The Kachina Cult: A Native Religion

People have their own interpretations of their personal religion, which means that even within the same denomination, people may have different beliefs, but there is usually a core belief everyone of that particular religion can turn to. This is how it is with the Kachina Cult of the Pueblo Indians. The foundation is the same, but as the Kachina Cult spread different practices were incorporated. This has posed a problem as to where the Kachina Cult officially came from, as there have been many different theories as to where it originated. Determining the origination of the Kachina Cult will be accomplished with a focus on the Kachina Dolls and how they have changed over time to accommodate the changes in the religion. In order to try and understand the origins of the Kachina Cult, it is necessary to look at and understand a little about the basics of this religion as it is today. After the basis of the Kachina Cult is set up, the chronicles of the Spanish explorers will be discussed, including the brief interlude of the Pueblo Revolt. Finally, the different theories of the origin of the Kachina Cult will be discussed in order to conclude that it is in fact a native born religion and the influences that the Spanish and other Euro-Americans might have had on it were superficial and did not seriously affect the actual religion.

The Kachina Cult appears to have been around for centuries. Calling this religion a cult may be considered a bad thing in Euro-American culture because of the negative view Euro-Americans have of cults. However, according to the Random House College Dictionary, a cult is

1. a particular system of religious worship, esp. with reference to its rites and ceremonies. 2. an instance of great veneration of a person, ideal, or thing, esp. as manifested by a body of admirers.... 3. the object of such devotion. 4. a group or sect bound together by devotion to or veneration of the same thing, person, ideal, etc. 5. Sociol. a group having a
sacred ideology and set of rites centering around their sacred symbols. 6. a religion that is considered or held to be false or unorthodox, or its members.

Therefore, it can be determined that, even though in modern American society a cult has a very negative connotation (most likely following the sixth definition from above for this particular topic) it does not have to be seen as a bad thing. In fact it adequately describes the religion of the Hopi and other Pueblo Indians who practice the Kachina Cult because they are very focused on their rites and ceremonies. Many may have associated the negative definition of a cult with the Hopi because they are so secretive. Secrecy does play a large part in the Kachina Cult ceremonies according to Jonathan S. Day, who says that “secrecy guarantees that every Hopi religious society is important and irreplaceable.”¹ The Hopi believe that secrecy is what makes their religion important and special, although there is never any indication that they would consider themselves a cult. Therefore, following the tradition of previous scholars who have written on this particular subject, this paper will use the term the “Kachina Cult,” as this is the best word to define what the Hopi believe and practice.

It is not only their religious practices that the Hopi kept guarded. It has been suggested that many aspects of the Hopi Indian culture are guarded from outside observers, though their religion is probably the most heavily guarded aspect of their culture. However, they are not always as guarded as has been suggested, which explains why some insight can be gained into the Kachina Cult. In their article, Edwin Wade and David Evans suggested that the Kachina sash (used in ceremonial life²) “is an important key to the understanding of Hopi world view. One

would therefore expect that the Hopis would guard its meaning jealously as they do for many other items of their culture. Yet with only a few exceptions Hopis were quite willing to discuss the sash’s meaning.”\(^3\) Studying the Kachina sash would therefore provide a way for scholars and others interested in the religious lives of the Pueblo Indians to get knowledge about the Kachina Cult in a way that would be acceptable to the Pueblo Indians themselves. Accessing the Kachina Cult in a way that is respectful to the Pueblo Indians could also lead to increased opportunity to learn more about a way of life that has thus far been kept mostly secret. By learning more about the Kachina Cult, people in general can therefore show the Hopi the respect they deserve by knowing how to behave in ceremonial situations they may become involved in.

