

Selective Remembrance: Narratives of Ethnic Reconfiguration and Spatial Displacement in the Life of Queho, 1880s-1940

Alex K. Carroll, University of Arizona

Abstract: Social memories and collective representations act as vehicles for configuring, legitimizing, and sustaining particular constructs of knowledge and power in the world of lived relations, while simultaneously marginalizing or negating others. This paper explores constancy and change in popular and official histories of a Southern Paiute man who lived in southern Nevada from the 1880s-1940. Accused of killing between seven and thirty people between 1910 and 1940, Queho became the center of multiple historical accounts written over the course of one hundred years. This diachronic analysis highlights the continuous reconfiguration of Queho's ethnicity and place of origin followed by a discussion of the theoretical and practical implications of reconstructing these social memories.

Memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition. Memory is life ... History on the other hand, is reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete.

Pierre Nora

Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire

COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATIONS

Social memories and collective representations act as vehicles for configuring, legitimizing, and sustaining particular constructs of knowledge and power in the world of lived relations, while simultaneously marginalizing or negating others. In written accounts detailing the life and death of

Queho¹, an indigenous man who lived in southern Nevada between the early 1880s and 1940, social memories and collective representations of Queho's ethnicity, place of origin, and motives for killing between seven and thirty people have been continuously and radically reconfigured. Through an analysis of discontinuities among these representations, it is possible to reveal collective expressions of knowledge, power, and identity among those who have the power to speak and determine what is remembered and forgotten (Hutton 1993:122).

Prior to this analysis, there has been no known scholarship dedicated to critically examining the life of Queho, nor ways in which discursive and iconic representations manifest in historic and ethnographic accounts of the Numic people. Consequently, knowledge of the social, political, and economic impacts of these discourses remains in its infancy. This paper represents a preliminary analysis aimed at identifying dominant narratives that were repeatedly told as distinct ethnic groups vied for control over the contested lands and resources of Eldorado Canyon.

From 1910 to 1919 Queho was accused of killing between seven and thirty people in Eldorado² Canyon, NV, Black Canyon, NV, Las Vegas, NV and the surrounding regions.³ In response to these accusations, multiple posses were organized to find and arrest Queho. At the same time, local reporters provided continuous written coverage of the alleged events.

¹ Between 1910 and 2000 Queho's name has alternately been spelled Creeo, Queo, Queho, Quejo, and Kueho. According to some Southern Paiute elders, Queho's name probably derives from the Numic word, "Quients" which means "Arrow". I have chosen to use the spelling which occurs most frequently in public documents over the course of 92 years, however, it remains unclear which spelling is most historically accurate.

² The American spelling of this site is "Eldorado", however, the Spanish rendering, which came into usage in the sixteen century is "El Dorado", or "the guilded one" (Carlson 1974:106).

³ For a full list of newspapers documenting the killings attributed to Queho, see the References Cited.

Recognizing the power of the press to influence public opinion and “obscure the threshold between a reproductive and originating act” (Kuchler and Melion 1991:16), a writer from the *Las Vegas Age* stated,

It may be that publicity [about Queho] will frighten away a few timid spirits, but the loss in this respect is small compared with the benefit to be derived by the furthering of the ends of justice by such publicity. Peace officers everywhere realize the advantages to be derived from the aid of the press in helping to run down criminals. [*Las Vegas Age* March 10, 1911]

Ninety-two years after this statement was made, collective visions of knowledge, power, and identity continue to express themselves through narratives about Queho’s existence. By critically examining sample mytho-histories of Queho’s life it is possible to identify recurring themes within the construction of social memory.

ANALYTIC STRUCTURE

Following a brief description of the aboriginal occupants of Eldorado Canyon and surrounding regions, I discuss one aspect of the Spanish and Euro-American occupations that contributed to the progressive loss of sovereignty among Southern Paiute⁴ inhabitants. Thereafter, I present sample materials from a case study of an indigenous man who lived in this territory during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This case study provides a mechanism for exploring social memories of ethnic conflict and ethnic boundary maintenance behaviors in relation to an historical era wherein economic and territorial privileges between Paiutes and nineteenth century immigrants were being radically restructured.

Textual analysis begins with an identification of seven discursive strategies that are used to legitimate popular and

⁴ In current usage, the Numa, or Numatic people are referred to as the Paiutes. In older accounts, this designation is sometimes spelled “Piute”.

official accounts of Queho's existence. Next, the use of these discursive strategies in the reconfiguration of Queho's ethnicity and place of origin is explored through sample texts written between 1911 and 2000. A map is included to demonstrate how narrative changes progressively position Queho as an outsider lacking ethnic and communal attachments to the aboriginal Southern Paiute territory of southern Nevada where the killings occurred. Finally, I provide a synoptic account of how particular narrative structures are used to solidify the collective identities of Euro-Americans while simultaneously deconstructing one indigenous man's ties to a particular place and ethnic community.

