inhabitants of the American Papaguera. A further factor which brought about culture change was the gradual termination of hostilities between the Papagos and their enemy, the Apaches. From Jesuit times on, the Papagos had defended themselves against Apache depredations; and a major focus of their aboriginal religion centered around the ceremonial preparations for, and termination of, an engagement with this enemy.² After 1885, when Apache raids were finally eliminated by the American Army, part of the resulting vacuum in native Papago religion may have been filled by Catholic ceremonies. Such a development could have been fostered by the movements of the Papagos which followed the cessation of the Apache wars. The eleven so-called defense villages, where many of the Papagos concentrated for greater security, started to disband at this time, both because

²Underhill, 1946, pp. 165-210.

they were no longer necessary and because such large congregations were impractical for the raising of cattle, which was becoming an increasingly important basis of livelihood.³ A breakdown in ceremonial organization resulted from the abandonment of these centers.⁴

Additional evidence suggests that the general forms of the folk Catholicism described in this thesis began to be generally adopted in the last third of the nineteenth century. Underhill quotes an informant as saying that the first Papago folk chapel was built by his grandmother.⁵ Chesky writes that the first Spanish prayers were introduced at Gu-Achi by a woman who is still living in the village. The woman was born in Mexico and had been married to a Mexican.⁶ This information conforms with what we learned from informants in Tucson. One man, in his early forties, reports that as a boy he heard old men talk about the first acquisition of religious images and pictures; he thinks that Yaqui Indians, who sought refuge among the Papagos during the time the Diaz government of Mexico was

³Hoover, 1935, pp. 262-263.

⁴Underhill, 1939, p. 203.

⁵Underhill, 1946, p. 317.

⁶Chesky, 1943, pp. 35-36.

savagely persecuting the group, also influenced the development of Papago folk Catholicism.

While we do not deny that Papagos have been influenced by Catholic practices to some degree from Jesuit times, we believe that the Sonoran Catholicism briefly described by Underhill, Spicer, and Chesky⁷ has been adopted in recent times by all but the Sonoran Papagos, and possibly those from San Xavier who acquired it as part of their Mexican and Spanish cultural heritage. To be sure, the Papagos have modified certain customs and beliefs to coincide more advantageously with their world view, but these modifications are strikingly few; and the observer is struck by the manner in which the Papagos consciously imitate the rituals of their Mexican neighbors.

Recent Catholic Contacts

The Jesuit priests, who began the missionization of the region occupied by the Papagos, were expelled by order of the Spanish Crown in 1767. They were replaced by priests of the Franciscan Order who remained until the secularization of the missions by the Mexican Government in 1822.

In Arizona, American priests of the Franciscan Order

⁷Underhill, 1946, pp. 312-324; Joseph, et al., 1949, pp. 81-89; Chesky, 1943, pp. 11-37.

returned to their former Indian charges in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, beginning work among the Gila Pimas in 1885. The following year the Bishop of Tucson offered the Order its old church of San Xavier del Bac; but since no priests were available to staff the mission, it was not until 1912 that the Friars Minor returned to this post.

In 1896 a permanent mission was established among the Gila Pimas, but it was not until 1908 that intensive work commenced. These workers also contacted those northern Papagos living closest to the Pimas.

In 1911 the Order petitioned the Bishop of Tucson for permission to missionize the whole of the Papageria lying within the United States, a request which was complied with. Fathers Bonaventure Oblasser and Tiburtius Wand reconnoitered the area and the following year moved their headquarters from the Pima Mission to San Xavier. Papago missionization began in earnest the next year. Progress was rapid and, on the whole, successful. Missions were strategically located in various parts of the area lying in what is now the Sells Reservation. Each mission with a resident priest or priests served a series of chapels. Teaching sisters came to the Reservation, and schools were established in which both the religious and secular education of the Indian children was conducted.

At present there are five mission districts on the

Sells Reservation serving over forty churches, chapels, oratories, and stations without buildings. The Indians of the San Xavier Reservation have a resident missionary and school. In Tucson the Order established an Indian mission church and school, and it is with Papagos who made some use of the establishment that this thesis is mainly concerned.⁸

When the American priests began missionary work among the Papagos, they found the greatest number of the group professed belief in Catholicism. A small minority, concentrated for the most part in the southeastern part of Papago country near the Mexican border, had been converted by Presbyterian missionaries who began working there beginning in the late nineteenth century, and others had become Protestants while at Indian boarding schools. The Baptists, Mormons, and several smaller sects had also succeeded in making a few conversions. Only occasional conservative individuals, generally old men, denied Christianity in any form and adhered to the older aboriginal beliefs.

Though there was no ordained clergy among the Papagos when the American priests arrived, there were lay religious leaders in many communities who conducted religious services. Some villages had small chapels in which services

⁸This summary is largely based on "The Kingdom of St. Francis in Arizona," Rev. Maynard Geiger, 1939.

were held, and certain feast days were celebrated with religious devotions, processions, music, and dancing. Contact between the Papagos and Mexican clergy was maintained through seasonal trips to Sonora where the Papagos worked for and traded with the Mexicans. Children were baptized by the Mexican priests, and religious images and pictures, blessed ribbons, candles, and holy water secured. An annual pilgrimage to Magdalena, Sonora, to visit the miraculous image of St. Francis Xavier was and still is an especially important event in the lives of Papago Catholics.

The American priests were not universally welcomed by the Papagos; they were in fact excluded from certain communities. Trained in American seminaries, some were shocked at the rudimentary Catholic practices of the villagers and quickly set about trying to educate them along lines more acceptable to the priests. A few interfered with the secular lives of the people and tried to modify Papago social institutions which did not meet with their approval. A reaction to the arrival of the missionaries was the establishment of folk chapels from which priests were excluded in areas where such chapels had not existed before; this was especially true in the northern and western parts of the Reservation. The term, "Sonora Catholics," was applied by the American clergy to those who worshiped in these chapels. Many denied the Americans were really priests, believing that the only true priests were in

Mexico. So real was this problem that during the 1920's the Mission Superior asked the Bishop of Sonora to come to the Reservation in an attempt to convince the Sonora Catholics that the Franciscans were priests as were the men under his jurisdiction.

Since the middle of the 1930's, Papago resistance to the American priests, never very great in the southeastern part of the Reservation, has been subsiding all over. In some districts a nice balance has been achieved between orthodox and folk Catholic practices. Thus in the village of Santa Cruz the mission priest and the folk Catholic leader of the village both participate in the Sunday Mass, with the latter reciting the rosary in Spanish as part of the ceremony. In other communities where this understanding is lacking, priests have found that in order to get satisfactory cooperation from their charges they must overlook much that they would not approve in an Anglo-American parish and, as a result, have generally achieved good relations with most sections of the Catholic population.

Tucson Papago Mission

In 1927 the Franciscans established San Jose Indian Mission in South Tucson to be devoted to the spiritual needs of the more than four hundred Papago Indians who lived in the general area. A resident priest was stationed

at the mission and several sisters of the Immaculate Heart Order attended its two-room school. The mission was well built and generously supported financially by the Franciscan Order and several interested lay Catholic foundations. Such an establishment appeared to be sorely needed by the Tucson Indians who, prior to its establishment, had to contact the priests at San Xavier Mission when in need of spiritual assistance. But San Jose never flourished as an Indian mission, and attendance by Indians, both of the church and the parochial school, was disappointing. In fact, except for a faithful few Indian families, the majority of the people for whom the church was built had only the most cursory contacts with the mission or its attendant priest.

Several of the rather large number of priests that came to and left the mission tried to maintain something of its original purpose. Papago children were given priority over others in the school, the first Sunday Mass was reserved for the Papagos, and an interpreter provided to translate sermons and notices for those who spoke only their native language. Priests made regular calls to the homes of Papago parishioners encouraging their religious participation and urging parents to have their children attend the mission school. The welfare of the group was of primary concern, and material assistance in the form of food, clothing, and social services was made available to needy families.

As the years went by, and new priests lacking in missionary zeal were sent, the church took on more and more the characteristics of a parish church rather than an Indian mission. Members of ethnic groups other than Papago began to be accepted into the church and the school: Mexican-Americans, Yaquis, and a few Anglo-Americans. A special Mass was no longer said for the Indians alone, and Spanish rather than Papago became the second language of the church. During the time the field work for this thesis was being carried out, the Indians represented but a small minority of the parishioners, although Papago children comprised about half of the over one hundred students attending the school.⁹

⁹In the summer of 1952, San Jose Mission was abandoned and the buildings razed.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF TUCSON PAPAGO

FOLK CATHOLIC PRACTICES

Introduction

A basis for mutual understanding between the Papagos and the orthodox clergy, not a simple matter under any circumstances, is especially difficult to achieve in an urban environment where integration into the church is but one of the many onerous adjustments to alien culture the Indians are asked to make. The San Jose priests found the task of working exclusively with the Tucson Papagos so unrewarding that they gradually shifted the focus of their activities to other segments of the population, more sophisticated and adjusted to city life and better informed on orthodox Catholic procedure. The result is that the Tucson Indians, relegated to a minority position in an ethnically mixed congregation rather than being the objects of special religious education and training, are, as a group, less in contact with the clergy and orthodox church activities than are the people in many of the larger villages on the Sells Reservation.

Some church officials have allowed the wide cultural hiatus that separates them from the Indians to interfere

with their adequately serving the group. On the occasions when Papago Catholics have sought counsel on personal matters, it frequently has been given in terms of the priest's or sister's Anglo-American cultural values and is more often than not inapplicable to the solution of a Papago problem. Further, this lack of mutual understanding has interfered with the instruction of many for the sacraments which must precede full participation in the Catholic Church. Some Indians are handicapped by a language barrier, but others, able to communicate adequately with the priest, have received so little encouragement that many are reluctant to approach the priest on these matters.

Little attempt has been made to integrate the Indians into the church sodality structure, which is dominated by Mexican-Americans. The single Papago church organization, initiated in the mid-1940's by a priest sympathetic to the Indians, is felt by its twelve members to be ignored by the priest and teaching sisters. Some of its members are among those of the Papago community most anxious to participate more fully in church affairs. While technically a sodality of the church, the members meet at one another's homes and only infrequently does the group participate as a unit of the church.

The parochial school, half of whose pupils are Indian children, affords no common ground for agreement between the clergy and the Indian parishioners. Its instruction

standards are felt by certain Indian parents to be below those of the city schools where many of the most acculturated Catholic parents send their children. This leads the priest to complain that the "best" Indians are setting bad examples for the others.

Unable to adequately adjust to and achieve a full integration into the orthodox church, the Tucson Papagos rely heavily on folk Catholicism for much of their religious activity. This chapter will sketch the broad outline of these practices, and in subsequent chapters specific aspects will be enlarged upon.

Relations between Tucson Papago Catholics and the Orthodox Church

Papago folk Catholicism, as practiced by the Tucson Indians at least, scarcely represents a sect or cult independent from the orthodox church. It depends on the priests, both American and Mexican, for all of its "power" and for a great deal of its religious knowledge. Ceremonial paraphernalia--images and pictures of saints, prayer books, song books, candles, crucifixes, etc.--should be blessed by a priest for maximum efficacy. When religious objects are not actually sanctified in this manner, they are sprinkled with holy water which has been blessed in the orthodox church. During the Easter season, when the greatest church attendance by the Tucson Indians takes place,

a year's supply of holy water is often obtained. Some families take advantage of the yearly pilgrimage to Magdalena to supply themselves with it.

There is a certain bolstering of folk Catholic practices by the clergy itself, which for one reason or another gives official sanction to the performance of priestly functions by laymen. Thus the relatives of a dying woman who had never been baptized in the church were advised by the priest whose aid they solicited to choose a godparent to baptize her with holy water. The priest told the relatives that the godparents could perform the baptism just as well as he. Incidents of this sort, which are by no means uncommon, have the dual effect of making the Indians feel the priests are indifferent about helping them and at the same time give the folk customs added prestige through receiving this sanction.

Many of the Tucson people most active in folk Catholic observances are among those most faithful in attending the mission church. Out of sixty persons who were observed to engage repeatedly in folk religious activities, only five were pointed out as expressing opposition to church attendance. All five were Mexican born Papagos who claimed they did not go to church because of a language problem. Others pointed out that the sermons and announcements at San Jose Church were given in both Spanish and English and suggested that the real objection was to American priests. It is

interesting to note, however, that three of these people were strict in seeing that their English-speaking children attended Mass in the mission church regularly.

Despite the group acceptance of partial dependence on the church for religious expression, any attempt by a Tucson Papago to turn to it for all his religious activity is resisted. One of the members of the Indian sodality, who wished to direct the activities of the organization toward a more thorough knowledge of orthodox Catholicism and fuller integration into the church, was generally rebuffed for trying to become a "white" Catholic. Young Indians, educated for long periods in the Catholic faith in distant Anglo-American boarding schools seem, without known exception, to conform to Papago standards of Catholic practices and, outwardly at least, beliefs on their return to the group.

The old people of the community, the spokesmen of the group in matters of custom, have been observed to lecture on how well Catholicism (that is Papago Catholicism) fits in with native Papago customs and beliefs. The remarks by the oldsters are quite vague and apparently rarely contain concrete illustrations. However unclear the reasons, though, the group's traditional Catholicism is correlated with things Papago; and Protestant Indians, especially the Presbyterians, of which there are some fifteen families in Tucson, are resented for their attempts to imitate many

aspects of Anglo-American culture. The objections to accepting Protestant or "white Catholic" ways, from the point of view of the older Papagos, is not so much to giving up aspects of the folk religion through more complete integration into the church, as to the resulting necessity for adapting to diverse and alien aspects of white, and only incidentally Catholic, culture. The folk Catholicism of the Papagos is an important instrument of social control within the group, having inherited these functions from the pre-Catholic aboriginal religion by a series of gradual and non-traumatic transitions. To attempt a fuller integration into the orthodox Catholic or Presbyterian Church, it is felt, means the bridging of a cultural hiatus so broad as to assure the destruction of much of value in Papago culture. So while the power of the orthodox church is acknowledged and accepted, its standards of ethics and personal conduct cannot completely serve the needs of the Papago Catholic community, which chooses to meet in its own way the problems encountered.

