

Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project

Education Initiative

2003-2004



Restoring water to ensure the continuity of the Akimel O’otham and Pee Posh tradition of agriculture

Opening Pandora’s Box?

Part 58

“We found the Pima all that Colonel Emory described them—peaceable, quiet, and honest Indians.”

John Durivage, emigrant

As the Pima and Maricopa learned the value of American gold coins and their relative value to Mexican silver, they shifted their economy to one largely based on money. At the same time, the Pima and Maricopa, perhaps frustrated by their inability to acquire new tools from the emigrants, grew desirous of American technology, particularly metal tools such as shovels, hoes, axes and ploughs, all of which would aid them in farming. Furthermore, mules and oxen were in demand, indicating a shift from an economy based on manpower to one based on horsepower. Powell recorded the Pima “did not like to part with their horses,” although they offered, “to give a horse for a yoke of oxen,” showing they wanted oxen.

Initial 49er journal accounts note the Pima and Maricopa were all that the Americans had heard and read. They were honest, industrious, confident and “perhaps better than some others we had seen.” They even “surpass many of the Christian nations in agriculture,” Emory concluded, and were “little behind them in the useful arts, and immeasurably before them in honesty and virtue.” Their “high regard for morality” was evident in that no American soldiers reported any items stolen during their visit with the Indians. Griffin noted the Pima “are extremely honest—last night we left every thing we had lying about as usual, nothing was missing, and to day while trading with them, they had free access to the tent—and not an article was missing, although they might have been stolen with the greatest ease.” When Colonel Cooke traveled to the villages five weeks later, too, found no theft. “Although our property was exposed in such a manner that many articles might have been easily stolen, not a thing was molested,” despite the fact that nearly 2,000 Indians were in the military camp. Pauline Weaver, serving as scout for the battalion, informed the troops the Indians were so honest “they had been known to follow travelers half a day to restore lost property to the owner.” When Major Graham passed through the villages, Azul told him “not to fear his people stealing from us, [as] he had told them better, and he would be responsible”

Throughout the first half of 1849 the journals bespeak of the honesty and integrity of the Indians, although there were isolated instances of theft. When Harvey Wood passed through the Pima villages in June 1849, for instance, a member of his company lost a buffalo robe to theft, although Azul managed to secure its return after admonishing his people to respect the property of the emigrants. Wood was impressed with the effect. “Had the thief been a white man,” the emigrant stated, “talking would hardly have restored it.” Durivage, traveling behind Wood, noted, “a number of horses and mules were stolen” but he does not indicate whether the Pima and Maricopa did so or if it were the work of the Apaches, who periodically attacked the villages for food and animals. Asa Clarke, on the other hand, passed through the villages on June 4 but “heard no complaints of their stealing.” Harris noted Azul specifically informed the emigrants they “need fear no pilfering, as the ‘Pimas do not steal.’” William Chamberlin adds that Azul “took dinner with us” and inquired regarding how the Pima “behaved towards us.” If his people were caught stealing or misbehaving, the chief explained, the emigrants were to inform him and he “would punish them accordingly.” Passing into the Maricopa villages a day later, Chamberlin had a vastly different perception of the Maricopa. “We found them to

lie and cheat and steal” having “degenerated greatly within a few years.” Harris also noted the Maricopa had to be carefully watched.

By the time Green arrived in the villages in mid summer 1849, Azul was informing emigrants “his men are not all honest. they will steal [having] learned to do so by the Appachees.” Consequently, Green wrote, “From the account given of these injuns they must have improved very much since Mr. Emory was through the country for he represents them as having all the virtues of the whites without any of the vices. The only virtue I saw among them was raising corn & wheat to sell to the emigrants at high prices.” Notwithstanding, Green still considered the Pima honest. Regarding the Maricopa, he was less kind. “Why Mr. Emory has given them so good a character I cant tell unless he was very hungry & Esau like sold his words for a mess of pottage.” Evans, following Green by four weeks, experienced no theft. “They molest no one,” the Ohioan wrote, “and [only] look to trade.”