BOUNDARIES IN FLUX

Prior to the Spanish, Mexican, and Euro-American occupation of present day Nevada and its neighboring states, the Southern Paiutes were the sovereign inhabitants of a territory comprising sixteen districts spanning portions of southern California, south and central Nevada, southern Utah, and northern Arizona (Kelly 1934). Some Paiutes continuously resided near riverine systems such the Colorado River, where they lived through mixed subsistence methods of farming, fishing, hunting, and plant procurement practices (D'Azevedo 1986).

Along this same river system in the vicinity of the Eldorado Canyon, which is located in the southeastern tip of Nevada, influxes of Spanish, Mexican, and Euro-American populations quickly followed the "discovery" of gold and other precious metals. Precious metals were first reputedly discovered by the Spanish who moved a shipment of ore from Eldorado Canyon to Mexico City in 1703 (Andress 1997:9). Thereafter, Francois Aubrey reportedly discovered gold in the same vicinity in 1853 (Bieber 1938:360-361). Finally, Joseph Good from North San Juan, California is frequently credited with discovering mineral wealth in Eldorado in 1861 (Edwards 1978:178). Although the Paiutes of Nevada had practiced mining long before their

territories came under the dominion of others, and were not infrequently the people who showed the mineral veins to the newcomers (e.g. Angel 1881:484), it was the later groups who came to benefit the most from their exploitation of these mineral resources.

By 1862, 174 mining claims had been filed in El Dorado District and by 1865 miners had laid claim to 600 additional sites (Andress 1997:26). One of the first, and most successful mines, the Techatticup, yielded over five million dollars in gold, silver, and lead (Andress 1997:8). This mine's name derives from two Paiute words, *tecahenga* (hungry) and *to-sup* (bread or flour). According to one account, an Indian who was reportedly trying to stave off his hunger showed Joseph Good this site, which drew an additional 89 miners to Eldorado Canyon by 1864 (Andress 1997:17; Angel 1881:484).

Data gathered by explorers, ethnographers, and census takers indicate that Southern Paiute communities resided on Cottonwood Island on the Colorado River and in Eldorado Canyon, where much mining was concentrated after 1861 (Carlson 1974:106). While census figures of Indian residents are given sporadically and recorded with varying degrees of precision, it is clear that at the time that Queho was born, circa 1880, there were at least 114 Indians living in El Dorado Canyon (Federal Census, 1880). By contrast, census takers report only forty-one Indians in the same region by 1910 (Federal Census, 1910).

Following the influx of Euro-American miners into southern Nevada in 1861, larger populations increasingly taxed the scarce resources upon which Southern Paiutes depended (Stoffle et al. 2000). Some Paiutes, including Queho, responded by selling their labor to local mines and mills. In addition, Paiutes began cutting down stands of wood on Cottonwood Island and catching driftwood floating along the Colorado River, which could be sold for one dollar per cord (Angel 1881:490). The superintendent working at the Techatticup from

1881-1890 wrote that they had a dangerously low supply of wood on hand, but planned to remove 400 cords from Cottonwood Island (Andress 1997:54).

Reports of malnutrition and starvation are reported throughout Nevada during the period preceding and concomitant to the early killings attributed to Queho and other Indians living in southern Nevada and northern Arizona (e.g. Angel 1881:148). In addition, there is evidence of a local flu epidemic spreading through Eldorado prior to one of Queho's first killings (Andress 1997:104).

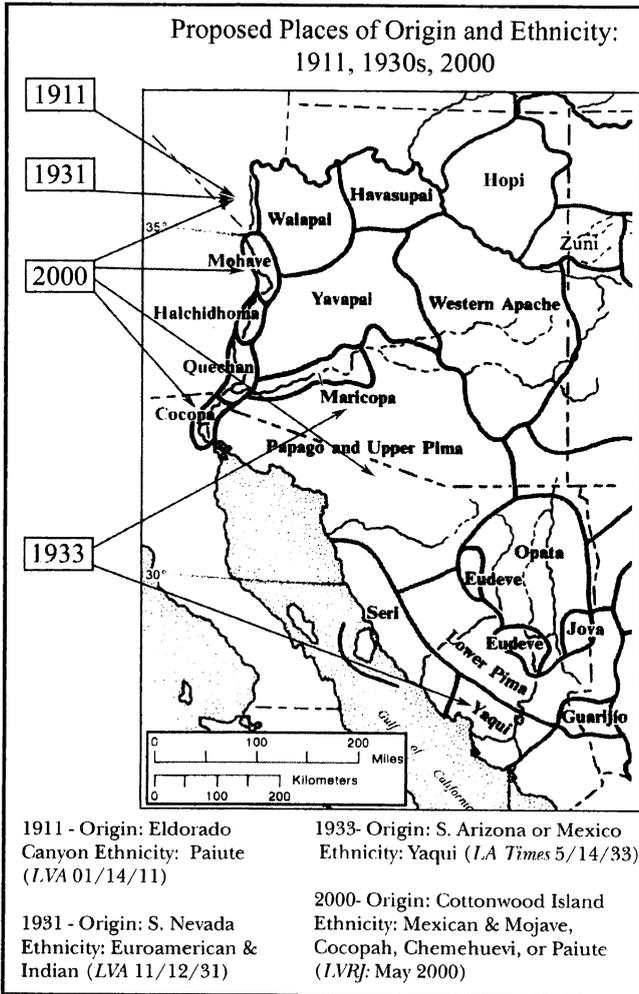
Such factors cannot be causally linked to the deaths attributed to Queho; they do, however, reflect the general conditions that prevailed among the Southern Paiutes of southeastern Nevada during the late nineteenth century. Alterations in land and resource access and availability, and movement from traditional subsistence strategies towards wage labor in a western-based economy signify the most dramatic alterations among the Southern Paiute people (Littlefield and Knack 1996).