The Organization, Personnel, and Range of
Participation in Tucson Papago
Folk Catholicism

Because of the urban character of greater Tucson, its Papago inhabitants form a community quite different in character from that of the villages of the Sells or San

Xavier Reservations. The Tucson people live either in isolated households scattered over a wide area of South Tucson or in small enclaves in neighborhoods dominated by members of other ethnic groups. The Indian community is not stable, there being a continuous movement between Tucson and Reservation villages or to the cotton camps of the Santa Cruz Valley for seasonal employment. Additional disunity is engendered by the fact that the Tucson people originate from diverse Reservation villages and are not of a single dialect group. With this lack of community grouping, it is only to be expected that the religious organizations typical of the rural Papago villages would not exist in Tucson. There are no Sonora Catholic chapels, no large-scale ceremonial organizations, no village band, and only rarely are there attenuated examples of community-wide religious participation.

The folk religious observances of the Tucson Indians can be divided into three categories: 1. Individual devotions; 2. Devotions in honor of a saint's day or other holy day--affairs voluntarily entered into either by a single family or by a group of households; 3. Observances which are mandatory at a time of family crisis, as in the case of fatal illness and death. The last two categories require the services of ceremonial specialists of which there are a number in Tucson.

Types of Specialists

Lay Priests.--In any formal religious observance in which a group larger than a family participates, the services of a lay priest (Papago paali, from the Spanish padre) are usually required. The ceremonial specialists know the prayers, songs, and rituals necessary for various occasions. He or she can satisfactorily perform for the community the functions of an ordained priest if required to. He can baptize an infant, comfort the sick, pray for the dying, conduct a funeral service for the dead, and assist the soul of the departed to reach the other world. The lay priest is a ritual specialist only, and, despite his other abilities, he is not called upon to settle moral issues by virtue of his religious calling.

Five lay priests are active among the Tucson Papagos, three men and two women. Of these four are Papagos and one a Mexican woman. The four Papagos, all but one of whom are men, were either reared in Mexico or in the United States in homes where Spanish was spoken and where considerable Mexican cultural influence existed. They are all of the Kokolóloti dialect group.

In addition to the five generally acknowledged specialists, there are an undetermined number of people who can carry out ceremonial functions if the accredited specialists are not available. We know of five such people. Of these only one is a native speaker of Spanish, the others know

only a few words. There are certainly others, both Spanish speaking and non-Spanish speaking who can conduct some of the services in an emergency, but who were not observed to have been called upon during our stay in Tucson.

In order to be a capable and well-informed lay priest, the ability to read and write is important. Of the five Tucson specialists, all but one are literate. In fact, literacy is more important than the knowledge of Spanish, for two of the known lay priests at San Xavier village, neither of whom speak the language, manage very well by reading the prayers and songs from books in which they have transcribed them in Spanish. The lay priests in Tucson, and this observation may be true for other communities, are constantly modifying and enlarging their repertoires of songs and prayers, a process which is greatly simplified for a literate person.

The major Tucson ceremonial specialists are all related to one another through the compadrazgo system, either by the instrumentality of the Holy Cross ceremony (see p. 53), or by taking one another's religious objects to a priest to be blessed (see p. 109), or by standing as godparents for each other's children (see p. 99). Despite their ceremonial kinship, no high degree of mutual friendship is expressed. There is, in fact, a degree of hostility emanating from imperfectly concealed feelings of professional jealousy.

We were unable to gain any concrete information as to

how or why a person becomes a lay priest. Some learned the songs and prayers from parents, others from friends or ceremonial kin; as many seem to have achieved their positions through a series of fortuitous events as through conscious effort. Taken as a group, the lay priests do not seem to express a greater degree of religiousness than many of the rank and file participants in religious services, less so in some cases. The five religious leaders all stand out for their sobriety, dignity, sound economic position, and the high degree of respect they enjoy in the community at large. It might be added parenthetically that, while generally respected, they are by no means universally liked.

The ideal pattern appears to be that lay priests should receive no payment for their services. There is evidence that payments are sometimes made to them in Tucson, but since these specialists gain their livelihood through wage work, it may be merely compensation for wages lost while carrying out ceremonial duties. We were assured that "in the country" (on the Reservation) lay priests never charge for their services.

The five specialists are all very much dedicated to their calling and when needed make every effort to oblige the family who has requested their services. Emergency calls, as in the case of a request for prayers for a dying person, effect a great deal of personal inconvenience

for the lay priest who, after a night of prayers, must report to his regular job in the morning.

Ceremonial Assistants.--Each of the lay priests is aided by a group of women who form a choir, chant the responses to his prayers, and generally assist him in the proper conduct of ceremonies. One of the leaders has a regular team of three or four women who always accompany him; the others lack regular assistants and seek the aid of different women in the community depending on the nature of the ceremony, where it is held, and who is available. It is worth noting that there is not always a close correlation between an individual's knowledge of the ceremonial techniques, prayers, and songs and active participation in a choir. There are some women who are excellent singers and who know the prayers and ceremonies well who were observed only in the role of invited guests at household services. The women recorded as having served as lay priests in the absence of the regular leaders are all ceremonial assistants.

Musicians.--Players of musical instruments are unimportant in Tucson religious ceremonies since there is no longer an organized band. However, instrumental music is acknowledged as an important part of folk Catholic ritual, a feature whose absence is regretted by many in Tucson; and since bands are occasionally brought from the San Xavier and Sells reservations for ceremonies, musicians

must be included in this listing of specialists. Of the three male lay priests in Tucson, two are known to play one or more of the instruments which make up the traditional Papago band--the drum, violin, and guitar. Two of the San Xavier lay priests are excellent musicians.

It is said that among the old Papagos a promise to learn to play an instrument was often made to the image of St. Francis Xavier on pilgrimages to Magdalena.

Pascolas.--Pascola (Papago páhkola) dancing is an element of Papago Catholic ceremonialism borrowed from the Yaqui Indians. The Papago pascola functions as a clown, entertaining the assembled people; he differs from the Yaqui pascola in that he wears no mask and does not dance to the music of the flageolet and drum, but only to that of European instruments. There are no active Papago pascolas in Tucson at the present time.

Altar Makers.--Some women in the Tucson community are known for their ability to construct altars for certain occasions--for example, to dedicate to a saint on his day or for the ceremonies which are observed following a death (see p. 87). Of the three known Papago women who practice this art, all are active participants in Catholic rituals serving in the capacity of ceremonial assistants. These women lend their talents widely and, so far as is known, do not accept financial remuneration for their efforts. The ability to make tasteful artificial flowers

is a prerequisite for this specialty.

Owners of Religious Figures.--It is usually the case that the images of saints in whose honor a large scale religious service is held are owned by private families. The saint's owner not only looms important in the celebration itself, but during the rest of the year people may come to the household to venerate before the figure. In Tucson there are several families who possess images used in this manner that are widely known in the community. One elderly woman owns a wooden cross used in the annual observance of the Finding of the Holy Cross (see p. 51). Similarly, the numerous images of the Virgin used in the elaborate ceremony which takes place each year at the end of May are individually owned (see p. 54). In the recent past the ceremonial paraphernalia used in the community-wide affairs held on St. John's and St. Joseph's days were privately owned.

It is common for families who lack ceremonial equipment, such as pictures and images of saints, large crucifixes, and the like, to borrow them to decorate altars constructed for special occasions. This is especially true for ceremonies in connection with a death.

Medicine Men.--Almost without exception Papago Catholics make use of the native medicine men (Papago ma'makai), most frequently in connection with the purification of a mother and infant following a birth; but medicine men are also

consulted in cases of sickness by people of all ages. There were at least two medicine men practicing their specialty in Tucson during our stay.

While not a bona fide folk Catholic specialist, a medicine man may request certain Catholic rituals for his patients. Occasionally Catholic ceremonies are prescribed as a cure for a specific malady; such a case is described on page 82. More commonly medicine men require that a patient fulfill a broken vow of a Catholic nature before they attempt to treat him, and they may request that parents have a sick child re-baptized (see p. 76).

The St. Nicholas Club.---The St. Nicholas Club was originally a sodality of San Jose Mission, but during the time we were in the community it had lost nearly all formal connection with the church. About a dozen members remain active at the present time, two of whom are men.

The membership ranges from persons who speak neither English nor Spanish to English-speaking high school graduates, many of whose values are directed toward middle-class Anglo-American cultural standards. Members of both the Kokolóloti and Totokowani dialect groups, who make up all but a tiny fraction of the Tucson community, are represented in about equal numbers.

The present function of the group is that of a mutual aid society--visiting members, or relatives of members, when they are sick and furnishing labor, financial assistance,

and ceremonial support for wakes, funerals, and the period of nightly devotions which follows a funeral. The members function together smoothly when they are offering assistance at a time of crisis. On the few occasions when the organization has attempted to engage in activities of other sorts, unity was lacking and support by the members was confused and half-hearted.

Organizations which offer mutual aid as one of their major functions are not unknown in other Papago communities. At San Xavier the church choir and the ceremonial organization of the "Twelve Apostles" assist the families of their members when the need arises.

Rank and File Participation in Folk Catholic Ceremonies

In considering ceremonial participation by members of the Tucson Papago community, a distinction must be made between voluntary ceremonies and those traditionally held at a time of crisis.

Voluntary ceremonies are, by and large, most frequently sponsored and participated in by a relatively small segment of the community composed mostly of the people described as ceremonial specialists, with a limited number of other persons, mostly women, joining in. There is more than religious devotion motivating participation by these people, for the ceremonies have features of informal visiting,

feasting, and entertainment which are long anticipated and pleasantly remembered. The persons participating most frequently are of middle age or older who are conservative in their outlook. To a large extent, these religious gatherings with their attendant release from mundane activities, take the place of movies, public dances, ball games, and the like which are enjoyed by the younger and more urbanized Papagos.

Participation in crisis ceremonies, especially those connected with the death of a family member, is more general. Some families will engage in larger and more elaborate observances than others, but the family unit which doesn't at least attempt to conform to these customs is looked down upon by the rest of the Catholic community.

Except for the lay priests, men are not active participants in ceremonies of either type; in fact, men are frequently absent from the devotions held in honor of a saint. Sometimes the adult males of a sponsoring family may kneel with the other participants for the opening prayers and then completely absent themselves for the remainder of the evening. The husbands of the women gathered to pray and sing often congregate outside of the house where the services are held, and drinking by the men is common on these occasions.

At wakes, the nightly ceremonies following a funeral, and the ceremony commemorating the anniversary of a death

more men are present. They congregate outside the house and stand by to offer assistance, carrying water, chopping wood, etc. There is some participation by men in the actual religious services which take place at these affairs, although this is not obligatory. Some who might otherwise participate remain outside because of limited space in the room where the ceremony is held. It is accepted that women have priority on the available space.

Pre-adolescent children of either sex do not usually participate in ceremonies. This is not to say that children are excluded, for mothers sometimes bring their small daughters, and less commonly sons, to teach them the forms of the rituals. Wakes and other ceremonies for the dead are occasions where large numbers of small children are brought together, and an outsider is struck by the contrast between the shouts and laughter of the youngsters playing outside and the solemnity of the vigil taking place within the house.

Mexicans sometimes join with the Papagos in the conduct of their religious ceremonies. These participants often occupy the status of honored guests who are invited to eat first, urged to take comfortable seats, and generally treated in a deferential manner. Some Mexican women are active in Papago religious affairs and show an element of missionary zeal, being willing, even anxious, to share their vaster knowledge with Papago neighbors. Such a group

is active in the religious ceremonies held during the month of May (see p. 54). These women give the Indians religious information, advise them on the powers of various saints, and teach them to make and decorate altars.

The Nature of Folk Catholic Beliefs

It is possible to go to almost any Tucson Yaqui, middle-aged or older, and get from him a view of Yaqui Catholicism which will agree in concepts and content with the views of other Yaquis of his age. They have a well-established folk religion, a thorough knowledge of which is a required part of the individual Yaqui's cultural training. What is more, a conservative Yaqui defends his religion as the true faith and often regards the beliefs and practices of others with intolerance. This group has succeeded in blending Christian beliefs with its aboriginal world view and conceives of these elements as an integral part of its cultural heritage.

Although segments of the group have been in contact with Catholic agencies for over 250 years, the Papagos have developed no such view. To them Catholicism is the religion of the Mexicans; and, while they have adopted it and the majority of them believe in it, they do not think of it as being really theirs. Many of the Papagos contacted in Tucson repeatedly assured us that to get "correct" views about the folk Catholic practices they were engaging in we should contact certain of their Mexican neighbors.

Because of the uncertainty with which they control these borrowed beliefs, the Papagos are very dependent on the religious knowledge of a select few. The influence of lay priests, both Mexican-Papago and Mexican, information from the orthodox clergy, and miscellaneous advice offered by Mexican and Yaqui neighbors afford the foundations for Papago Catholic practices, with the result that they are subject to change, adding to the confusion and uncertainty with which the average person views the religion.

Spicer quotes a missionary priest as describing the Catholicism of the Papagos as a "religion of externals"¹⁰ and we agree with this characterization in the main. Yet behind the outward expressions of the religion--the village festivals, the pilgrimages to the Mexican town of Magdalena, the sonorous recitation of Spanish prayers before a household altar or in a village chapel--lies a simple theology, imperfectly understood to be sure, but capable of being cautiously generalized upon. An understanding of what lies behind these expressions, however vague, will be of value in affording us a better understanding of the visible expressions themselves. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to this attempt.

¹⁰Joseph, et al., 1949, p. 89.

Dualism

The Papagos have a religious concept that good is rewarded and evil punished supernaturally; but all punishment for evil takes place during life and all are rewarded equally after death with admittance into heaven, which is conceived by many as the aboriginal spirit world in the east. The evil person--one who robs and cheats, is mean and stingy, or who mistreats his relatives--is punished by a long and painful illness which is ultimately fatal. A good person dies quickly and painlessly after a brief illness or, even better, dies quietly in his sleep. This is a cultural ideal, held up to children as the reward for a good life. In cases where a person suffers a protracted illness there is often speculation and gossip on the basis for the supernatural punishment.