As the number of emigrants passing through the Pima and Maricopa villages increased, the frequency of complaints increased. Lorenzo Aldrich, writing in October 1849, explained he had to watch the Pima carefully. “You have to keep a sharp look out upon their movements, and your utmost vigilance will probably be insufficient to prevent their depredations. They will steal anything they can get their hands on.” Quaker Charles Pancoast was no kinder. “We had barely unyoked our Teams before a hundred or more Indians gathered around us, and a number of our tools (which we carried in straps outside of the wagon) were stolen so adroitly that in not a single instance could we detect the Thief. We lost so many tools we became alarmed.” When a yoke of oxen was stolen Wednesday morning, three emigrants—including Pancoast—paid Azul a visit to demand its return. The chief assured the emigrants “he would get them for us” and in the meantime urged the travelers to move their camp five or six miles away from the village “where his People would not be tempted so much to steal from us.” Three days later—after the chief intervened—three Pima men returned the missing yoke of oxen, having found it well south of the camp.

Later emigrants, having read accounts of the honesty and virtue of the Indians, were surprised by what they experienced. Hunter wrote in October 1849, “They are not so singularly innocent and ‘honest’ as Cooke represents them.” Powell’s company also expected a high regard for honesty because of what Emory and Cooke had written. “We were caught off guard,” Powell wrote, when the Pima “stole a great quantity of things from us. We lost axes, hatchets, pistols, blankets, coats, aprons, etc., etc. We were perfectly astounded when they left us at night to find out how much we had lost.” While Eccleston reported no theft among the Pima, when his Fremont Association reached the Maricopa villages he noted the Maricopa had to be “watched very closely, not withstanding Major Emory speaks so highly of their honesty.” If they did not steal then, the emigrant wrote, “they have since learnt, & are now very promising pupils, taking things from right before you.” Another emigrant paralleled these remarks, noting, “They might have been honest when Emory was among them, but they have learnt bad manners since.” The question was why were the Indians more inclined to steal as the emigrant traffic increased.

The answer seems to be found in the fact the available supply of tools, farm implements and beasts of burden was never large enough to meet the demand of the Pima and Maricopa farmers. Consequently, the first signs of anti-social behavior appeared as their level of frustration over their inability to acquire these tools and animals increased. Clearly the Indians recognized the value of American technology and how it could benefit their economy without drastically altering their cultural values. While the Indians might reject mineral activity and sheep raising, they saw American agricultural technology as compatible with their long established farming economy, in line with their core cultural beliefs and as having a positive impact on their current means of agriculture.

The fact that the first complaints of theft were leveled against the Maricopa can be explained by their geographically disadvantaged location. Emigrants entered the Indian villages from the east, meaning they reached the Pima villages first. The Maricopa, therefore, had secondary access to the

emigrant market and as a result received a lower quantity—and perhaps quality—of goods in trade. Durivage, for instance, wrote his company found the “Pima all that Colonel Emory had described them,” yet five days later when leaving the Maricopa villages he noted “a number of horses and mules were stolen.” Other emigrants were “much annoyed” by the Maricopa who “required much watching.” Hunter went so far as to note the Pima even condemned their western neighbors and allies for ignoring “the precept ‘thou shalt not steal.’”

While initial contacts with the emigrants noted the absence of theft, the opening of a technological Pandora’s box may have awakened a covetous eye among the Indians who grew increasingly frustrated by both their inability to acquire such goods and the perceived waste of the emigrants who refused to trade these items only to dump an array of goods along the trail further west. The latter issue appears to have profoundly affected the former, as the Pima and Maricopa increasingly desired new technological advances that they saw as essential for increasing their own productivity and for continuing to meet the demands of the emigrants. Factor in the fact that the emigrants were neither soldiers under restrictive military care nor Spanish missionaries under strict religious influences and one can see the beginnings of destabilizing influences in the villages. When unsuccessful in their attempts to acquire these goods—and the education that would enable them to efficiently utilize this new technology and when continuing to witness the jettisoning of a wide variety of goods—the Indians’ view of integrity was modified and theft increased. This is observed in the loss of authority that Azul exhibited over his people. While once able to admonish his people to respect the property of the emigrants—and even able to secure the return of stolen goods through persuasion—Azul could no longer do so by 1850, with the result that theft increased.