The following case study explores how one Indian's actions were textually depicted over the course of 91 years during which time Paiute claims to the aboriginal lands of southern Nevada progressively diminished in memory as well as in fact. This analysis is premised upon the Foucaultian notion that knowledge and power are inextricably related (Rabinow 1984:49). Accordingly, language in general and textual renditions of social memories in particular, serve as the primary means through which we constitute ourselves as subjects of our own knowledge.

In the case of Queho, definitions of criminality, madness, and normality accompany the reshaping of ground rules for collective behaviors between Euro-Americans and Indians at the turn of the century (Foucault 1988). These parameters are indicated through the concretization of social memories in text,

which shape, and in turn are shaped by, collective actions in the world of lived relations.

Figure 1



Map Source: Ortiz, Alfonso. 1979. Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 9 (Southwest):ix. Washington: Smithsonian Institution.

MAKING MEMORIES

While Queho's story has been reinvented countless times in textual and verbal discourses dating from 1910 through 2000, each narrative repeatedly makes use of the following discursive strategies:

(1) Each narrative frames the story of Queho in a manner that legitimizes some discourses while erasing, negating, or marginalizing others (Alonso 1988, Halbwachs 1980; 1992, Herman and Chomsky 1988, Irwin-Zarecka 1994).

(2) The written accounts naturalize *Weltanschannng* (a worldview) consistent with that of the authors as well as the intended audiences of these narratives (Halbwachs 1980). In particular, these narratives reaffirm models of Spencerian Social Darwinism, biological determinism, and psychological determinism as a means of justifying power imbued hierarchical divisions among individuals and groups representing particular ethnic and cultural affiliations.

(3) The narrators provide explanations of "adequate causation" for Queho's actions through frameworks that exclude analyses of the social, political and economic conditions which configured relations between indigenous groups and Euro-Americans during the time in which Queho lived (Portelli 1991:16). By narrowing the scope of causative factors to individual criminality, savagery, or psychological maladjustment, the audience is distanced from the encompassing web of power struggles that accompanied the colonization of southern Nevada in particular, and the American West more generally.

(4) The narrators frequently use the singular voice to establish the authority of the writers as well as the legitimacy of their accounts (Alonso 1988). Singular voiced narratives filter out multiple perspectives on the issues being discussed. In "official" renderings of Nevada history, the perspectives of American Indians who were directly and indirectly involved

and affected by the events being portrayed are commonly exclude or reduced to infrequently referenced footnotes (Herman and Chomsky 1988).

(5) The authors transform Queho from a complex human being into an iconic figure that is progressively distanced from originating acts and contexts informed by collective interactions (Alonso 1988). Herein, the representation begins to outpace the person to whom the icon was originally attributed.

(6) The authors employ the rhetorical devices of exaggeration and emotionalism to “enhance the imaginative and symbolic quality” of their accounts (Portelli 1991:11). These devices tend to be accompanied by ideas that are frequently unsubstantiated by alternate lines of evidence.

(7) The authors use written accounts of Queho's life to naturalize and legitimate changing social, political, economic, and ideological concerns of “the greatest number of members” (Halbwachs 1980:43). In Eldorado Canyon, Euro-Americans constituted the community whose interests became increasingly hegemonic following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848.

Cumulatively these discursive strategies catalyze processes of “strategic remembering and deliberate forgetting” that result in public representations that are partial, ideologically infused, and distanced from the people and events they purport to describe (Kuchler and Melion 1991:19). These strategies also conceal the gap between “history-as-action” and “history-as-representation” (Alonso 1988:34), thereby partially delimiting a critical analysis of the texts in question.

In order to develop a sense of how collective representations of Queho have been sustained and reconfigured, it is necessary to examine the employment of these discursive strategies in written documents. These texts detail multiple versions of Queho's ethnicity, origins, and relations to both Euro-American and indigenous communities.

1910

One of the first public accounts of Queho is recorded in the *Las Vegas Clark County Review* (November 26, 1910). In this excerpt, Queho's relations to the Indians of the Southern Paiute communities of Eldorado Canyon and Las Vegas are presented with relatively few discursive filters.

Messages from Searchlight and Nelson [Nevada] brought news to the Sheriff's office about six o'clock Monday evening that an Indian was on the war path in El Dorado Canyon ... This Indian, Creeo, by name, left Las Vegas about the 14th ... stole a boat and went to the Indian ranch about 12 miles below El Dorado. He told an old Indian that he had killed two white man [sic] and was going to kill the watchman at the Gold Bug mill, which he did on the 17th ... Vegas Indians have been noticed to be uneasy for several days and a knowledge [sic] of Creeo's act is probably the cause. [*Clark County Review* November 26, 1910].