Pantheon of Supernaturals

There is little emphasis placed on God (Papago Chios, from the Spanish Dios) who is a shadowy, imperfectly conceived otiose being. The important supernaturals are those capable of material representation as pictures and images: the Holy Family and the various saints. The importance of the saints to the group is indicated by the Papago term for Catholic, "believers in saints" (Sa'santo-so'uhochutam). These holy figures are in no way developed

into a hierarchy nor are they conceived as being related to one another (except for the members of the Holy Family). Rather they represent independent entities, the individual powers and characteristics of whom are variously conceived by different persons.

The total number of saints known and worshiped varies with the individual. On the whole they appear to be drawn from the same body of saints familiar to the people of northern Sonora, although certain additions are resulting from the purchase of figures advertised in American Catholic periodicals. These supernaturals are not regarded as cold, harsh, or unyielding; on the whole they are thought of as beings with whom the individual can be on friendly terms and who will advise and protect, reward good acts, and overlook and forgive transgressions. A listing of major saints known to Tucson Papagos is given in Appendix II.

One further supernatural must be included in this listing although it is emphasized that our information is fragmentary. This is the devil (Papago tciaur, from the Spanish diablo), sometimes associated with horses.¹¹ One might cast aside this horse-devil as divorced from Christianity were it not for a pertinent fact: the appearance of the horse-devil in dreams may cause mental derrangement, which is also true of dreaming of saints.

¹¹Underhill, 1946, p. 315.

In both cases the cure includes the recitation of the Catholic rosary (see p. 82).

Moral Concepts

There is a fundamental body of moral concepts that, while not necessarily Catholic in origin, are characteristic of the Papago Catholic viewpoint. This does not purport to be a complete listing:

Generosity.--The Papago virtue of generosity is symbolized by the universal practice on the part of sponsors of a ceremony to feed participants and guests. No wake or ceremony in honor of a saint is complete without this feature. The feeding of guests on ceremonial occasions is a manifestation of the belief that a generous person will not know want himself.

Freedom from Bad Thoughts.--Not harboring what is expressed by Papagos in English as "bad thoughts" (Papago pee'esisuhum) about others is stressed in both everyday life and especially in the fulfillment of religious duties. A person who is jealous of others or who secretly plots evil while manifesting the outward signs of friendship is a dangerous person, capable of harming others, often innocent persons. Thus, such a person at services conducted for the dead can prevent the spirit of the deceased from making a successful transit to heaven, or on the occasion of a baptism cause the child to sicken and even die (see

p. 77 and p. 90).

Keeping Promises.--In Papago society high value is placed on keeping one's promises, especially in dealings with the supernatural. A person who promises to fulfill a vow to a saint and fails to keep his word is likely to become sick. Medicine men, in attempting to diagnose a disease, will frequently question the patient to ascertain if he has broken such a promise and require that he fulfill it before treatment is begun.

Personal Sacrifice

There is a minor element of personal sacrifice to be noted in Papago folk Catholicism, especially in connection with the pilgrimages to the shrine of St. Francis Xavier, but also in promises made to other saints. Thus, a person may promise to walk on his knees from the street in front of the Magdalena church to the altar, and one Tucson man carried his ailing child to Magdalena on foot, a distance of over 120 miles! Sacrifices of this sort are the exception rather than the rule among Papago Catholics, however, who do not emphasize the high degree of self-mortification that has been observed among Mexicans at this holy shrine. The promises that the Papagos make to the supernaturals are usually of a less strenuous nature and involve such things as holding a religious ceremony, lighting candles for the saint, discharging rockets in

his honor, or making financial offerings.

Personalized Prayer

Along with group recitation of such formulas as the rosary and other Spanish prayers, Papagos also make personalized appeals to the supernaturals. There is a great deal of individual variation in these proceedings which are by no means a universal practice among Papago Catholics. Most commonly personalized praying is done by women. Prayers are generally conducted in private, often before a household altar. (Of the forty-two households whose membership formed the basis of this study, twenty-one had altars. The other half, while not displaying them on altars, possessed certain holy pictures or images.) Prayers are recited in Spanish, English, and Papago. Spanish prayers are usually read from small printed tracts obtained in Magdalena or from Mexican women in Tucson, and the prayers in English are obtained either at local churches or are taken from Catholic periodicals. Prayers in Papago consist of extemporaneous appeals, usually by women who cannot read, and are usually accompanied by fragments of the rosary in Spanish which have been committed to memory.

CHAPTER III

VOLUNTARY AND CALENDRIC CEREMONIES

Folk Catholic ceremonies of the type which are sponsored voluntarily, as opposed to those mandatory at a time of crisis such as sickness or death can be divided into two categories: large-scale affairs put on by a group of households, often managed by an organized ceremonial committee and attended widely by members of the community, and single-family sponsored observances limited in size to a dozen or so invited guests. Large ceremonies are commonly found among the rural Papagos on the San Xavier and Sells reservations where most villages have one or more annual observances which attract visitors widely. The annual (December 2-3) festival in honor of St. Francis at San Xavier Mission is a good example of this sort of affair. It includes religious services and a procession, followed by dancing and feasting until dawn. There is but a single example of a large-scale ceremony in Tucson (see p. 54). Until the early 1930's the Tucson Indian population was organized more as happens in rural areas, occupying several more or less distinct communities which allowed for larger ceremonial operations than are possible now. With the single exception noted in the foregoing, ceremonial activity in Tucson at present is limited to family sponsored

household observances.

Types of Ceremonies

The Velorio

A common folk Catholic ceremony found among the Tucson Indians is the velorio (Papago velunt).¹² The dictionary definition of this Spanish word is wake, and velorios are held for the dead. However, the term is also applied to certain observances in honor of a saint, and it is with these that this chapter is concerned. There is some difference of opinion as to how the two types of velorios should be conducted, and at least one lay priest feels that at venerations for a saint the songs and prayers customary at wakes for the dead should be avoided. Ideally, a velorio should last from soon after sundown until sunrise the next morning, but in Tucson this pattern is often modified; and the devotions usually last until midnight or shortly after. These ceremonies are frequently held as a result of a promise made to a saint or saints for answering a person's prayers. Three more or less typical examples were for the following reasons: for assisting in the recovery of a sick child, for protecting the life of a son serving in the Army in Korea, and by an elderly woman for assisting her to obtain a small pension. Sometimes a promise includes giving a single velorio; other

¹²This term is also used by Papago cattlemen for an all night vigil at a water hole.

times it may be for a whole series over a period of years. One Tucson woman holds an annual devotion on Christmas Eve dedicated to Santo Niño de Atocha in payment for having saved the life of her daughter when the girl was a baby. A young couple dedicated ceremonies to St. Joseph for three consecutive years for the continued health of their children. Some ceremonies are given on the sponsor's saint's day or dedicated to some favorite saint out of reverence for him and in an attempt to win his good will. Not all of them have the payment-for-services-rendered aspect.

Velorios are organized and financed by the person or family who sponsors them, with assistance furnished by relatives, friends, and ritual kin. The preparations are often quite extensive. Food has to be purchased and cooked and arrangements made for seating and serving the guests. The financial outlay may be considerable; money is frequently saved for some time in order to conduct one of these affairs. A velorio may be postponed well beyond the saint's day because sufficient funds are lacking.

One or more of the lay priests is invited to a velorio to lead the songs and the prayers; and most of the guests are drawn from the membership of their choirs, other religious women, relatives, and neighbors. Velorios of this type are usually limited to between 10 and 20 participants. The husbands of the participating women may be on the

premises and occasionally visit the proceedings during the course of the evening's activities.

Guests begin to arrive at a velorio after supper and go directly to the ceremonial room where they take their places on the mattress- and quilt-padded floor. There may be a bench and a few chairs or boxes placed in the rear of the room where elderly or crippled women and the occasional male participants sit. The dominant feature of the room is the altar which is either especially assembled or consists of the regular household altar redecorated for the occasion; these vary in form, size, and complexity--from a table or box covered with a white cloth on which the family holy images and pictures are placed to large, stepped affairs with a white cloth backdrop on the wall behind them and a canopy over the top. A great deal of time and expense go into the preparation of the larger altars. One, for example, displayed over 40 images, pictures, a large crucifix, religious medals, flasks of holy water, blessed palm leaves, and snapshots of members of the family. It was decorated with fourteen candles, including two that were over three feet long, flowers, both real and artificial, paper garlands, streamers, and great sprays of freshly cut greenery.

For certain occasions the decoration of the altar is varied. At a velorio held on Christmas Eve, green and red crepe paper streamers were used and tiny Christmas

trees, glass ball decorations, paper Christmas bells, and the like were placed on the altar. Small creches are usually part of the altar decoration at Christmas time. One woman decorated her altar with Anglo-American Halloween colors, black and orange, at a ceremony held on All Souls' Eve. Visitors may bring their personal images of the saint whose anniversary is being celebrated and place them on the altar along with the images of the sponsoring family.

The guests sit facing the altar, visiting informally before the ceremony starts. The lay priest and the women who will sing with him take positions directly in front of the altar. On entering the room the lay priest usually kneels, crosses himself, and directs a prayer in a subdued voice to the images. Ordinary guests have been observed to do this also. When the majority of the participants have arrived, the lay priest gets onto his knees, signifying that the ceremony is to begin. The others join him while, beads in hand, he leads the rosary in Spanish. The length of the introductory rosary varies with the person in charge, but usually consists of five decades. (Each decade is made up of ten "Hail Marys" preceded by an "Our Father" and followed by a Glory Be to the Father.") Two verses of a religious song are sung between each decade. These vary with the leader, but in all cases they are apropos to the occasion. Thus, for a

velorio in honor of the anniversary of the Finding of the Holy Cross on May 3, the song, "Santa Cruz," is appropriate. (See Appendix III for a listing of the titles of some fifty songs employed in Papago ceremonies.) The worshipers join the leader in the song if they know the words, but at least his three or four assistants can be counted on to help him. The introductory ceremony is concluded with the recitation of certain prayers chosen from the repertory of the leader according to his predilection. These may be committed to memory or read from Mexican prayer books, printed tracts, or hand-copied transcriptions.

Following the rosary, the celebrants settle back into positions of comfort while the leader leafs through the notebook in which he has his songs copied until he finds one to his choosing. Seated before the altar, his book tilted toward the light from the candles, he commences a song which is slowly taken up by the others, some of whom have their own songbooks. The songs, which consist of from seven to twenty short, four-line verses, are rendered in accordance with a customary procedure; the first stanza is repeated after each succeeding verse in the manner of a chorus which, of course, doubles the length of the song. Since they are sung slowly to dirge-like tunes, even the shortest is of some duration. On completing the song, the worshipers rest and visit, chatting quietly with each other until the lay priest, after

ten or fifteen minutes, begins another song. And so the velorio proceeds--periods of singing followed by periods of informal visiting, gossip, and subdued laughter, and, as the hour grows late, catnapping by some of the older people. Young children, brought by their mothers, sleep quietly wrapped in blankets on the floor, and men folk wander in and out during the evening.

In the case of all-night velorios, certain songs are, ideally, only sung after midnight. These include the mañanitas and the songs, "Buenos Dias Paloma Blanca," "Buenos Dias San Francisco," and others.

About ten or eleven o'clock in the evening and again at three or four in the morning, if the affair lasts all night, the guests are invited by the sponsor to eat at a table set in another room. Since not all guests can be seated at the same time, they are fed in shifts. It is a mark of respect to be asked to eat first. The lay priests, close friends of the sponsor, and often Mexican guests are of the categories who are served first. Those remaining in the ceremonial room may either relax and gossip or continue with the singing if there is a person present who will lead the songs. The guests are served by the sponsor, helped by other female members of the household or other women who have assisted with the affair. It might be noted that the many duties of the sponsor prevent her from actively participating in but a fraction of the

total ceremony.

The meal is basically Mexican in style and a typical menu consists of tamales, beans, a thick stew of garbanzos (chick peas) cooked in a rich broth, flour tortillas, coffee, canned fruit, and bakery cake. Some families serve native Papago foods on these ceremonial occasions--such things as sweetened mesquite gum, atole (gruel) made of ground mesquite beans sweetened with panoche (crude sugar), and sahuaro syrup--along with the regular fare.

A feature of interest that was repeatedly noted at Papago velorios was the employment of Spanish words by persons who do not speak Spanish. Thus, a woman arriving at a velorio will greet the others with "buenas noches," and upon completing a song the guests may thank the lay priest in unison with "gracias." Velorios are times when people are on their best ceremonial behavior. Ritual kinsmen, who normally address one another by first names, carefully use cómpahli (compadre) and cómahli (comadre). Compadres and comadres who have not seen one another for some time will shake hands and ceremonially embrace one another.

The velorio, whether it lasts until midnight or continues until morning, is concluded by the same rosary and prayer with which it started. The guests, after shaking hands with their hostess and the lay priest, depart to their respective homes or jobs.

Rosaries

A less spectacular class of ceremony more frequently observed than the formal velorio for a saint is the simple recitation of the rosary in Spanish. Most commonly these are conducted in conjunction with visits to the critically ill and at the novenas following a funeral, which will be described in detail in the next chapter. Rosaries are appropriate on other occasions, too, and these can be best cited with examples rather than by a single broad generalization. Rosaries may be recited to a saint. Thus, on a St. John's Day a rosary followed by several songs was given in conjunction with a child's birthday party which was attended by about sixty guests. The rosary, led by a lay priest, was of secondary importance to the party and participated in by only a fraction of those present. Other examples of rosaries were recorded on the occasion of the reunion of a lay priest and his wife with his brother's family whom they had not seen in years, by several women in a Reservation cemetery in connection with decorating the graves for All Souls' Day, on the occasion of a baby shower, by a group of women on Mother's Day, by families on All Souls' Eve, etc. In short, rosaries are appropriate for almost any occasion one cares to apply them to. Rosaries do not necessarily require the services of a lay priest and range from more or less fragmentary

recitations by religious women to fairly complex affairs, accompanied by singing, which might be thought of as attenuated velorios.

Mañanitas

A custom more common in Tucson twenty or more years ago than at the present time is the serenading of a person on his saint's day. On these occasions a group of singers, accompanied by several musicians usually equipped with violins and guitars, call at the home of a person on his saint's day or birthday. The serenaders sing one of the Mexican songs of the type called mañanitas until the members of the household, awakened by the music, invite them in for refreshments. The most common pattern in the past was for the singers to make the rounds on St. John's and St. Joseph's days, serenading the many people named for these saints. The urban character of the Tucson community has largely curtailed this custom which is still common in Reservation villages.