Review: Opening Pandora’s Box?
Fill in the Blank

Using the words below, fill in the blank for each sentence on the left. Each answer is used only one time.

Education	Honest	Plough	Wasteful	Lived
Oxen	Stealing	Frustrated	Gold	Silver

1. Mexico used _____ coins to buy and sell goods with the Pima and Maricopa.
2. The United States, on the other hand, used _____ coins.
- 3-4. The Pima and Maricopa especially desired to farm with a yoke of _____ and a _____.
5. The Pima and Maricopa were known to be _____.
6. By late 1849, Pima chief Antonio Culo Azul noted not all of the Pima were honest and some were _____ from emigrants.
7. The Maricopa may have been frustrated in acquiring the goods they wanted because they _____ further downstream from where the emigrant road entered the Pima and Maricopa villages.
8. The Pima and Maricopa grow increasingly _____ at not being able to acquire metal tools and equipment.
9. American emigrants were often times viewed as _____ by the Pima and Maricopa, contributing to the Pima and Maricopa desire to acquire additional trade goods.
10. The Pima and Maricopa recognized they would need an _____ on how to use some of the new technological aids they acquired or wished to acquire.

Teacher Plan for “Opening Pandora’s Box?”

Terms to know and understand

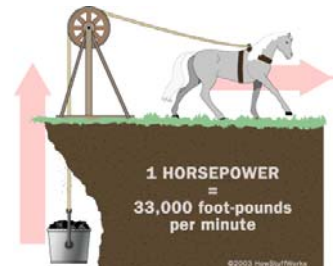
- Manpower
- Horsepower
- Pilfer
- Adroitly
- Anti-social behavior
- Pandora’s Box

Critical Thinking:

- After you have completed the reading, consider other possible reasons for the increase in anti-social behavior among the Pima and Maricopa. What other “Pandora’s boxes” might have been opened and how might this have affected the people?

Activities

- The term **horsepower** was invented by the engineer James Watt, who lived from 1736 to 1819 and is most famous for his work on improving the performance of steam engines. We are also reminded of him every day when we talk about 60-watt light bulb. To help sell his steam engines, Watt needed a way of rating their capabilities. The engines were replacing horses, the usual source of industrial power of the day. The typical horse, attached to a mill that grinded corn or cut wood, walked a 24-foot diameter (about 75.4 feet circumference) circle. Watt calculated that the horse pulled with a force of 180 pounds, although how he came up with the figure is not known. Watt observed that a horse typically made 144 trips around the circle in an hour, or about 2.4 per minute. This meant that the horse traveled at a speed of 180.96 feet per minute. Watt rounded off the speed to 181 feet per minute and multiplied that by the 180 pounds of force the horse pulled (181 x 180) and came up with 32,580 ft.-lbs./minute. That was rounded off to 33,000 ft.-lbs./minute, the figure we use today (see www.auto.howstuffworks.com)
- A healthy human can sustain about 0.1 horsepower. Clearly the Pima and Maricopa recognized the value of horses (and more particularly oxen and mules) to improve their agricultural work. Explain to a classmate (or the teacher) why the Pima and Maricopa might have been preferred horsepower (and why they desired to acquire these draught animals (and ploughs).



Students will be able to:

1. Hypothesize reasons for the increase in anti-social behavior among the Pima and Maricopa.
2. Interpret evidence for a shift among the Pima and Maricopa form manpower to horsepower.

Objectives

About P-MIP

The Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project is authorized by the Gila River Indian Community to construct all irrigation systems for the Community. When fully completed, P-MIP will provide irrigation for up to 146,330 acres of farmland. P-MIP is dedicated to three long-range goals:

- Restoring water to the Akimel O’otham and Pee Posh.
- Putting Akimel O’otham and Pee Posh rights to the use of water to beneficial use.
- Demonstrating and exercising sound management to ensure continuity of the Community’s traditional economy of agriculture.