The author of this text frames Queho's activities in a manner that diverges markedly from representations propounded in public discourses narrated after 1910. First, the author reveals that Queho had established ties with the Indians living in the Southern Paiute settlements of Eldorado Canyon and Las Vegas. This is accomplished through the use of a split-voiced narrative (Alonso 1988) that situates Queho within "a series of active relationships" (Gramsci 1982:235-6). The author reveals that Queho disclosed his plans and actions to at least one Indian residing in a settlement within close proximity to the Eldorado Canyon. Queho's relations to Southern Paiute communities are also suggested when the author attributes the uneasiness of the Southern Paiutes of Las Vegas to knowledge of Queho's actions.

Next, the author politicizes Queho's actions, and thus implies that his motives are rooted within a social context. He alleges that Queho was an Indian "on the war path" (*Clark County Review* November 26, 1910). This designation politicizes the killings attributed to Queho and also positions his actions within a collective opposition against an unstated force. Historic

accounts discussed later in this paper affirm the presence of other acts of Paiute resistance.

Newspaper articles indicate that other Southern Paiutes expressed physical aggression towards the Euro-Americans both collectively and individually in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. A prospector who worked in southern Nevada in the late 1890s and early 1900s recalled these aggressions, stating,

We had not been down to Fort Mojave for some time previously so this note was our first intimation that another Pah-Ute had run "amok". There had been several similar cases before and there has been at least once since and strangely enough, all had originated in the vicinity of Eldorado Canyon, ninety miles above Needles [California]. Whenever one of those locoed [sic] Indians started out on a career of killing he became a lone wolf, feared and ostracized by all his fellow tribesmen. [Miner Frank Holmes' reflections on an 1897 letter from W.S. Hancock cited in *The Needles Nugget* January 12, 1940].

Ahvote was the name of the Southern Paiute individual whom Hancock described in the previous passage. According to Riggs (1912:106-7) "Ahvote killed five Euro-Americans in two days. Another Southern Paiute known as Mouse "killed two men above the canyon [before being] hunted down and killed" (Riggs 1912:106-7).

Collective acts of physical aggression towards Euro-American prospectors were also recorded in local newspapers when a court ordered the execution of a Paiute, Conchie, for the murder of a Euro-American, William Williams (*Searchlight* December 18, 1903). In January of 1904, demonstrations of collective violence continued. Paiutes from the Moapa Reservation allegedly killed two prospectors: William Joe and Henry Alexander. After shooting these men, the Paiutes reportedly mutilated their bodies "frightfully." During the same time, other Moapan Paiutes committed unspecified "depredations" leading Euro-Americans to fear a "general uprising" (*Searchlight* January of 1904).

People of other ethnic groups also frequently resorted to violence during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Hubert Bancroft states that there were 400 reported murders committed in southern Nevada between 1846 and 1890, with an average of ten homicides per year (Reid 1998:113), and Judge Harris states that 402 murders were committed between 1846 and 1881, which averages to 11.48 murders per year (Myrick 1958:341). Between 1870 and 1880, this estimate results in a ratio of 1 homicide for every 281 people per year (Federal Census, 1880).

Although homicidal activities were a pervasive phenomenon among all ethnic groups, Harris maintains that "adequate punishment is meted to but few" (Myrick 1958:341). Of the four hundred and two killings, only "eight people were hung by sheriffs, twenty three received prison sentences ... and thirteen were hung by citizens and vigilantes" (Myrick 1958: 341-342). Queho and other indigenous men, notably Mouse and Ahvote, were among those whom the law took a direct interest in capturing.

Despite limited law enforcement in Nevada, however, the amount of violence collectively experienced by whites from American Indians was relatively small compared to that in other states. Historian Hubert Bancroft (1890) notes,

Owing to the milder disposition of the Nevada tribes, as well as the swift vengeance by which any resistance was met, the state suffered less than some others by Indian wars. Probably 250 or 300 white persons have been killed by Indians in Nevada, while ten times that number of savages have suffered death at the hands of white men. [OCS-80 cited in Tuohy 1978:101].

1930

After stories of Queho began circulating through the press, reports about Queho's ethnicity, his place of birth, and his relations to both the Southern Paiute and Euro-American communities of southern Nevada began to undergo significant

alterations. By the 1930s, narratives of Queho became steeped in layers of symbolism that reflected “human interests, purposes, ends, and means” (Turner 1967:20). In one of the early mytho-histories constructed around Queho’s existence, the author reminisces,

When news of the punishment [of Steve Tecope, the reputed brother of Queho] was made known, old timers around Las Vegas and Searchlight lighted up their pipes and fell to recalling the days when the old Quartet mine was in full operation, and the Indians who formerly operated the mine had been forced into the background [*Las Vegas Age* November 12, 1931].