Calendric Ceremonies

There are nine major Catholic holidays observed by the Papagos. On the Sells Reservation each of the major villages celebrates one or more on a large scale, and people from other settlements of the district participate with the sponsoring villagers. Except for the single

festivity on the night of May 31, there is no community-wide ceremonial participation in Tucson.

The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the manner in which the main religious festivals of the Tucson Indians are celebrated. In the order of their occurrence they are: St. Joseph's Day (March 19), Feast of the Holy Cross (May 3), May Devotions to the Virgin (May 1 to May 31), St. John's Day (June 24), Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (August 22), St. Francis Day (October 4, December 3), All Saints' and All Souls' days (November 1 and 2), and Christmas (December 24 and 25).

St. Joseph's Day (March 19)

St. Joseph is widely known and highly favored among Papago Catholics, and José and Josefa (among the younger people often Joseph and Josephine) are among the most common Indian first names. As a member of the Holy Family, the image of St. Joseph is frequently found on home altars. During the 1920's two influential Josés of the Tucson community, assisted by others of the same name, sponsored ceremonies complete with religious processions, band music, dancing, and feasting. The affairs terminated with the deaths of the two sponsors. No known St. Joseph's Day velorios were held during our stay in Tucson, although it is usually observed by some family in the community.

We were told of a feature that is especially common at these affairs, as well as at velorios for other saints. This is the custom of "tying" those who are named for the saint. Some time after midnight the sponsor, or the ceremonial leader, calls for all people with the saint's name to face others in front of the altar. While a mañanita is sung for the Josés, the guests come forward and tie gifts to their arms. These consist of shirts or other articles of clothing, yard goods, lace trim, and the like. Sometimes money is wrapped in a handkerchief and the whole is fastened to the person's arm. It is the custom for those who have been tied to furnish refreshments, usually liquor, to those who have honored them. Whatever the amount of drink given, it must be consumed on the spot, and this exchange is accompanied by much merriment. The term for the ceremonial exchange of drinks is "wola." The term is of Spanish origin--the Sonora-Mexican term for a like exchange is "bolo."¹³ The Papago version is compounded into hu-wola, one term for feast.

Feast of the Holy Cross (May 3)

This feast commemorates the finding of the true cross

¹³The term bolo is used by the Yaquis for a party given by a child's parents for the godparents on the occasion of the child's baptism. The godparents furnish liquor for the event.

some 180 years after the Crucifixion. It is an important Mexican Catholic holiday, observed in towns and villages in Sonora and in Spanish-speaking communities in Arizona by nine nights of prayers culminating with a traditional ceremony. The customs have been adopted by Papago Catholics and the occasion is observed at the villages of Topawa, Cowlick, Santa Cruz, San Xavier, and others. It is celebrated on a smaller scale by a mixed group of Papagos and Mexicans in Tucson. People with the last name Cruz treat May 3 as a personal saint's day, and at least one Tucson family sponsors a household ceremony of some sort for the occasion. In the past there were several large-scale Holy Cross festivities which included community-wide feasting and dancing. The sponsors of these affairs, who were named Cruz, are now either dead or have moved back to the Reservation.

On May 3 many Tucson Indians go to the river and gather willows which they fashion into crude crosses and hang near their house entrances. These may be taken to a priest for blessing or merely sprinkled with holy water. The willow crosses, renewed every Holy Cross Day, protect the members of the household from misfortune. The old crosses are burned in the yard without ceremony.

In one neighborhood in South Tucson in which a concentration of Indians live, a special ceremony is held annually to commemorate this feast. The participants,

which include an undetermined number of Mexicans, form a sort of ceremonial society loosely bound together by mutual ties of ritual kinship. The sponsor of this annual affair is an elderly Indian woman, the owner of a small (18") wooden cross to which the ceremony is dedicated. It was given to her by her mother who in turn was given it by a Mexican woman. Nine rosaries are recited nightly before the cross, the last one falling on the evening of May 3 when the novena is culminated with a special ceremony. On this night the cross is placed on an altar constructed of three tiers. After the rosary, a couple officially appointed as "sponsors of the cross" for a period of several years go to the sides of the altar and each takes hold of a ring affixed to either arm of the cross. Those assembled begin the song, "Santa Cruz," and at the end of each two verses the couple lifts the cross down a step. When the bottom step is reached, the process is reversed until the cross is again on top of the altar. When the cross has been returned to its original position, one of the "sponsors of the cross" steps forward and questions the guests to find if anyone wishes to take compadres. Only persons who have previously been taken as compadres in this ceremony are eligible to do this. The ritual is simple; the couple wishing compadres removes the cross from the altar and passes it to the man and woman they have chosen to honor who kneel, cross themselves, and

then return the cross to the other couple who replaces it on the altar. The four people, now compadres, shake hands and the two men embrace, as do the women. This is repeated by other eligible persons who wish to take compadres. In actual practice, women most commonly engage in this ceremony, their husbands often holding back and refusing to participate. But whether the husbands actually take part or not, they are drawn into the ceremonial union. Wolas are customarily furnished to the new compadres.

May Devotions to the Virgin (May 1-31)

The only known May ceremonies in honor of the Virgin regularly carried out in the Tucson Indian community are those held by the group of people active in the Holy Cross ritual. This is the biggest ceremonial event engaged in by Tucson Papagos at the present time. Similar ceremonies are held at Topawa, Sells, and at other Reservation villages, although the occasion is not observed at San Xavier. Each night the women gather in the home of one of their number and recite the rosary before an altar upon which they have placed their images and pictures of the Virgin. As the month progresses, preparations are made for the ceremonies which climax the devotions on the night of May 31. Small, ornate litters--decorated with crepe paper streamers and artificial roses--are constructed to hold the images of the Virgin. Young girls, daughters

of the participants or children of relatives and friends, who will carry the images in a procession are coached in this task and taught the appropriate songs and prayers. A Mexican woman who has been closely connected with the ceremony for the past fifteen years, assisted by several Mexican friends, is instrumental in organizing and teaching the Indians the appropriate rituals for the occasion.

The preparations for the dance--the hiring of musicians and the collection of money to buy the large amounts of food needed--go forward at the same time. A committee, composed of a chairman and an undetermined number of assistants and their wives, takes charge of these responsibilities. Additional labor is furnished by other people, both Indians and Mexicans, who live in the neighborhood. Financial support is solicited from the Indian community at large; persons who make contributions are assured that they will be invited to eat during the course of the evening's activities.

After the final rosary of the evening of May 31, an elaborate and colorful procession commences from the house where the nightly prayers are held. In 1951 this procession was made up as follows: three young men, walking abreast, were in the lead; the two on the outside carried pictures of the Virgin and the other a large plaster crucifix. Directly behind them came some twelve girls, both Papagos and Mexicans, dressed in communion gowns and veils and

carrying three elaborately decorated litters. Two more girls held aloft a large arch decorated with crepe paper. Following the girls were four singers walking abreast. This group moved up the street where it was met by another dozen girls, carrying four more litters, and the band from San Xavier Village, especially hired for the occasion. With the band in the lead playing a spirited Mexican march and the singers in the rear intoning a hymn in Spanish in praise of the Virgin, the procession moved slowly around the block and returned to the house from which it started.

The next phase of the ceremony took place in the yard of the house, which had been cleared for dancing. From a central pole on which a strong electric bulb was attached, lines of paper streamers were stretched to the four corners of the house lot. Benches and chairs were arranged around the perimeter of the dance ground where the approximately one hundred people who had marched in or witnessed the procession were seated. The band members, who had been playing continuously, took up positions toward the center of the yard, and the young men and girls placed the pictures and images on a specially built altar near the edge of the dance area. Candles carried by some of the women in the procession were lighted and placed on the crowded altar. The girls, directed by the Mexican woman in charge of the ritual, assembled in two lines facing the

altar. The drummers beat a final flourish, and then the music stopped. The girls commenced singing a verse of a song directed to the Virgin after which the two front girls genuflected, crossed themselves, and went to the rear of the two columns. The procedure was repeated by the next two and the next until the original pair was facing the altar again. The band played another flourish and a second verse of the song was sung and the crossing procedure repeated. The girls, still in two lines, were led in a short prayer; upon its completion they were directed to move aside a few paces to form an aisle leading to the altar. The women who had participated in the nightly rosaries went between the columns of girls to the altar where they knelt briefly in prayer. They were followed by the members of the band who knelt before the altar and crossed themselves. After the band members had finished their devotions, it was announced that any others who wished could go to the altar to pray; and a number of the visitors, both men and women, did so.

The band, after going into the house to eat, assembled at the far end of the dance area and began playing Mexican dance music. As the evening progressed more and more people came, until somewhere between 300 and 350 were assembled, some dancing, others standing or sitting together and visiting. The bulk of those attending were Papagos, although many Mexicans and Yaqui Indians were also present.

Visitors were fed in shifts all during the time the dance was in progress; a large percentage, but by no means all who attended, were invited to eat. Many who stayed until morning were fed twice.

Shortly after midnight the images were taken from the altar near the dance area and displayed in the house. About 6:00 a.m. the musicians, before returning to San Xavier, stood before the images and played three or four tunes, the same type of music they had played for the dancers. This custom of playing to the images is typical of Papago religious observances. Following a religious procession on the Reservation it is customary for the musicians to follow the litters bearing the holy images to the households where each belongs and to play a tune for it. Sometimes crowds following the musicians dance while the music is played.

The special prayers of the musicians, the playing of "secular" music along with the singing of hymns in Spanish in the procession, the placing of images near the dance area where they can "see" the dancers, the playing of music for the images, sometimes accompanied with dancing, all add weight to the view that instrumental music and "social" dancing in Papago folk Catholic ceremonialism has a deeper religious significance than is apparent on the surface.

St. John's Day (June 24)

The feast of St. John is an important holiday in Sonora and the Spanish-speaking communities of Arizona. The folklore of the region holds that the first summer rains fall on this day. In the Tucson of fifty years ago the event was celebrated with public dances, horse races, and rooster pulls. These features are preserved among the rural Papagos. Velorios are common on this day, similar in makeup to those held for the feast of St. Joseph.

Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

(August 22)

Images of the Immaculate Heart of Mary are frequently displayed on Papago household altars, and velorios are sometimes held on the occasion of this feast. Prior to 1940 the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart Order served with the Franciscans in the Papago missions; this may account, in part at least, for the popularity of this holy day.

Feast of St. Francis Xavier

(October 4, December 3)

Important features of Mexican Catholicism are the many regional religious shrines to which the devout make annual pilgrimages. The shrine of the Virgin of Tepeyac, near Mexico City, and the Virgins of San Juan de los Lagos and

Zapopan in the state of Jalisco are three of the best known examples. There are others of more restricted importance geographically, and one of these is the miraculous image of St. Francis Xavier located in the parish church of Magdalena, Sonora. The Magdalena shrine is significant in the lives of Spanish-speaking Catholics from a wide area. Visitors come each October from as far as California and Texas, as well as Arizona, Sonora, and Sinaloa. During the week of the festival as many as 15,000 people strain the limited facilities of the small town. Stalls selling religious articles--images, holy pictures, medals, candles, etc.--food, dry goods, hardware, and the like along with temporary bars and restaurants mushroom in the town plazas. Mechanical rides, public dances, strolling bands of musicians, and Yaqui deer dancers all add to the carnival spirit of the occasion. The church is packed around the clock as the pilgrims crowd to venerate before the saint, especially on October 4, which is the saint's day.¹⁴

It is certain that this annual event has been held at least for the last hundred years. Bartlett, who passed

¹⁴Actually December 3 is the day of St. Francis Xavier. October 4, which is the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron of the Franciscans, may have been adopted for the annual festival during the time that order was in charge of the Upper Pima missions.

through Magdalena in 1854 while the religious festival was in progress, reported a scene closely paralleling that which can be seen today.¹⁵ How long the affair had been held prior to Bartlett's visit is not clear, but the basis for the pilgrimage was present in Magdalena from early Jesuit times. Shortly before his death Kino dedicated a chapel at the mission pueblo of Magdalena to St. Francis Xavier "whose entire body, in an admirable image, is shown in a gilded niche."¹⁶ The fact that Father Kino was buried at Magdalena may have stimulated its importance as a holy place.

The annual pilgrimage to Magdalena is joined by many Papagos who come from all parts of the Sells Reservation, San Xavier, Tucson, Ajo, and the diverse rural locations where Papagos are seasonally employed. While there is a religious basis for the visit, the secular features of the Magdalena festival are inviting too. It is a time of release from the dull work-a-day world, a time when friends and relatives, isolated by distance during most of the year, are able to visit with one another. Money saved for the occasion is spent lavishly in restaurants and stands selling jewelry and clothing; and not least, the trip to

¹⁵Bartlett, 1854, pp. 425-431.

¹⁶Wylllys, 1931, p. 152.

Magdalena affords the Papagos an opportunity to purchase and consume liquor openly, since Mexican law does not prohibit its sale to Indians.

During the trips to Magdalena, religious paraphernalia used in folk Catholic ceremonies is obtained. Images and pictures of saints, blessed candles, and ribbons (Papago sam'palisisk bab'yuka, Spanish medidas) which are rubbed on the image of the saint to ward off disease are purchased, and holy water (Papago kots tshutak) is procured in the church. Pictures and images, not only of St. Francis but of other Catholic supernaturals, are often brought from home by the pilgrims to rub on the figure of the saint, thus charging them with his power.

The trip to Magdalena is considered a sacred obligation not to be lightly embarked upon. Some go so far as to say that even thinking about going is tantamount to a promise which, should it not be kept, can result in sickness or other misfortune. Many of the older and more conservative people are appalled by how lightly the younger generation views this holy obligation, stating they go for a good time only and not primarily to worship the saint.

Visits are frequently made by sick people seeking a miraculous cure; children especially are often taken. One woman told how, as a small girl, her parents placed her under the reclining figure of the saint while they prayed for her recovery.