Ceremonies are very important to the Kachina Cult and are very sacred and secretive. “From February through July, Katsina ceremonies are held on a regular basis, some of which are open to non-Indians or Pahanas.”\(^4\) Pahanas used to be more welcome to attend the Kachina ceremonies until the missionizing of the Spanish impelled them to make their ceremonies more secretive and less available and open to Pahanas.\(^5\) Therefore it is very difficult to determine exactly what the Kachina Cult is like currently, because they are so protective of their ceremonies and everything else that is associated with their religion. However, for over a century now, people have been collecting Kachina dolls but do not know much about them and how they connect to the Kachina Cult. Harold S. Colton (a Hopi Indian) planned a book which

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would detail what each Kachina Doll represented.\textsuperscript{6} Colton discussed three aspects of kachina which are a good indication as to what the Kachina Cult represents: “the supernatural being, as he exists in the mind of the Hopis; the masked impersonator of the supernatural being, who appears in the kivas and plazas; and the small dolls carved in the same likeness.”\textsuperscript{7} These three elements are the key to Hopi religion, and the last aspect (the Kachina dolls) will be the focus of determining the origin of the Kachina Cult, though all aspects will be considered throughout the paper.

The second key to the Kachina Cult (the mask) is almost as important as the Kachina dolls do survey how the religion has changed over time. Frank G. Anderson suggested in his article “Early Documentary Material on the Pueblo Kachina Cult,” based on Luxán’s (a sixteenth-century Spanish chronicler of the Espejo Expedition) chronicles, that the masks had been around long before the Spanish, as masks similar to the ones the Hopi and other Pueblo Indians used had already been seen in Mexico.\textsuperscript{8} Luxán’s chronicles come from the sixteenth century. This, along with Anderson’s article, suggests that many of the rituals and costumes associated with the Kachina cult were already in place when the Spanish arrived. Anderson’s article seemed to focus on the one aspect, masks, as being a native custom to the Pueblo Kachina cult. However, just the year before Anderson wrote this article, he wrote an article called “The Pueblo Kachina Cult: A Historical Reconstruction,” where he tried to give a more general view of where the Kachina Cult came from, including the suggestion that it integrated many Spanish


\textsuperscript{7} Harold S. Colton, \textit{Hopi Kachina Dolls: With a Key to Their Identification} (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987) 2.

elements into the original native cult over time.\textsuperscript{9} As a counter to his own arguments, Anderson does cite Elsie Clews Parsons, who believed that the Kachina Cult was very much influenced by the Spanish Catholic religion.\textsuperscript{10} These two articles articles by Anderson help show how a scholar’s perspective can change over the years from trying to give a general view, to supporting one side of an argument more than another.

As mentioned above, the mask is a key aspect of the Kachina Cult and the changes in the masks can help us understand the origin and development of the Kachina Cult. However, masks will not play a big role in this paper (as the Kachina dolls will), so they will be discussed briefly here before moving on to the more prominent aspect of this paper - the Kachina dolls. Frederick J. Dockstader is a scholar who is researching the origin and development of the Kachina Cult. He claims that “the most outstanding example of White influence ... can be seen in the Kachina mask (küütiũ) itself,” then goes on to briefly explain how the materials used in the making of the Kachina masks had changed from natural materials to more processed materials.\textsuperscript{11} This supports the idea that the Spanish influences were superficial and did not affect the actual religion. The fact that Spanish influences were superficial can be surmised, because it is unknown why the type of material changed and it cannot be assumed that the Spanish and other White people forced the Hopi Indians to use “white” materials for Indian religious practices.

First, it will be established that the Kachina Cult, with most of their present-day practices, was already securely in place by the time the Spanish arrived in the sixteenth century. The


\textsuperscript{11} Frederick J. Dockstader, \textit{The Kachina and the White Man: The Influences of White Culture on the Hopi Kachina Cult} (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985) 108.
Coronado Expedition was the first group of Spanish explorers that encountered the Pueblo Indians in the present-day Southwest United States, including the Hopi Indians. When they arrived, their chronicler noted that “their rites and sacrifices are somewhat idolatrous, but water is what they worship most, to which they offer small painted sticks and feathers and yellow powder made of flowers.”\textsuperscript{12} The “small painted sticks” could be an early beginning to the Kachina dolls as nearly three centuries later, Adolph F. Bandelier remarks that “they also had boards of wood [early form of Kachina doll], which they do give to the children as dolls.”\textsuperscript{13} This later supporting evidence from Bandelier suggests that the Pueblo Indians already had rites and ceremonies of their religion in place when the Coronado Expedition arrived in the mid-sixteenth century. These two sources coupled together also show there was change in the Kachina Cult over time; however, there is no indication that the change was due to the influences of the Spanish and other Europeans or Americans. The centuries separating these sources were times of limited contact between Indians and Europeans, which is further evidence that the Spanish did not influence the change from “small painted sticks” to “boards of wood” to Kachina dolls.