In this opening statement, the author deploys several discursive devices that frame a narrative resulting in the ethnic reconfiguration of Steve Tecope and Queho and the legitimization of Euro-American domination over lands previously owned by the Southern Paiutes. The author begins his text by positioning himself as an authority. First, he adopts a singular voice through which to vocalize his narrative. Next, he references “old timer” Euro-American prospectors, who are presumably in a position to give a definitive account of Queho’s life. The value of their testimony stems from their status as elders and their long term residence in southern Nevada. Finally, the author uses this opening statement to indicate the physical displacement of Indians at the Old Quartet Mine. This physical displacement foreshadows Queho and Steve Tecopes’ ideological displacement within the ensuing narrative.

The body of this story is constructed around the reconfiguration of power relations between the Euro-American and indigenous communities. In contrast to allusions of complacent dominance on the part of the old Euro-American prospectors, Queho and Steve Tecope are depicted as figures whose power is on the wane. Unlike the “old timers,” Queho and Steve Tecope’s advancing ages are conflated with imminent extinction. They are reportedly the “last of their family—a family of red men” (*Las Vegas Age* November 12, 1931).

Queho and Steve Tecopes' imminent deaths are also symbolically conflated with the closure of an era during which particular Southern Paiutes defied Euro-American laws and directives. The "last of a family of red men" alludes to the end of Indian resistance, the end of the Southern Paiute community, and the end of the indigenous population at large. A note of victory underlies these declarations. Queho is reportedly, "... a hermit far from the haunts of white man, while the younger brother is in the white man's jail, fated to spend the rest of his life in the white man's dreary prison" (*Las Vegas Age* November 12, 1931). In both cases, the author positions the brothers physically and ideologically apart from the dawning era of Euro-American dominion uncontested by "red men."

After removing Queho and Steve Tecope from the arena of collective relations of power, the author relays the story of Queho's origins.

A white man, unknown to history or legend by name, came to the little Indian settlement and stayed to marry the daughter of the chief, becoming the father of two half-breed children. As a member of the family, he enjoyed a word in councils governing the crude mining operations, and grew fairly wealthy according to white man's standards. He and his wife had an isolated trysting place on a high cliff above the Colorado River, where they pursued their studies, she learning to read and write English, and he to speak the native tongue. Another white man stumbled upon the little Indian community, and was surprised to find a member of his own race living as an Indian. The result of his visit was that the husband of the trusting Indian girl abandoned her and their two children, leaving as a farewell, a short note in her new language. Grief stricken, the young wife took her two children with her to the trysting place high above the muddy Colorado, and with them leaped into the murky waters, to be seen no more. Relatives of the girl swore vengeance. Tecope and Queho grew to manhood. Tecope was peaceful. The tragedy of the tribe grew into an obsession with Queho. Suddenly, a few years before the war, the elder brother ran amuck, so the story goes. [*Las Vegas Age* November 12, 1931]

This story employs a number of discursive strategies that result in the naturalization of a paternalistic racial hierarchy within which Euro-American men are positioned in a superior place

above the indigenous people of southern Nevada, and women are denigrated to the status of passive sexual objects. Within this categorization, the Euro-American father is cast as leadership-oriented, rational, civilized, and both linguistically and technologically adept.

In contrast, the representations of the Indians within this tale are diminutive. They live in a “little village” and practice “crude mining.” The wife is a “trusting Indian girl” (savage), who must be taught to read. Moreover, her identity is reportedly constituted via her relationship to her Euro-American husband. After being abandoned, she becomes “grief stricken.” In response to emotional duress she takes an active role that culminates in death. In a parallel fashion, the author frames the killings attributed to Queho as arising from deeply rooted psychological wounds. In both cases, the active forces expressed through Queho and his mythical mother are entirely conflated with death and destruction.

The author also uses this text to reconstitute Queho’s ethnicity and place of origin. This is done through a three-pronged strategy of generalization, exclusion, and invention. In lieu of a specific place of birth, Queho is born in a “little Indian village.” While it can be inferred that he was conceived at the “trusting” place, or a cave somewhere along the Colorado River where certain Southern Paiute traditionally lived, the author makes no mention of aboriginal territories. Moreover, although the author makes a point of noting that these Indians practiced “crude” mining before certain Euro-Americans took over these lands, he fails to mention that the mines of southern Nevada were located upon the traditional lands of the Southern Paiutes.

Finally, the author claims that Queho was a “half-breed.” This declaration is made after the author has presented a framework in which the Euro-American and Indian “races” are polarized and hierarchically positioned. Within this framework, a “half-breed” constitutes an outsider by default. He is neither Euro-American, nor Indian, nor somewhere in between. His

existence is the product of a sexual encounter between two "races" that culminated in abandonment by his father and the suicide of his mother.

By implication, Queho's birth is a biological and social error resulting in the individual biological and psychological scarring of Queho, and later the psychological and social scarring of the communities upon which he expressed his rage. Through this representation, the author undermines Queho's claims to community membership among specific Southern Paiute communities, generalized Indian communities, or generalized Euro-American communities. In the absence of these ties, Queho's actions are easily portrayed as the products of psychological malaise rather than actions rooted in socially, politically, or economically changing contexts infused by the radical reconfiguration of power relations between and among Euro-American and indigenous groups and individuals.