Only a fraction of all Papago Catholics make the annual pilgrimage at one time. Those who do not go are eager to share the blessings of the saint with those who do. A family's holy pictures may be sent with friends who rub them on the image of the saint, and pilgrims frequently bring back blessed ribbons and holy water which they distribute to relatives and friends. Visitors to Magdalena may promise the saint to hold a velorio in his honor when they return home, and these are attended widely by guests who did not make the trip. Visitors bring their images which are placed on the altar with the recently sanctified ones of the host. Velorios in honor of St. Francis are held each year in Tucson, as well as on the Reservation and in the cotton camps where many Papagos work during the fall.

There is, in addition to the annual event in Magdalena, another at the Mexican Papago village of Jack-Rabbit-Falls-Down (Papago Chui'gushk). This festival dates from the 1920's when the image of St. Francis then displayed in the Magdalena Church was taken to the isolated village to protect it from anti-clerical forces bent on its destruction. Pilgrims, both Mexicans and Papagos, go there each year during the first week in October. Some feel that since this image of St. Francis is older than the one currently displayed at Magdalena it is more powerful.

A figure of St. Francis was dedicated by the American

priests at San Xavier Mission in an effort to build up a local shrine which would direct the attention of Papagos from Magdalena. Both October 4 and December 3, the actual day of St. Francis Xavier, are celebrated with veneration before the saint, religious processions, and public dancing.

It has been suggested that the emphasis the Papagos place on attending the Magdalena festival, together with the large numbers of pictures and images of St. Francis displayed in Papago homes and chapels, may be indicative of some extraordinarily strong attachment for this saint, an attachment of long duration possibly going back to Father Kino's stewardship of the Upper Pima missions. That the Papagos highly esteem St. Francis can not be denied, but it is doubtful if they are more attentive to him than are members of other groups who make the annual pilgrimage. We found no indication of a Papago "cult of St. Francis" with particular features of ritual or belief not generally shared. What has been said for Papago folk Catholicism in general holds for the group's attitude toward St. Francis. He is acknowledged to be a Mexican saint, the patron of the well-watered wheat fields and orchards of the Mexican-dominated northern Sonora river valleys. As one man explained it, the Papagos saw that the prosperous Mexicans prayed to St. Francis and decided to put themselves under his protection also.

All Saints', All Souls' Days

(November 1-2)

Throughout Mexico, and Latin America generally, the twin holy days of All Saints' and All Souls' are occasions when families pay homage to the memory of their dead; the days are traditionally observed by visits to the cemeteries where the graves of relatives are cleaned of debris and decorated with candles and floral wreaths and by the ritual feeding of the souls of the departed. In some areas a distinction is made as to the significance of the two days: All Saints' is celebrated in connection with the return of children's spirits while All Souls' is characterized by communion with the souls of adults.

All Saints' and All Souls', with no apparent ceremonial distinction made between them, are observed by Papago Catholics. In terms of the large numbers who participate, they are the most important days on the ceremonial calendar. In various of the rural Papago villages community-wide religious services, followed by dancing, are held in addition to the family features which will be described in the following. Some villages honor their dead on November 1, while others customarily carry out the rituals the night of November 2. The usual pattern of observing the occasions is impeded for many of the Tucson Indians whose relatives are buried at distant Reservation villages, and only some

can be with their relatives on these days. Others take advantage of any visit to the Reservation, whatever the time of year, to clean and decorate family graves.

The many Tucson Papagos who have relatives buried at San Xavier go out on either day to decorate the graves; no great amount of clearing the grave mounds is necessary since an appointed delegation of San Xavier villagers clears the cemetery of weeds before the visitors begin to arrive. The largest crowds come during the evenings. Family groups, men, women, and children, go to their graves and decorate them with wreaths and bouquets of flowers. Candles, which are placed on the mounds, are lighted, and hundreds of them throughout the graveyard afford a truly beautiful sight. The graves of immediate family members are more elaborately decorated than those of more distant kin. It is common for a grave decorated with, say, a single candle or jar of flowers by one family group to be lavishly decorated later in the evening by another more closely related to the deceased. Children's graves may have, in addition to the floral offerings and candles, a toy or two laid on them. At the head of a few of the adult graves, affixed to a stout post or the grave marker, are small birdhouse-like structures in which tobacco, sweets, and similar comforts are placed and annually renewed.

The crowds which gather at San Xavier cemetery,

including Mexican-Americans and Yaqui Indians as well as Papagos, appear to be not unhappy ones. Children run about the grave mounds playing, and men and women chat amiably with friends as they go about their tasks. There is little overt sadness about the occasion, and it is interesting to witness the lugubrious conduct of Anglo-American visitors who, bent on not being obnoxious, manage to miss the spirit of the occasion.

The Feeding of the Spirits.--The feeding of the spirits of dead relatives (Papago kokoi) is even more common than the decorating of the graves. Few Papago Catholic families fail to carry out this obligation, even if no more thoroughly than by setting out leftover food. Others prepare elaborately decorated tables, with special ceremonial foods and sweetmeats relished by a deceased family member, which may range from bags of marshmallows to some aboriginal food such as boiled cholla buds or sahuaro syrup. The table for the dead is usually laid in the kitchen after the family has completed its evening meal. This may be done on the night of the first or the second or at any time during the week in which these two days fall. Some tables are decorated with flowers, candles at each of the four corners, and often with a crucifix or an image of a saint. The room in which the ghostly meal is served must be left

undisturbed while the spirits come to eat. The windows are often opened so that the spirits have easier access to the room, and it is not uncommon for candles to be lighted in the yard to guide them home. Later during the evening or on the following morning, the food is eaten by the members of the household. It is said that, since the ghosts have taken the essence of the food, it lacks nourishment; and however much of it is consumed, it will sustain one for but a brief time.

Some Tucson families band together for a more elaborate All Souls' observance. A lay priest, assisted by his coterie of female associates, is invited to call on a number of households during the evening. The visitors and the members of the household, the women at least, kneel before the household altar or in the kitchen where the table is set for the family's dead while the lay priest recites five decades of the rosary, each interspersed with a verse of an appropriate song. Following the rosary, the guests are invited to the table where the food is served them. The remaining food, tamales, fruit, nuts, sweets, even dishes of beans and stew, is put into containers by the hostess and given to the guests. In each household visited, the rosary is repeated and more food given the visitors.

Some families hold full-scale velorios for their dead. The single such example recorded during our stay in the

community was held some months subsequent to All Souls' Day, but acknowledged to be in honor of the occasion.

Christmas (December 24-25)

The traditional nine-day Mexican Christmas celebrations of Las Posadas, commemorating the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem and their search for lodgings, is not a custom observed by the Papago Indians. Their Mexican-derived Christmas festivities are mainly concentrated on Christmas Eve, Noche Buena, mingled with features of Anglo-American Christmas. In Tucson, Indians celebrate Christmas Eve widely, with many going to midnight Mass at local churches and San Xavier Mission. The latter is especially popular because, in addition to the orthodox services, there are folk Catholic rituals, followed by a public dance which lasts until after sunup. A festive meal of tamales is served by many families after returning from midnight church services.

Velorios are held in Tucson on Christmas Eve to the extent that all of the lay priests are busy on this occasion. It is not uncommon for a family, unable to obtain the services of a lay priest, to postpone its velorio until New Year's Eve. The altars for Christmas velorios are specially decorated with red and green crepe paper, red Christmas bells, colored glass ornaments, and the like. A tiny creche is of central importance on these altars with figures

of wise men, animals, and the Infant Jesus asleep in the manger. A Christmas tree, with familiar Anglo-American decorations, is often located near the altar. The velorios, attended by invitation, are made appropriate with the singing of special songs in honor of the Christ Child. At midnight, or shortly after, the figure is taken from the manger and put into a shallow fabric envelope which is suspended across the front of the altar. A ribbon is affixed to it in such a way that when it is pulled, the "cradle" rocks. The guests go before the altar one at a time, kneel, cross themselves, and tug at the ribbon. The lay priest and his assistants sing a song in praise of the Christ Child during this ceremony. This ritual is followed on the Reservation, too, and is the main feature of the observance which follows the Christmas Eve Mass at San Xavier. Some families, instead of using a cradle, have the holy image in a basket and pass it around to the guests who kiss the infant figure at the conclusion of the ceremonies.

The hostess and the guests commonly exchange gift-wrapped Christmas packages on the occasion of a Christmas velorio. Other people give gifts on Christmas Day. In the past, gift exchange was limited to adults, but at present children are becoming increasingly common recipients of gifts. This growing importance of Christmas as a holiday for children, along with the Christmas tree and the adoption

of such festival food as turkey, are manifestations of the inroads that "Christmas" is making into the Mexican-derived Noche Buena customs.

In the case of the turkey, the inroad is a direct one. The turkey is a native bird of the Americas, and its use in the Noche Buena is a traditional one. However, the turkey is now being used in the Noche Buena in a way that is different from the traditional use. In the traditional use, the turkey is roasted and served with a special sauce. In the new use, the turkey is often served with a different sauce, and it is often served with other foods that are not traditionally part of the Noche Buena. This is a clear indication of the inroads that "Christmas" is making into the Mexican-derived customs.

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CHAPTER IV

FOLK CATHOLIC OBSERVANCES

IN CONNECTION WITH CRISIS RITES

In this chapter we will consider the ways in which Tucson Papago Catholics conduct certain crisis rites in the life of an individual. The observance of these occasions is mandatory for a family, to neglect them would draw strong censure from the community at large. These are: baptism, visits to the critically ill, and a series of ceremonies conducted for the dead. We will also consider Communion, Confirmation, and church marriage, which are frequently, but not universally, observed by Papago Catholics.

Baptism

In addition to the aboriginal infant purification ceremony¹⁷ commonly practiced by Papago Catholic parents, especially those in contact with their own more conservative parental generation, the Sacrament of Baptism is universally accepted. In most cases Tucson Papago children are baptized by the priests at San Jose Mission, but in

¹⁷See Joseph, et al., 1949, p. 118.

addition to the sacrament by the orthodox church, there is a form of folk baptism carried out by some. Its unique features will be treated separately.

A consideration of the interesting and, from the viewpoint of social organization, important, system of ritual kinship, so large a part of which arises out of Indian baptismal customs, is only briefly considered here, but will be discussed in detail in the succeeding chapter on the godparenthood system.

Orthodox Baptism

The Catholic Church requests that at least one and ideally two godparents be chosen to sponsor a child in baptism. On the whole the selection and petitioning of the godparents is taken seriously, and there is a considerable body of custom concerned with this step toward baptizing an infant. Ideally no choice of sponsors is made until after the child is born. Indeed, a devout couple will not discuss the subject with one another while the mother is carrying the child, and some say they even try not to think about whom they might ask. It is felt that simply thinking about a possible sponsor is tantamount to committing oneself; and should circumstances force another choice, misfortune would likely befall the child. This high degree of caution is consistent with the basic tenet of Papago belief that it is dangerous to break one's promises.

As soon as possible after the child is born, the parents go to the sponsors whom they have chosen to ask them to arrange the baptism. This should be accomplished quickly for an unbaptized child is said to sicken easily. Needless to say, the parents are quite sure that the couple they have chosen are willing to accept the expense and responsibility that goes with sponsoring a child. On the rare occasions when the couple asked refuses to comply, adverse criticism against them by the community at large results. It is regarded as an honor to be asked, and acceptance, regardless of the state of the family finances, is expected. In cases where the sponsors are very poor, the parents may agree to meet all expenses. Once the sponsoring couple have accepted the obligation, all responsibility for the baptism passes to them. They make the appointment with the priest and any other arrangements; it would be considered bad taste for the parents to inquire into the scope of the plans.

On the appointed day the parents either meet the sponsors at the church or, more commonly, all meet at the parents' house and go to the church together. It is customary for the godparents to furnish the child with a set of rosary beads and new clothing in which the godmother dresses him.¹⁸ Following the sacrament, the father and the godfather

¹⁸Some families observe a custom wherein the child is "given" to the godparents before the baptism and symbolically returned to the parents after the ceremony. This is thought to be a recently acquired custom borrowed, according to one person, from the Yaquis.

and the mother and the godmother shake hands and embrace one another to acknowledge their ritual kinship which has been consummated by the act of baptism. The godfather pays the priest and the two couples leave the church, sometimes parting at the door, but more commonly going to the home of the godparents for a baptismal feast. These range in elaborateness from a simple meal attended by both couples and some of their relatives to large affairs including a semipublic dance. Regardless of the scope of what follows, if anything, the meal itself is almost always a family affair before which the parents and godparents are lectured by their elders on the mutual responsibilities they must show for one another and of their duties toward the child. The couples may be asked to embrace in the presence of their families to once more symbolize their new relationship.

According to Papago custom the godparents should choose the name of the child, which would not be known to the parents until they heard the godfather mention it to the officiating priest. This practice has fallen into disuse because the hospitals, in which nearly all Tucson Indian children are born, demand that the name of the child be given immediately for the birth certificate. Some godfathers give their godchildren Indian nicknames in addition to their European Christian names. This, of course, is not part of the church service, but is told to the parents later.

Folk Baptism

By church law any person may perform the baptismal rites when a priest is not available. Usually such is the case in emergencies, as in extreme sickness when death appears imminent. Among the Papagos baptisms by laymen are quite common, and Chesky reports that this is the accepted form among Sonora Catholics.¹⁹ While a few persons were pointed out as having never been baptized except in this manner, among the majority it was done in addition to the official rite by an ordained priest. One of the most common reasons for parents' having their children baptized "with water" or "at home" as it is termed by English-speaking Papagos is on the recommendation of a medicine man. Two case histories will illustrate the reasons:

Two young Tucson parents asked another couple to take their baby to the church to be baptized, a request which was agreed to. Financial difficulties, however, forced them to postpone the date several times. Meanwhile the child became ill and, frightened by this, the parents asked another couple to take the child to the priest at San Jose Mission. The infant's health did not improve following its baptism, and the parents sought the advice of a medicine man who said that they had broken a promise by not allowing the first couple asked to sponsor the child and that he could not offer treatment until the promise was kept. Since the priest could not baptize the same child twice, the original couple was asked to baptize the child themselves with holy water.

A Tucson woman told the following story about a similar experience in her family which lives in a village in the southeast part of the Sells Reservation. A widow with several children married our informant's brother and a child was born soon after.

¹⁹Joseph, et al., 1949, p. 118.