The second Spanish expedition that visited the Pueblo Indians in the sixteenth century was the Espejo Expedition from 1582-1583. When the Espejo Expedition first encountered the Hopi Indians, they remarked that “they are idolaters as in the province of Sumí [Zuñí]. They have shrines along the roads and houses of worship in the Pueblos where they talk to the devil.”\textsuperscript{14}

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\textsuperscript{14} Diego Pérez de Luxán, \textit{Expedition into New Mexico made by Antonio de Espejo 1582-1583: As Revealed in the Journal of Diego Pérez de Luxán, A Member of the Party} (Los Angeles: The Quivira Society, 1929) 103.
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The observation of the Hopi Indians shows that the Kachina Cult was essentially already in place, fits in with the aspect mentioned above about Kachina being a supernatural being,\textsuperscript{15} which the Spanish most likely would have connected with the Devil. In the sixteenth century, it appears that the Hopi were already worshipping idols, probably Kachinas, and the fact that the Spanish saw them as “idolaters” suggests they may have already had the masks and dolls that depict the Kachina.

When the Espejo Expedition encountered the Hopi Indians, they compared them to what they had already seen at the Zuñi village. The Spanish saw the Zuñi as

idolatrous, for that pueblo had four caverns [kivas] in the plazas where they have their dances and their baths.... In front of each one, before going within, is a black stone ... and on each one is a badly painted figure of an Indian with a flaming crown. These idols everyone has in his house.\textsuperscript{16}

This supports the idea that the Kachina Cult is a native religion. This is because the different villages of Pueblo Indians, like the Zuñi Indians and the Hopi Indians, already had similar practices by the time the Spanish arrived, which implies that the religion had already begun spreading throughout the southwest region of the present-day United States. The observations of the Coronado Expedition and the Espejo Expedition validate the claim that the origin of the Kachina Cult was strictly native. However, it must now be determined if the development of the Kachina Cult was also purely native or if once the Spanish came they effectively changed the Kachina Cult.

Few primary sources exist for the centuries between the sixteenth century and the late


\textsuperscript{16} Diego Pérez de Luxán, \textit{Expedition into New Mexico made by Antonio de Espejo 1582-1583: As Revealed in the Journal of Diego Pérez de Luxán, A Member of the Party} (Los Angeles: The Quivira Society, 1929) 78. Brackets in original text.
nineteenth century. As it turns out this was a period of limited contact between the Natives and the Europeans. Frederick J. Dockstader, however, suggests that there was not complete isolation as many have thought and that “the Spaniards were conscious of these stubborn apostates, and frequently considered means of recovering Tusayan.”

This quote from Dockstader begins to develop the idea that the Kachina Cult continued to grow on an almost purely native basis and that the Spanish were not very influential in these native Hopi lands during the years when Spanish explorers and missionaries had limited contact with the Hopi Indians. Dockstader also suggests that “although there were intrusions from time to time, the pressure from the Whites diminished to a point where they were no longer the primary threat they were once considered.”

This idea that there was only limited intrusion, also supports the idea that Spanish influence on the Kachina Cult was fairly superficial, even if at one point it had been considered a threat to the religious practices of the Kachina Cult.

Therefore, even though there are scarce primary sources from this particular time period, it can be concluded that the Hopi Indians were successful in driving out the Spanish and preventing them from becoming too involved in their religious practices. Everything started with the Pueblo Revolt that began in 1680. Ramón Gutiérez, in his book *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away*, said that “from the conquistadores’ perspective, the Pueblo Indians were an inferior breed close to savages.” This quotation is another example of how the Spanish viewed

\[17\] Frederick J. Dockstader, *The Kachina and the White Man: The Influences of White Culture on the Hopi Kachina Cult* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985) 72. Tusayan, according to the glossary in the back of Dockstader’s book is the “early Spanish name for the area occupied by the Hopis.”