1960S

By the mid-1960s, narratives of Queho's ethnicity, origins, and reasons for killing became further embedded within a framework of Euro-American paternalism and collective victimization. This framework is bolstered through the discursive strategies of emotionalism, exaggeration, and the creation of a sharp delineation between law-abiding Euro-Americans and chaos-inducing Indians. Lounsberry (1964:20) exclaims,

In view of the fact that this entire distance was virtually without water and was infested by hostile Indians and ... temperatures zooming to 135 degrees and more, early sheriff's officers scarcely may be blamed if they didn't beat their brain out in an effort to bring the niceties of law and order to the remote hellhole on the river.

The theme of racist paternalism is further expounded in the following statement:

Nevada's Piute Indians had grown fat and lazy since laying off their war bonnets and exchanging their pride and normally empty bellies

for a new way of life characterized by peace and plentiful handouts. But apparently one young buck from the Piute camp near El Dorado canyon, did not agree with this new theory of peace and plenty. [Lounsberry 1964:22]

In addition to casting the Euro-Americans into the role of rescuers, this statement seeks to legitimate and naturalize the Euro-American's dominion over the aboriginal lands of the Southern Paiutes. In order to accomplish this end, the pre-Euro-American history of southern Nevada is summarily dismissed as a time of "war ... and empty bellies" (Lounsberry 1964:22), whereas the time after the Euro-American's arrival is characterized as Edenic. It is both "plentiful and peace(ful)" (Lounsberry 1964:22).

Within this hierarchical scheme the author creates representations that serve to denigrate the indigenous people regardless of their actions. Whereas the pre-contact Paiutes are represented as living in miserable conditions characterized by war and starvation, the Paiutes who lived in lands dominated by Euro-American interests are portrayed as "fat" "lazy" and "prideless" beings who survived off "handouts" (Lounsberry 1964:22). Furthermore, those Paiutes who fail to accept the parameters as defined by the Euro-American community are represented as maladjusted and hateful. Accordingly, after Queho purportedly caught "the torch of ... hatred" flung by Ahvote (Lounsberry 1964:22), he began his life of crime, which the author explains through psychological reductionism. He claims,

Social workers today would like to contend that Queho's entire bloody career was due to frustration in childhood; and from where I sit, this seems to be as good an explanation as any. [Lounsberry 1964:22]

After legitimating Euro-American dominion and paternalism, and creating an iconic representation of Queho as a hostile "half-breed" in need of psychiatric care, Lounsberry presents his version of Queho's origins and ethnicity. He claims,

Assertedly the “catch colt” son of a Cocopah Indian girl and a soldier at Fort Mohave, Queho was doomed from the hour of birth—the old men of the tribe having ordered that he be killed as soon as they had learned that blood of the despised palefaces coursed through his veins. Minutes before the death sentence was to be executed, the girl-mother is supposed to have fled with her child into Pyramid Canyon, thence traveling laboriously northward. As the Colorado’s original course though the region lay at the bottom of a gorge too steep and rough to enable frequent access to its water, the Cocopah girl was forced to make her way through the desert with virtually no food, and only such liquid sustenance as she might press from the sticky pulp of the barrel cactus. With her newborn baby tugging hungrily at her breasts, the girl eked out a precarious existence until reaching the hot, barren El Dorado range, where a Piute hunting party came upon the dying pair. As women don’t have an especially high trade-in value among the Piutes, the exhausted girl was callously abandoned to her death. Her baby son, however, was adopted into the Piute tribe and nursed back to health. [Lounsberry 1964:22]

In this mytho-history, the author uses a racial paradigm of biological determinism to explain the entirety of Queho’s existence. Here the phenomena Yong describes as “the races and their intermixture circulate around an ambivalent axis of desire and aversion” occurs (Alonso n.d.:1). Queho is reportedly the product of a rape perpetrated by an Euro-American soldier against a Cocopah “girl.” In addition to dichotomizing the races into two ‘pure’ camps, and thus reducing Queho to the status of a biological impurity, the author reifies notions of unilineal evolution which deflate the value of non-Euro-Americans.

The author also uses this text to undermine the status of women. Queho’s mother is thus a “girl-mother ... without especially high trade-in value among the Piutes” (Lounsberry 1964:22). In addition to reducing Queho’s mother to the status of whore, the author implicitly conflates the gender inequality perpetrated through the Euro-American rape with the putatively low status of women among Paiutes. Thus, he forms a tenuous alliance between the Paiute rescuers and the Euro-American rapist.

By reconfiguring Queho’s ethnicity via rape by an Euro-American perpetrator against a Cocopah “girl,” this author also

positions Queho as an illegitimate, spatially displaced, biological outsider. As a biological impurity, he does not belong to the putatively “pure” races that the author seeks to naturalize and legitimate through statements such as, “Queho was doomed from the hour of birth” and had the “blood of the despised palefaces cours(ing) through his veins” (Lounsberry 1964:22). By implication, Queho’s alleged biological impurities are the source of the physical aggressions that he later exercised against individuals who were usually of Euro-American descent.