The mother asked her new sister-in-law to take the child to the church to be baptized. Soon afterwards the infant became sick and was taken to a medicine man who determined that the sickness was due to the fact that the mother had not taken the child to the couple whom she had promised to allow to sponsor all of her children. When she approached the couple to carry out the medicine man's request, they "acted funny" and said, "Why didn't you bring her to us in the first place?", but agreed to perform the folk ceremony. The child's health improved for a while, but she sickened again and finally died. The medicine man blamed the tragedy on the second couple, who, he said, by having "bad thoughts" had "caused the child to sin." The woman who told us of this incident said that had the baby lived, the medicine man would have requested the parents to have her baptized a third time in an effort to get the job done correctly. She knows of at least one case where a child was baptized ²⁰four times before one was satisfactorily achieved.

A second reason for instituting folk baptism is because the couple the parents wish to be their child's god-parents (and equally, if not more, important their compadres) is ineligible to fulfill this role in the eyes of the church. One set of parents solved this problem by choosing a couple acceptable to the priest to sponsor the child in the church ceremony and had another stand for the child in a folk baptism.

It would be incorrect to suggest that all folk baptisms are conducted for the sorts of practical reasons enumerated. There are some parents who regularly have their children

²⁰The custom of rebaptizing children is derived from the common Papago practice of taking infants to the medicine man for repurification in case the first attempt is not thought to have been efficacious.

baptized twice, once by the orthodox church and once "with water." The most obvious explanation for this not uncommon custom is that it affords a means by which parents can establish ritual kin ties with more than one set of sponsors. There may be less obvious reasons, though. One woman suggests that by having several sets of sponsors the chances are increased that godparents will be always available in case the child gets critically ill.

Little need be said about the ceremony of folk baptism itself. The person officiating says some sort of prayer and sprinkles holy water on the baby's head. The rite is usually carried out by one of the sponsors, but if they are unsure of themselves a laypriest may be asked to perform the ritual. A baptismal feast, attended by members of both the parents' and sponsors' families, is usually held with this type of baptism too.

First Holy Communion and Confirmation

The Catholic practice of taking First Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Confirmation are recent innovations among Papago Catholics, dating from the arrival of the American Franciscans. Neither are well-established, although increasing numbers of school-age children are encouraged to prepare for them. Some parents who have not taken Communion themselves insist that their children do so they may participate more fully in the religious life of

the church.

An indication of how weakly established these customs are is illustrated by the nature of the ritual kin ties which accompany them. Whereas following a baptism, well-established compadre relationships exist between the parents of the child and the godparents, such is not the case with these rites. Further, all expenses, such as the purchase of new clothes for the initiate, are met by the parents rather than by the sponsors.

Marriage

Two forms of marriage are practiced by Tucson Papago Catholics, one according to the rules of the church and the so-called "Indian marriage" where a man and a woman live together by mutual consent. As Catholics there is a desire by many to conform to the laws of the church, and it is also recognized that civil authorities sometimes require evidence of legal marriage in matters of inheritance, acquiring title to property, etc. Not least in dictating the choice of church marriage is the realization that a couple not wedded by some constituted authority is likely to draw censure from the greater community of which the Papagos are a part.²¹

²¹To these two classes of marriage must be added civil ceremonies which are not unknown in the Tucson Papago community.

Catholic marriage is preceded by lengthy preparations; some priests require that the couple contemplating matrimony confess and take communion. As many of the people lack the religious training to carry out these requirements, long delays are incurred while instruction is given. Language barriers, fear of the priests, lack of baptismal certificates, previous marriages, and embarrassment over discussing with a priest so delicate a matter are among other factors which contribute to the continued practice of Indian marriage by those who express no objection to the principle of church weddings. There are those, it is worth noting, in the Papago community who exploit the group's acceptance of Indian marriage customs in order to achieve a temporary union which can be broken at will. This is a cause of concern to some, who see that what is called "Indian marriage" today lacks the institutionalized basis it once had. In the past marriages were arranged by the respective parents who instructed the couple on their mutual duties and responsibilities. Divorce was not a simple matter of mutual consent, but was arbitrated by the two families. Ultimate adjudication was in the hands of the village chief, backed by public opinion, who would allow a couple to separate only when he had exhausted all means of achieving a reconciliation.²² The social controls which once maintained permanent unions have been weakened considerably,

²²Underhill, 1939, pp. 179-185.

especially in the urban environment of Tucson. Wives of these informal matches can be, and sometimes are, abandoned with impunity, leaving the unfortunate women, often with children, to support themselves.

There is little in the way of folk custom dealing with Catholic marriage; religious ceremonialism is confined to the church. A married couple is selected to sponsor the bride and groom, and they usually meet the expenses for the ceremony and at least part of those incurred by any celebration which follows. The ceremonial relationships arising from Catholic marriage will be discussed in Chapter V.

The native Papago practice of arranged marriages, either by the parents of the couple or by an intermediary, are uncommon but not altogether absent. We know of two such marriages among Tucson people. At least two cases of marriage between a widow and her late husband's younger brother have also been recorded.

Visits to the Critically Ill

Tucson Papago curing practices range from almost total dependence on modern medical techniques to equal faith in folk cures, appeals to Catholic supernaturals, and attendance by native medicine men. Between these extremes falls the bulk of the Indian population whose faith in such matters is divided. These people are aware of and respect the ability of white doctors, notwithstanding that individual

practitioners may be distrusted. Many are willing to receive outpatient care, bear children in a hospital, or suffer the loneliness which goes with confinement for a condition known to be not serious; it is with cases of critical illness that institutionalized medicine is avoided. Medical aid is often refused for such cases or, when the condition worsens in the hospital, patients are removed by relatives, much to the chagrin of the white doctors. They are not taken home to be treated for their conditions, but so that they can die peacefully, comforted and assured by familiar surroundings and constantly attended by relatives and friends. It is on illnesses of this sort that our information is based.

Folk Catholic practices are not commonly invoked in an effort to cure disease.²³ Extemporaneous appeals may be

²³An exception to this is found in cases where medicine men prescribe Catholic rituals for certain types of illnesses, specifically mental derangement, which is said to result from dreaming of a saint (Papago sa'santo ih, "saint sickness"). Underhill reports the recitation of the rosary for the benefit of an epileptic person, but no details are given (Underhill, 1946, p. 315). We were told of a curing session for a man who had symptoms of mental derangement at San Xavier Village prior to World War II. The cure called for recitation of a rosary and mixed dancing to the music of a traditional Papago band. The ceremony lasted from noon until sundown and was held at the house of the shaman who prescribed it. A rosary of the type described in this section was recited, following which those present, some 40 people, each made the sign of the cross over the sick man; and while some of the man's relatives stayed with him, the others were ordered to dance in the yard. Following each musical selection played, the dancers returned to the sick man and each repeated making the sign of the cross over him. This continued all afternoon. Pregnant and menstruating women were forbidden to participate in the rosary or to dance.

directed to St. Francis or other saints to regain one's health or the health of a relative, but these prayers lack the character of formal rituals. Much more common is the frequent recitation of rosaries at the bedside of a critically ill person, not to cure the disease, but to comfort and console him, to assist in absolving him of sin, and to help him make the transition from a corporal to a spiritual existence. These rosaries seem to be employed only when hope for a recovery has been abandoned by the family and often by the sick person as well. This is not to say that in all cases the recitations of rosaries are taken as an indication of impending doom, for they may have the opposite effect, and it is recognized that in some cases they produce a straw of hope to which the sick person clings. Thus the godfather of a sick woman, baptized on her death bed, advised the godmother, members of her family, and friends against the reciting of the rosary as it was cruelly giving her hope for recovery when her wasted condition made such hope futile. On the other hand, an elderly woman reported that she had witnessed cases where the recitation of the rosary had given sick people sufficient encouragement to recover their health. Short of this, however, the rosaries have a profound effect in soothing and comforting a person's suffering, often allowing him to fall into a peaceful sleep following its recitation.

A critically ill person should never be left alone.

Some members of the family, a godparent, compadre, or friend is constantly at his side both night and day. Rosaries are held as often as possible, sometimes two or more in a single day, by various groups of relatives and friends. Lay priests may be called in or volunteer their assistance, but anyone who knows the prayers may conduct the services. Quilts and pads are placed on the floor around the sick bed, and a crucifix, the invalid's holy pictures and images, candles, and a flask of holy water are placed on a box or bench close by. The participants, who might range in number from four or five to all the people that can crowd into the room, kneel as closely to the bed as is practical. The leader makes the sign of the cross over the sick person and recites the rosary and any additional prayers which he deems appropriate while the others chant the responses. No songs are sung at rosaries of this type. Following the prayers the leader again makes the sign of the cross over the prostrate figure, and one by one the guests go to the bedside and repeat this. There is considerable variation in these actions, and some of them illustrate an interesting syncretism between Catholic practices and native Papago ceremonial techniques of exorcising evil, which in these cases is conceived of as sin. Most commonly observed is the practice of making the sign of the cross with a set of rosary beads, which may be first dipped in holy water. One woman was seen to make the sign of the cross four times,

the Papago sacred number. Some people take a picture of St. Francis or other of the invalid's saints and pass it over the sick person's entire body.²⁴ Others sprinkle a large cross on the bedclothes with holy water. In addition to the sign of the cross one woman, at least, makes a practice of heating her hands over the flame of a candle blessed by the Magdalena priests and then deftly rubbing the head, trunk, arms, and abdomen of a sick person. Another was seen to rub an invalid in this manner after first wetting her hands with Magdalena holy water. It was pointed out to us that this rubbing technique is similar to that used by a medicine man in curing. Pictures and images may be given to the sick to kiss at the time the crossing procedure is being carried out.²⁵

The demeanor of the relatives and friends who are almost constantly at the bedside of the sick person is worthy of comment. It is considered proper for persons of respected status to offer their opinions regarding the

²⁴The practice of passing sacred objects over the body of a sick person is employed in Papago curing technique. Underhill, 1946, p. 28.

²⁵While the word "kiss" is used by English-speaking Papagos for this action, it is not an accurate descriptive term. Many Papago Catholics do not "kiss" a holy object, but rather they place it near their lips and nose and breathe deeply (Papago ee'ho'ooch'ku). This is an example of a native technique of gaining power from a sacred object applied to Catholic practice.

invalid's condition both to the family and to the sick person himself. A woman might ask if there is some favorite saint that the sick person wishes to pray for him or whether there are any other people he wishes to see before the end comes. Plans may be made by the visitors and the sick person for the funeral with discussions about coffins, burial clothes, who will be asked to pray at the wake, and the like. An outsider among the Papagos is struck by the frank manner with which such matters are discussed. Normal day to day affairs are talked over and gossip and jokes related. The actions of the visitors are little modified by the fact that their friend is dying, and tears of sorrow or mournful conduct are all but unknown at these times. Thus occupying a social role not appreciably modified by his condition, constantly surrounded by relatives and friends who act neither sad nor gloomy, death approaches the sick Papago as a series of easy transitions rather than looming up at once as a violent shock.

Sometimes the prognosis of a disease is inaccurate, and death does not come at the time predicted. People who have traveled from a distance cannot stay on indefinitely, nor can others be expected to disrupt their normal pattern of living beyond a certain time. When such a situation arises, as it must from time to time, a family member or a close friend is faced with the sad duty of explaining the problem to the sick person and requesting that he stop

fighting against death.

Ceremonies for the Dead

The most extensive series of Papago Catholic rituals are those concerned with death and burial. It would not be overstating the case to say that they are the major focus of Catholic practices; surely they draw the largest number of participants from among the members of the Papago community, since it is expected of every Catholic family which has suffered the death of a member to perform these rituals. Further, the period of critical illness and the death ceremonies which follow are occasions when members of the community are in close contact with the family and critical of any deviation from the expected standards of ceremonial conduct. As a consequence of this demand, it is at these observances that persons previously uninstructed in ceremonial details learn the greatest amount. In order of their occurrence, Papago ceremonies for the dead are: the wake (velorio); the funeral; the novena, a period of nightly prayers following the funeral terminated by another velorio; and the observance of the first anniversary of the death.

The Wake

The constant vigil over the sick person is maintained until he finally succumbs and the death is announced by loud wails on the part of the women present. The body is

immediately washed and dressed in funeral clothes.²⁶ This task usually falls to members of the immediate family, preferably of the same sex, since the spirit of the dead would be embarrassed should unrelated persons view the naked corpse. Godparents should assist with the body of a child, but this is not always observed. The body is extended on its back, the eyes closed, the arms crossed over the chest. Rosary beads are hung over the hands. Although it is always the case that in Tucson the dead are taken to a mortuary for embalming, in compliance with a state law, they are first cared for in this way. The coffin, bearing the body, is returned to the family home where it is attended by relatives and friends until the funeral the following day. The closest kin of the deceased are shown every consideration and have few duties other than accepting the condolences of the visitors who come to pay their respects.

The evening following the return of the body from the mortician's is the occasion of a velorio during which the greatest number of visitors come to view the body. In basic form this ceremony is very similar to the velorio held for a saint. Preparations for this are carried out by relatives and friends close to the family who also give

²⁶When death takes place in a hospital, the body is not immediately available to the relatives. This affords additional reasons for fearing to allow the removal of a critically ill person from the family home for treatment by white doctors.

financial aid. The number of visitors may exceed 75 or 100, and since it is required that each of the guests be fed, the preparations, not to mention the expenses, are considerable.

Visitors begin to arrive at the wake in the early evening, going to the room where the body is displayed. The haste with which the preparations must be made plus the confusion and sorrow of the occasion usually preclude much attempt at decoration. The coffin, which rests on a rubber-tired dolly lent by the morticians as are large candle holders and a crucifix, may have a few sprays of flowers and a wreath or two on it and candles burning nearby. A hastily constructed altar with the family's holy images may also be present. The arriving visitors kneel before the coffin, bow their heads in prayer, look for a moment at the face of the deceased, and then either take a seat on the floor or, in the case of most of the men, join others of their sex who gather in the yard. When the bulk of the mourners has arrived, the lay priest or priests in charge of the ceremony begin the rosary. Several verses of an appropriate song are intoned between each decade. Upon its completion those present settle back on the floor for the singing which follows until midnight.

The attitude of the participants is solemn, but not marked by any high degree of mournfulness. Subdued laughter in response to carefully chosen jokes is not uncommon.

During lulls between the songs women relatives of the deceased will manifest sorrow over their loss by wailing and crying, in which they are joined by other women present. Too, they may address some remarks about the virtues of their dead relative or the circumstances which led to his death to those gathered who listen sympathetically. While the vigil over the corpse is kept until the funeral, the majority of the guests departs at about midnight when a concluding rosary is recited by the ritualist in charge.

Papago wakes are sometimes disrupted by the actions of drunken men, often close relatives of the deceased, who attempt to mitigate their sorrow with liquor. However upsetting their actions to the participants in the ceremony, every effort is made to ignore them and to continue with the ritual. It is felt that any attempt to reason with them will only lead to further disruption of the ceremony which adds to the confusion of the spirit which is hovering around the house.

The Funeral

Some Tucson families return their dead to the Sells Reservation so that they may be buried near the graves of relatives. The majority, though, make use of the cemetery at San Xavier Mission. Small yearly dues are assessed Papago residents of Tucson for this privilege. Preparations for the funeral, which takes place the day after death, are

carried out by friends and relatives, but seldom by the members of the immediate family. These include the digging of the grave by men and arranging with the priest to be on hand. A brief funeral service conducted by the mission priest is usually preliminary to the actual burial, though occasionally, due to misunderstandings over time or because he cannot be contacted, the priest does not officiate. At the funeral of a Tucson girl, the only services conducted were by her godparents of baptism who sprinkled the coffin with holy water before it was lowered into the grave.

After a short church service, ideally, the coffin is either carried or transported in a truck or hearse to the grave. Mourners, often led by a lay priest reciting the rosary, follow. Upon reaching the cemetery the casket is placed near the open grave and the lid removed as the relatives gather around to view the remains for the last time. The mission priest, after blessing the coffin and the open grave, usually departs, leaving the remainder of the interment to the Indians. The pall bearers place ropes under the coffin and lower it into the grave which has been specially dug so that pieces of short, stout timber can be placed over the coffin to form a vault over which a blanket is spread to prevent the sifting of dirt onto the coffin.²⁷ At some funerals while the grave is

²⁷The practice of protecting the coffin by constructing a vault of this type has been recorded for Yaqui funerals held at Holy Hope Cemetery in Tucson.

being filled, the crying women relatives face away from the scene. After the grave mound has been shaped, women place flowers and candles on it. At one funeral attended unmarried girls were asked to perform this task on the advice of a Mexican woman who said that it was the "correct" procedure.

It is the custom of some to put a cross on the grave at the time of the funeral. Others do not mark the grave in this manner until after the novena has been held; this custom is observed by the villagers at San Xavier.

The Novena

Starting the evening following the funeral, a series of nightly recitations of the rosary is held in the household of the deceased. This is called a novena even though the prayers do not always continue for nine days as is designated by the term. In some communities, including Topawa and San Xavier, the rosaries are recited for only four evenings. It is not unusual for the rosary said at the wake to be included in the total of four. It is the custom in Kokolóloti villages, and by members of this dialect group in Tucson, to pray the full nine nights. One Kokolóloti woman said that "the other people" (the Totokowani), by praying only four nights, do not show proper respect for the spirit since it remains around the household for nine nights following the funeral. Both forms

of the "novena" are terminated with a velorio which, like the wake, lasts at least until midnight.

Except for the last night's prayers, which attract large community participation, the rosaries are attended by few people--members of the immediate family, more distant relatives, and others close to the deceased. While a lay priest is usually called in, anyone who knows how to recite the rosary can conduct the ceremonies. In form they are simple and rarely last over an hour; the participants merely kneel before an altar while five decades are recited in Spanish. A song or two may be sung at its conclusion.

The altar must be redecorated for a novena. It is draped with black or dark purple cloth, and candles tied with bows of black ribbon are used. Small personal articles of the departed, say a handkerchief and a piece of costume jewelry, are also displayed. These may be first enclosed in a cardboard box. Flowers or bright crepe paper decorations are not used to decorate an altar during a novena except at the concluding ceremonies on the last night, though this is not a universal rule. At Topawa such trimmings are used during the whole period.

Preparations for the ceremonies which terminate a novena are extensive. Because the family has had an opportunity to recover from the initial shock of the death, and through the fact that those assisting them are less

pressed for time, this occasion is better planned and executed than is the wake. Food is prepared in quantity to serve the visitors; and, as is true at the wake, dishes of food are set out in a secluded corner of the house or yard so that the ghost may consume its essence. One or more lay priests are called upon to conduct the ceremonies.

The guests begin to arrive in the early evening; many of the women bring bouquets of flowers and extra candles which they place on the altar. The conduct of the visitors is less restrained than at the wake, and, on the whole, the ceremony is quite festive, with laughter and joking common. In all but the concluding features the religious services are like the basic velorios described in Chapter III. As midnight approaches, often indicated by an alarm clock on the altar, the demeanor of the participants becomes more solemn as the time is approaching for the soul to leave the land of the living to make its long journey to the spirit world. Women who have worked continuously in serving food to the guests and some of the men folk who have been congregated outside join the others. A final rosary and a series of special prayers for the dead are recited, followed by an appropriate song. While this is in progress two close relatives of the deceased, possibly a widow and her oldest daughter, go to either side of the altar and remove the black cloth, the flowers and articles of clothing and ornament, and extinguish and remove the

black-ribboned candles. New candles of some bright color are placed on the altar and lighted. The women relatives begin to cry and are joined by the others present. The male head of the household makes a short speech in which he thanks those present for attending the ceremony and for the assistance they have rendered. The guests, after shaking hands with the next of kin, file from the room, the novena being at an end.

The mourning candles, and sometimes the personal articles, are burned in the yard following the ceremony or taken to the cemetery where they are buried in the grave mound. This is carried out the morning following the end of the novena when the floral decorations from the altar are taken to the grave.

The First Anniversary of a Death

The foregoing description is of a novena in which the family, by means of the symbolic features displayed on the altar, announced to the visitors that its members did not plan to enter a year's period of mourning. In cases where this is planned the black cloth, mourning candles, etc., are not placed on the altar during the novena; the velorio of the last night, except for the prayers recited for the dead, is ended like a velorio held for a saint. The symbolic features are reserved for the anniversary to be held, if practical, on the same date the person died.

The Spanish word for this occasion is cumpleano; apparently there is no cognate term in Papago, it being referred to by various circumlocutions. In basic form this ceremony resembles the last night of the novena described in the preceding section. Some women burn their mourning clothes following the ceremony. We were told that at Topawa while the objects are being removed the guests throw handfulls of finely cut crepe paper on the altar to symbolize the earth thrown into the grave.²⁸ This, together with personal articles of the deceased, is buried in the grave mound the next day.

The wife of a lay priest told of an elaborately staged anniversary held in Tucson some fifteen years ago which included the services of a band to whose music the guests danced. She said that her husband disapproves of this practice and feels that people should not dance on these occasions.

²⁸The Yaquis employ confetti, which is called 'sewam', "flowers," in certain religious ceremonies. It is regarded as symbolic of a power against evil. Spicer, 1940, p. 255.

CHAPTER V

THE PAPAGO GODPARENTHOOD SYSTEM

Introduction

Throughout the preceding sections frequent references have been made to the ceremonial unions which are entered into by members of the Tucson Papago community. Little has been said about these relationships beyond brief statements about the means by which some of them are achieved. In this chapter we will examine ritual kinship more closely, paying particular attention to the nature of the relationships and the mutual duties and responsibilities involved.

These ceremonial unions are looked upon by many, if not by most, Papago Catholics as very sacred things; they are not something to be lightly discussed, especially with an outsider. This is particularly true with those who are partners in complex and far-reaching unions. As a result, our material is quite fragmentary, and no claim is made for a thorough coverage of the subject in this chapter.

The Catholic godparenthood system, the Papago variation of which is under discussion here, is found throughout Latin America, the Balkans, the Mediterranean area, and Eastern Europe, all regions largely people with peasant farmers where industrial capitalism has not displaced the family

as the basic economic unit.²⁹ The principal function of the godparenthood system is one by which a person can ceremonially relate himself to another person with whom he is not united by bonds of blood or marriage. Also, it can be employed to strengthen--to "intensify"--an existing blood tie.³⁰

Three categories of persons enter into a ceremonial union: 1. The initiate, such as a child taken to the church for baptism; 2. the initiate's parents; 3. the person or persons chosen by the parents to act as the child's sponsors. Two orders of ritual kin result from this activity; 1. A relationship between the sponsors (godparents) and the initiate (godchild); for this class of relationship the term padrinazgo (from padrino, Spanish for godfather) will be employed. 2. A union between the sponsors and the child's parents; this is referred to as a compadrazgo relationship (from compadre, the reciprocal term of address used by the father and the godfather. The compadrazgo and padrinazgo together make up the godparenthood system.

In the foregoing we have noted the two types of ceremonial relationships arising from the baptism of a child.

²⁹Mintz and Wolf, 1950, p. 352.

³⁰Paul, 1942, p. 56.

These may also result from the sponsorship of a child in his First Holy Communion, Confirmation, or of a couple taking the Sacrament of Matrimony. There is yet another class of ritual kinship in which the padrinazgo element is absent since the sponsored is not a person but an inanimate object. Examples of these are given in the concluding section of this chapter.

Compadrazgo Relationships

It has been found that among most people employing the godparenthood system, the relationships between compadres outweigh in importance those between the godparents and the godchild.³¹ This generalization holds true for the Papagos, who usually choose godparents with an eye towards acquiring compatible compadres rather than basing their choice on sponsors who will assist the initiate in the manner prescribed by the church. The stated ideal for godparents is "good Catholics" whom the parents respect. They need not be close friends. Persons who are economically well off do not appear to be often singled out, and it is denied that wealth is ever a basis for choosing ritual kin. The most frequent sponsors are married contemporaries of the parents, but there are exceptions. A widow requested to be a godmother might ask her son to serve as godfather, and

³¹Mintz and Wolf, 1950, p. 354.
Univ. of Arizona Library

one case is recorded where a pre-adolescent boy and his grandmother sponsored a child in baptism.

Although it is generally stated that in choosing god-parents relatives, both consanguine and affinal, should be avoided, this is not always born out in practice. There is evidence that relatives are actually preferred by some. One elderly woman told a niece to always have relatives baptize her children since they are more frequently available should an emergency arise and will support the child in case the parents die. We have enough examples of relatives taken as compadres (both through the sponsorship of children and by other means) to suggest that it is an accepted Papago practice. Since there is a high degree of interrelationship among members of a Papago community and since, characteristically, Papagos are best acquainted with their own relatives, practical considerations often dictate this choice. One is tempted to speculate that another basis for choosing relatives as ritual kin is to strengthen existing relationships through ceremonial ties. For example, one man asked his wife's niece, who was unfriendly to him, to take a crucifix to the priest to be blessed and thus became her compadre. Another man requested that his cousin and her husband, whom he liked but rarely saw, baptize one of his children. In both examples cited the resulting compadre ties brought the persons into closer contact than

they had previously enjoyed.

Although the main ties of compadrazgo are between the parents and the actual sponsors of the child (or however else the relationship is achieved), other members of both families may be included. Usually only the parents and mature siblings of the mother and father of the initiate and of the sponsors are drawn into the union, but one woman, at least, extends these relationships beyond the ceremonial kinsman's immediate family to include all relatives of the degrees recognised in Papago kinship terminology. This is achieved by classing her compadres and comadres as siblings and addressing their relatives by the same kinship terms they themselves employ. This concept is said to be not uncommon among certain older people interested in genealogy.

Ideally one set of godparents should sponsor all the children of a couple; the practice of approaching new sponsors for each child draws adverse criticism. In Tucson, however, the custom of godparents' limiting themselves to the sponsorship of three children of a given family is accepted.³² In at least one case studied the data suggests that the expedient was employed to avoid involvement with

³²This is said to be a common practice among Mexicans and Yaquis living in Tucson.

parents who were no longer found to be compatible. A more general basis for accepting this limitation is to avoid the personal and financial responsibility which would accrue from the sponsorship of an unlimited number of children.

The practice of "baptizing with water" in addition to church baptism has already been discussed. While the godparents which sponsor the child in both types of ceremonies are ritual kin to the parents, their relationship in respect to each other is not clearly defined by custom; some "folk" godparents recognize compadre relationships with "orthodox" godparents and vice versa, and some do not.

While the usual Papago selection of sponsors is other Papagos, Mexicans are sometimes asked to serve in this capacity, especially as godparents of Communion. It may be that members of this group volunteer for this service through an interest in seeing that Papago children receive this important sacrament. Mexicans, too, may be asked to take religious objects to the priests for blessing, thus achieving a place in the owner's compadre circle. Only three cases are recorded where Mexicans are either one or both of a Tucson Papago's godparents of baptism.

Ceremonial kinship between Papagos and Yaqui Indians takes place to about the same degree as is true with the Mexicans.

Duties and Responsibilities of Compadres

Few adult Catholic Papagos are without compadres. Some have but one or two, possibly just the persons who sponsored their children in baptism. Others have so many that they make no effort to try to remember them all. Whether a person has few or many, the man with compadres has a potential source of comfort and assistance which he can draw on in times of need. In actual practice, it is only with a limited number of compadres that a person maintains strong ties and to whom he feels strongly obligated. Usually these are his childrens' godparents of baptism. Nevertheless, when any member of one's compadre circle asks for a favor, it is felt that it should be given. Although refusals are common, as in the case of a drunken man's asking his compadre for money with which to buy more wine, there is a guilty feeling that some sacred obligation has been broken. It might be suspected that immoderate requests for money have caused the disillusionment of many a compadre.

Financial assistance between compadres is not the major function of the relationship. The real strength of the compadre circle lies in the feeling of security it affords its members in other ways. A sick man, for example, can count on some of his compadres, at least, to come to visit him; a woman is assured that her close comadres will help her when she is preparing for a household ceremony; compadres help at a wake and funeral; and, finally, the

highly sacred nature of the compadre relationships often affords a positive means of curtailing a person's transgressions. The appeal of a compadre has stopped more than one man's excessive drinking when the pleas of his wife failed, and the stern rebukes of a comadre are credited with stopping a young husband's philandering.