2000

By the year 2000, the question of Queho’s ethnicity and place of origin is presented through a lens of cultural relativism. This framework is used to entirely sidestep the questions of ethnic and cultural affiliation while simultaneously reestablishing representations that divest Queho of any particular ethnicity or membership within a specific community rooted in an actual physical place. Evans writes:

His tribal affiliation is uncertain. He may have been Mojave, Cocopah, Chemehuevi, Paiute or none of those. He was reputed to have been born some time around 1880 on Cottonwood Island, the illegitimate son of a Mexican miner and a local Indian girl.” [*Las Vegas Review Journal* 2000:2]

In this statement the author introduces new potential tribal affiliations for Queho. Though prior to this writing, authors had not represented Queho as either Mojave or a Chemehuevi (Paiute), the author fails to take credit for these additions. Moreover, by stating that it is equally possible that Queho was neither “Mojave, Cocopah, Chemehuevi, [n]or Paiute” (*Las Vegas Review Journal* 2000:2), he implies that Queho may have been from an even more distant location.

The author also claims that Queho may have been “the illegitimate son of a Mexican miner and a local Indian girl” (*Las Vegas Review Journal* 2000:2). Though this claim appears to have

been introduced by himself or Hopkins, who co-wrote an article of Queho, no credit is taken for its introduction. In addition, Queho's birthplace on Cottonwood Island is once more provided with a qualifier that implies that this statement is based on speculation rather than historically verifiable information.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Each of these sample narratives is constructed around core conceptions of ethnicity and belonging. In the final section, I identify three narrative styles that are used to solidify the collective identities of Euro-Americans. Next, I turn to the discursive methods used to obviate social memories linking Queho to specific places and ethnic communities.

SOLIDIFYING COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES

Through the creation of mytho-histories of Queho's existence, the collective identities of Euro-Americans from southern Nevada were solidified. This occurred through embracing a model founded upon "pure and separate races" in which collective solidarity depends upon the creation of an Other who is alternately depicted as an obstacle or a threat. The 'race-centered' narratives of Queho's existence are thematically arranged around professions of progress, victimization, and conquest. Collectively, these narratives provide the means to "pass judgement on the practices of the old regime [and thus] constitute the new order" (Connerton 1989:7). In addition, they establish a history of continuity for members of the dominant community and 'explain' historical events in a manner that mirrors the preferred ideologies of the majority (Halbwachs 1980:43).

NARRATIVES OF PROGRESS

In the first narrative style, the theme of progress is conflated with the ethnicity of the newly arrived prospectors and settlers. They are depicted as rational, hard working individualists

capable of making the desert flourish with material wealth, and the community flourish under the newly established ordering of space, resources, and ideologies. In contrast, indigenous people are portrayed as emotionally driven technologically inept people who are barely able to keep themselves alive. With the exception of Queho, indigenous people are summarily depicted as clannish, passive, and non-individuated. In each case, these depictions reflect the unilineal Social Darwinist frameworks of Spencer and Morgan. According to this narrative, Paiute aggressions and the increased dependency of some Southern Paiutes upon resources held by Euro-American as access to traditional methods of subsistence decrease are perceived as hindrances of progress.

Although narratives of progress emphasizing the alleged racially based differences of Euro-Americans and indigenous people are presented in order “to break definitively with an older social order ... [these efforts] encounter a kind of historical deposit and threaten to founder upon it” (Connerton 1989:12). In response, the authors create highly selective frameworks that progressively mythologize Southern Paiutes. References to indigenous life in southern Nevada before the arrival of Euro-Americans are carefully conscripted, brief, generalized, and mythos-oriented. Specific information including tribal histories, names, territories, social structures, subsistence strategies, systems of knowledge, and political organization is systematically excluded. With the exception of “renegade Indians,” Southern Paiutes living at the time of narrative constructions are excluded from representation within collectively published discourses. Information that cannot be conscripted within narratives of mythos-infused versions of the past is selectively framed through narratives of victimization and conquest.

NARRATIVES OF VICTIMIZATION

In narratives of victimization, reporters depict Queho as a lone killer with no social, political, or ancestral attachments to Southern Paiute or Euro-American communities. In the absence of these relations, Queho's story is reduced to a rampage of senseless violence perpetrated against members of the Euro-American community. Narrators of collective victimization regularly conflate the violence perpetrated by Queho with his ethnicity. As a result he is cast as a loner lacking attachments to particular communities as well as the icon of the violent Indian Other.

In contrast, Euro-Americans are portrayed as the targets of Queho's unjust aggressions. As Queho is represented as a renegade Indian rather than a renegade individual, a shared belief of victimization at his hand exacerbates perceived differences among people adopting models of pure and discrete races. According to Irwin-Zarecka (1994:60), "Self-definition as a victim clearly marks the boundary between 'us' and 'them' in ways only matched by ties of kinship. To construct a sense of community, one almost inevitably needs the presence of the Other; the oppressor serves this role very well indeed."