Padrinazgo Relationships

The relationship between godparents and godchildren is characterized by the fact that most of the duties and obligations are on the side of the sponsors; the godchildren reciprocate mainly through a show of deference and respect. One duty of the godparents stands out above all others--that is the obligation to visit and comfort the godchild should he become fatally ill and assist in arranging for the recitation of rosaries at his bedside. This is quite consistently observed. Following a Tucson man's serious injury in an accident, when little hope was given for his recovery, his godmother, old and sick herself, sent her son to arrange a rosary for him. She sent along a set of rosary beads to replace the ones she had given her godchild at baptism which had been subsequently lost. Less commonly observed, but acknowledged to be the right thing to do, is the washing and dressing of a non-adult godchild's body after death and, in the case of godfathers, assistance in digging a godchild's grave. This is commonly done at

San Xavier Village where, one woman reported, "the people are almost like Yaquis."³³

Godparents are not expected to assist in cases of ordinary sickness, although they sometimes do, and the parents should then heed their advice. Thus a father reported that when his young son was sick and under a white doctor's care, he was uneasy that the child's conservative godfather might visit and request that he be taken to a medicine man. He added that had this happened he would have felt compelled to abide by the godfather's wish, satisfied as he was with the doctor's handling of the case. Other godparental duties are less fixed by custom, and some feel a stronger sense of obligation than others. At least one case is known where a godfather has given a child gifts and repeatedly taken him to his ranch on the Sells Reservation during the summer vacation. Extended visits at the homes of godparents are said to be a common practice, during which the child is treated like a family member and given the same sort of advice and encouragement that he receives from his own parents.

Parents sometimes utilize the formal ceremonial bond between a child and his godparents as a means of disciplining a recalcitrant son or daughter. Often the mere threat

³³This informant alludes to the dominant role godparents play in Yaqui death ceremonies. See Spicer, 1940, pp. 106-108.

of calling in the godparents improves their conduct; this is used as a last resort only, since it is a shameful thing to have to do. Some parents say that they encourage their children to seek the advice of godparents in solving personal problems.

An orphan child is usually raised by blood relatives. Lacking these his godparents of baptism are obligated to do so, and it is not unknown for a parent, on his death bed, to request godparents to raise the child instead of biological kin. Members of the community would pay particular attention to such an arrangement, watching to see if the godparents were worthy of the trust put in them. Foster parents formally address an adopted godchild as Xy'liga, "my child," or nevakoma, "child I've baptized."

In the foregoing we have discussed the sorts of relationships that exist between an initiate and his adult godparents, principally those of baptism. Relationships of a different order exist between a married couple and their godparents of marriage, since from the start this is a relationship between adults. While marriage sponsors are theoretically chosen by the parents of the bride and groom, especially by those of the bride, the couple themselves are often instrumental in the selection. It was admitted by one man that his choice had partially economic motives; the man he chose for his godfather was a foreman of a CCC project on the Sells Reservation, and he needed a job to support his bride. While the attitude of the married

couple to their sponsors, who are generally a married couple too, is partly one of deferential respect, this feature is less marked than is the case with godparents of baptism. It is more of a partnership among equals, with features of mutual aid quite like those existing among members of a compadre circle.

In addition to the relationship between the bride and groom and their sponsors of marriage, a compadre relationship is instituted between the parents of the couple and the marriage sponsors. The strength of this relationship depends largely on circumstances; it can be as strong as the compadre circle arising from a baptism.

Among compadres only the reciprocal terms cómpahli (for a man) and cómahli (for a woman) are used. In the padrinazgo relationship the terms are more extensive and show a mixture of Mexican and native Papago usages. The formal term employed by a godchild of either sex for his godmother is ñy'ta't, the Papago kinship term for addressing a mother's older sister. Sometimes the Spanish diminutive of madrina, nina, is used, and at least one young woman teaches her daughters to employ the term madrina. A godchild of either sex should address his godfathers as ñy'paulina, from the Spanish padrino, godfather. Both the godfather and the godmother address a godson as ñy'ihado and a goddaughter as ñy'ihada, from the Spanish ahijado-a,

godchild.³⁴

Additional Means of Achieving Godparenthood Relationships

Along with ceremonial kin ties which accompany baptism, communion, confirmation, and marriage, there are those achieved in other ways by Papago Catholics. Some of these involve the sponsorship of a person, in which case they are accompanied by a godparent-godchild relationship. Others involve the sponsorship of an object and result in compadre ties only.

Putting on the Habito.--Although not a common custom among the Papagos, people, usually children, are sometimes dressed in an habito. An habito is a gown of cheap cambric, often patterned after the robes of an ecclesiastical order, hence the name. Frequently seen are those of St. Francis Xavier, Santo Niño de Atocha, and Our Lady of Lourdes. Two godparents are chosen for this ritual, which is usually carried out during the pilgrimage to Magdalena.

Placing Blessed Ribbons around a Person's Neck.--In Chapter III we discussed the blessed ribbons purchased by Papagos in Magdalena. When a person hangs one of these around a child's neck to ward off disease, he becomes its godparent and a compadre to its mother and father.

³⁴The prefix ny means "my" and is used before all kinship terms.

Taking a Sick Person to the Church.--Parents may ask a friend to take a sick child to the church to pray for its recovery. This is done most commonly at Magdalena, but also at San Xavier Mission. Godparent and compadre ties result.

The Ritual of Taking Compadres on the Cross.--This custom has already been described in Chapter III.

Taking Objects to the Priest to be Blessed.--Any religious object, to be efficacious, should be first blessed by a priest: images of saints, holy pictures, scapular medals, crucifixes, prayer books, missals, and the copy books in which religious songs are transcribed. Customarily the owner picks a friend or acquaintance of either sex to do this, and compadre ties result. Some unions effected by this procedure are tenuous, but others are strong and lasting.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Tucson Papago Catholics have achieved an adjustment to Catholicism in which they attend orthodox services, but resist a total integration into the Catholic Church. A large portion of their religious activities is conducted through participation in Mexican-derived folk Catholic activities which allow them a means of religious expression consistent with native cultural values.

The folk Catholic practices of the Tucson Papagos are controlled and directed by lay priests and other religious specialists, mainly recruited from within the group, whose functions are especially important at times of family crisis, as in the case of the serious illness or death of a relative.

The ceremonies and the religious beliefs contained in Papago folk Catholicism are held by all Papago Catholics, although some persons have more extensive religious knowledge and participate more actively in ceremonies than others. These practices are sufficiently integrated into Papago culture to be a part of it; an attempt by an individual to become so deeply involved in the activities of the church that the traditional forms no longer have meaning to him arouses general resentment from members of the Papago Catholic community.

Some of the persons most active in folk Catholic activities, however, are among those most faithful in attending orthodox services; the only persons who were known to reject them were Mexican-born Papagos who expressed dissatisfaction with American-trained priests, preferring Spanish-speaking clergy trained in the Mexican Catholic tradition.

The outward forms of Papago folk Catholicism have been adopted from Mexicans, Mexican-born Papagos, and, to some extent, from Yaqui Indians living in Arizona. An element of confusion and a lack of common understanding as to forms the ceremonial features should take results from the fact that they are still being learned. This consideration notwithstanding, Papagos still manifest a noticeable lack of self-assurance in the certainty with which they control the execution of the ceremonies, since they feel that the forms do not really belong to them. Many Indians express an opinion that theirs is but an imitation of Mexican Catholicism in which, as one woman put it, "we do the best we can." To an Anglo observer Papagos appear to be grateful supplicants of the rituals and other aspects of Catholicism which they have borrowed from the more accomplished Mexican Catholics.

Despite the self-consciousness which Papagos manifest in their feeling that they don't control the religious forms of folk Catholicism, they have gone far in adapting

them to their own needs and have given them a good deal of cultural meaning. In the area of curing, for example, there has been an integration of Catholicism with pre-existing native concepts. Sin is exorcised from a dying person through the manipulation of Catholic ceremonial equipment in a manner similar to that by which disease is removed from a sick person with native charms; a child may be rebaptized if the original ceremony is thought not to have been efficacious, just as in native practice a child may be repurified; and there is the view that under some circumstances Catholic supernaturals can cause sickness, as can native supernaturals. Papagos have worked native moral concepts into their Catholic theory: the native virtues of generosity, the importance of keeping promises, and the value of maintaining a mind free from "bad thoughts" are all associated with Papago Catholic beliefs and practices. In other areas too--in ceremonialism and in the adoption of the godparenthood system--there are further illustrations of how Papagos have integrated Catholicism into their culture in a manner which best serves them.

The success that Papagos have achieved in blending elements of Catholicism into their native way of life illustrates the main function that folk Catholicism serves; by maintaining strong group control over these religious activities, Papagos have been able to develop them along lines which serve their own particular needs.

The adoption of and adjustment to Catholicism is illustrative of the manner in which Papagos have dealt with foreign concepts and practices which are useful to them. For centuries an arid desert homeland isolated Papago communities from extensive visits by outsiders, but at the same time limited the economic adjustment of the group to one of barest subsistence. To augment their limited economic resources, they visited and labored for the more prosperous Gila Pimas and the Mexican ranchers and townspeople in northern Sonora. During these regular sojourns abroad, Papagos observed the customs of the people they contacted and returned home with a wealth of new ideas. There, free from outside coercion, the Papagos were able to adjust and integrate those foreign elements which could serve them best and reject that which was of no value to them.

Although they no longer enjoy the degree of isolation known to them in the past, these principles still hold. Joseph has commented on the "plasticity" to alien influences which allows Papagos "to take on foreign symbols without crucial difficulties and to fill them out with their own spirit."³⁵ But there is another dimension to the acculturation process as it affects Papagos: that is

³⁵Joseph et al., 1949, p. 195.

their apparent reluctance to accept change if they are not themselves masters of its extent and direction. For this reason total integration with the orthodox church is resisted since it would mean a loss of control over their religious expression which Papago Catholics are not prepared to make.

APPENDIX I

The following presents miscellaneous information concerning the people who made up the group on which the material in this study is based.

1. Total number, 64.
2. Age:
14 to 80 years; average age 40+.
3. Sex breakdown:
Males, 24
Females, 40
4. Dialect groups:
Kokolóloti, 39
Totokowani, 18
5. Country of nativity:
United States, 54
Mexico, 10
6. Languages spoken:
Papago and English, 44
Papago and Spanish, 4
Papago, English, and Spanish, 7
Papago only, 6
Other groups, 3
7. Knowledge of ceremonial procedure:
High, 26 Low, 15
Medium, 19 No information, 4

8. Number of persons known to have sponsored
non-crisis ceremonies:

Yes, 24

No, 23

No information, 17

9. Persons having made visits to Magdalena:

Yes, 43

No, 5

No information, 16

APPENDIX II

The following Catholic saints and religious representations were most often observed on Papago household altars.

	Images	Pictures
1. San Francisco Xavier	x	x
2. Santo Niño de Atocha	x	x
3. San José	x	x
4. Various representations of the Virgin	x	x
5. The Sacred Heart	x	x
6. San Antonio	x	x
7. Santa Rita de Cascia	x	
8. Santa Terese	x	
9. Infante de Praga	x	x
10. Nuestra Señora de los Dolores		x
11. Nuestra Señora de Carmen		x
12. San Diego (Santiago)		x
13. Nuestra Señora de Monserrate		x
14. Nuestra Señora de San Juan de los Lagos		x
15. Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe	x	x
16. San Ysidro	x	x

APPENDIX III

The song titles recorded here were copied from the song book of a Tucson Papago lay priest. While this man speaks Spanish, he has only a limited reading and writing ability. The frequent errors in spelling, so extreme in some cases as to defy understanding, are typical of the Spanish used in Papago religious observances.

The initial song is recorded in its entirety as an illustration of the form of these songs.

1. Santa Cruz

1.

Salve Cruz preciosa
Salve Cruz amable
Salve Cruz exceloso
Cruz divino salve.

2.

Desde el cielo vino
Jesus a buscarte
y con viva ancia
No para hasta halarte.

3.

Cipres victorioso
Prodigoso siguio
Sagrada estandarte
Donde espero Cristo.

4.

Salve Cruz hermoso
Cruz de mi remedio
Cruz por quien sali
de mi cantinerio.

5.

Salve arbol frondoso
 Bellisima luz
 Donde fue clavado
 Mi dulce Jesus.

6.

O Cruz admirable
 Salve trono ameno
 Cruz donde espero
 Mi amorosa dueno.

7.

De los pecadores
 Tu eres O Cruz Santo
 Todo mi refugio
 todo mi esperanza.

8.

Salve Cruz del cielo
 Sois de Cristo esposo
 Las que nuestra alma
 entren a la gloria.

9.

Con frente adoramos
 tu favor mi salve
 ya que en tu esperamos
 Salve, salve, salve.

Fin.

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 2. Triumfante | 9. Paloma Blanca |
| 3. Divino Jesus | 10. Mi Dulce Refugio |
| 4. A las Animas | 11. Jesus Amarosa |
| 5. Para las Posadas | 12. O Precioso Nino |
| 6. Dios te Salve Maria | 13. Dulce Jesus Mio |
| 7. Cantemos la Alva | 14. Despedida |
| 8. A Jesus Maria y Jose | 15. Luidas Mananitas |

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 16. A Maria | 42. Nazareno |
| 17. Ave Maria Purisima | 43. Misterio del Rosario |
| 18. Guadalupe | 44. Mananitas Tapatia |
| 19. San Ysidro | 45. Adios, Adios |
| 20. O Maria Madre Mia | 46. Nuevas Mananitas |
| 21. San Jose | 47. El Rosario |
| 22. Bolemos | 48. A Maria Santisima |
| 23. Carramos | 49. Para las Posadas |
| 24. Dulcicima Virgin | 50. Paloma Blanca (second version) |
| 25. Una Bistosa Nube | |
| 26. Suba Suba Suba | |
| 27. En tu Reina Celestial | |
| 28. Virgin Canderosa | |
| 29. Alabado Sea Jesus | |
| 30. Adios O Virgin | |
| 31. Cantemos Cristianos. | |
| 32. Terrible Dolor | |
| 33. San Francisco | |
| 34. Mananita | |
| 35. Luna Bella | |
| 36. Salgan Salgan Salgan | |
| 37. Old Mortales | |
| 38. Dulcicima Madre Mia | |
| 39. Noche Buena | |
| 40. Tortalita Triste | |
| 41. A la Mas Gloriosa | |

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