NARRATIVES OF CONQUEST

In addition to collective narratives of victimization wherein Queho is alternately depicted as a "Paiute terrorist" (Ashbaugh 1980:52), "Nevada's No.1 public enemy" (Lounsberry 1964), or one of "Nevada's most dangerous and vicious killer(s)" (*The Nevadan* 1974), narratives of conquest serve to solidify collective identities. The narratives of conquest take two distinctive forms. In the first version, the collective victory emphasizes the success of a particular community in overcoming immeasurable obstacles. In the second version, the collective triumph is accomplished by divesting the Other of power. Both narratives of collective victimization and conquest conjoin in their need to

have an alien Other against whom they express their resistance while concomitantly bolstering a sense of group solidarity.

"RACE," PLACE, AND DISCONTINUITY

While mytho-histories of Queho's life helped to increase collective solidarity among Euro-Americans, the same narratives hinged upon the dismantling of Queho's identity. Imaginative re-constructions and hence de-constructions of Queho's ethnic identity, as well as the repeated relocation of Queho's place of origin to regions outside of Eldorado Canyon reveal the second prevalent theme evidenced in narrative constructions of Queho's existence. These reconfigurations signal the alteration of a single individual's identity as well as the continuous reinvention of Euro-American and indigenous collective identities. The power of these alterations is twofold. Through the representations that emerge from these ruptures, the collective constructions of memory as well as the publicly espoused collective histories are fundamentally restructured. Connerton (1989:37) notes that,

Groups provide individuals with frameworks within which their memories are localized and memories are localized by a kind of mapping. We situate what we recollect within the mental spaces provided by the group. But these mental spaces, Halbwachs insisted, always receive support from and refer back to the material spaces that particular groups occupy.

The process of memory reconstruction begins with the alteration of Queho's connections to communities in which "memories are localized" (Connerton 1989:37). In addition to publicly divesting Queho of group membership, members of the Euro-American community used discourse and direct coercion to discourage members of the Paiute community from interacting with Queho, which is a necessary activity for creating and maintaining group memories.

Memory reconstruction also occurs through the reconfiguration of Queho's place of origin. One of the primary

discursive strategies employed in the subjectification of Queho occurs through the construction of narratives that displace Queho's birth from specific locations. In addition to referencing generalized and fictional locations, the authors situate Queho in locations that are spatially distanced from the places Queho indisputably inhabited between 1910 and 1940, and quite probably inhabited between the 1880s and 1910.

Between 1910 and 2000, Queho's place of origins is repeatedly moved from regions ranging between Cottonwood Island in southern Nevada to the Sonoran Desert of Arizona or Mexico. As Queho's place of birth is moved, his ethnicity is concomitantly reconstructed. The cumulative result of these mytho-origin stories is that Queho is situated as an outsider who may have been one of twelve different ethnic combinations. Through the continuous reassignment of Queho's birthplace and ethnicity, the authors sever Queho's connections to place and community. The construction and elaboration of spatial, social, and putatively 'biological' ruptures also serve as the vehicles for catalyzing fissures within the collective memory. The collective articulation of ideologically esteemed "truths" frequently rests on premises diverging markedly from events and details situated in particular places and recorded within some of the earliest historical records.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Considered singularly and collectively, the written accounts of Queho's existence (1910-2000) lucidly demonstrate that depictions of "the Other" are constantly being reconstituted via encounters between shifting fields of social action and hermeneutics (Alonso 1988). In both "histories-as-fact" and "histories-as-representation," narratives of Queho's existence have served as a medium through which dominant communities have conceived, preserved, and reinvented "the Other" as well as themselves. In the process of constructing and disseminating these narratives, the meanings attributed to

Queho's life have been repeatedly created, destroyed, and reconfigured.

This analysis reveals that individual and collective representations are never arbitrarily assigned, but rather develop within changing historic, socio-political, and economic contexts. Herein, the interrelated forces of knowledge and power conjoin to produce representations that mirror the fixed and changing interests of those "who can make the most effective use of the tools of discourse" (Milton 1993:9). In the case of Queho, newspaper accounts, journal articles, and books have been written exclusively by non-indigenous people who have chosen to depict Queho through representations that progressively estrange him from the place of his birth, the community in which he lived, and his ethnic identity.

The significance of these distancing measures lies in their capacity to radically decontextualize social memories. Absent from the narratives of Queho's life are the stories of Southern Paiutes who were progressively pushed out of their homelands by new immigrants in search of wealth, land, and the promise of a better life. Silenced are the complex and contested encounters among individuals and communities fighting for social, ideological, political, and economic dominance. In lieu of multi-vocal narratives with the capacity to point towards multiple layers of meaning and contestation, authors of Queho's story (1880s-2000) have chosen to create mytho-histories that essentialize, primitivize, or exoticize "the Other." These narratives simultaneously seek to undermine the premise that Southern Paiute individuals and communities had legitimate claims to the lands and resources of southern Nevada, and ways of engaging the world that did not mirror the ideologies espoused by members of Euro-American communities. Rather than actively examining these issues, the writings about Queho serve to naturalize, legitimize, and sustain the primary *Weltanschauung* of the communities which came to dominate portions of the traditional lands of the Southern Paiutes.

Through these selective discourses, the ongoing interplay between knowledge and power has remained largely masked. As a consequence, there has been an absence of critical analyses that seek to reveal the implications of such discourses.

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