\[19\] Ramón A. Gutiérez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford University Press, 1991) 44.
the Natives. Sergento Mayor Luis de Quintana also commented on this in 1681, after a year had already passed in the Pueblo Revolt. He said that

some clerical ministers... being unable to work and fulfill completely their obligations as ministers in the midst of so much idolatry, were living very disconsolately because of the said superstitions, and it having come to the notice of the said señor general, he gave a plenary commission... to seize the suspects and investigate and substantiate the said crimes, which he did. Having arrested the said Indians... [he] sentenced four of them to death, and some of them to the rest to lashings and being sold as slaves and others to imprisonment.20

It may be called the Pueblo Revolt, but even the Spanish documents at this time show that the Spanish were the instigators of the Pueblo Revolt. This implies that the Spanish did not realize that their attempted suppression of the Native religion led to the Revolt, and even after a year of warring, the Spanish were still arresting Indians for their idolatrous practices. Also, the fact that the Spanish were forced out for a couple of centuries speaks volumes about the power of the Hopi Indians and their influences on their own religion and their determination to pressure their religion. The Hopi Indians appeared to be unwilling to compromise with the Spanish, which led to them forcing the Spanish out and diminishing the Spaniards’ power as a threat not only to their religious practices, but to their people as a whole.

Jerald K. Slattum also discussed this middle period when Spanish influences were limited. He states that “at times governors openly opposed the suppression of native religions by the friars and ignored the requests made by missionaries in their attempt to stamp out the customs.”21 This later led to “the actual breakdown of the colonies and prepared the way for the


Pueblo Rebellion in 1680." These rebellions are what led to the Spanish explorers essentially pulling out of this particular region, leading to the period of limited contact, which persisted for a couple of centuries.

However, the Spanish and other European influences did not stay away from the Hopi Indians forever. With the nineteenth century, European contact became a prevalent part of Hopi Indian life again. “With increasing invasions by various military and civilian surveying parties, the Hopis gradually became aware of a new culture.” Not only were the Hopi Indians now exposed to the Spanish missionaries, but they were also exposed to Americans and other Europeans who were trying to take their land. However, it does not appear the the Hopi Indians necessarily saw the increasing of European contact again as a negative thing, but they had become strong enough that the new people they were now encountering in the nineteenth century did not have significant influence over their everyday lives and practices.

The Southwest Journals of Adolph F. Bandelier (1883-1884) are a prime example of the late nineteenth century re-introduction of Euro-American influences on the Hopi Indians. Bandelier’s observations on his expedition are further evidence of the theory that the Kachina Cult was developed by native tribes in what is now the Southwest United States. As mentioned before, Bandelier mentions the “boards of wood [early form of Kachina doll], which they do give to the children as dolls.” Combined with the evidence of the centuries of limited contact with


Whites, this observation of Bandelier’s suggests that the Kachina Cult was persisting despite their limited contact with the Euro-American culture and practices of the time. This shows that the Kachina Cult was still developing and changing among themselves (as is depicted by the changing of the Kachina dolls over the centuries) which helps explains the changes and differences between the Kachina Cult of the first European encounters in the sixteenth century and what is still practiced in modern times.

It has also been suggested that development of the Kachina Cult among the various tribes of Pueblo Indians was slightly different. This is not because some were influenced by the Spanish or other Euro-American ideas and culture, but because of the natural process of change over time. Bandelier observed that

> Even today the tempo of most dances is faster among the Western Puebloans than among the Eastern. Items of ceremonial paraphernalia continue to be traded throughout the Pueblo area. Throughout recent decades, Zuñi Pueblo has continued to be commonly recognized as the center of the kachina cult, with various traits diffusing both west to the Hopi and east to the Rio Grande villages. Inevitably, there has been a certain amount of reciprocity between these villages.25

This observation of Bandelier suggests that the Kachina Cult developed as a native religion with the Zuñi tribe, and then subsequently spread to the surrounding villages. This observation also supports the theory that the Kachina Cult originated and developed through native means and also implies that Spanish influences probably did not have a great effect on the development of the Kachina Cult. Bandelier’s observation shows that not only did the various Pueblo Indian tribes have a network of communication set up between them, but also that the Kachina Cult had probably been around for quite some time. This network of communications was probably

present for a couple of centuries (possibly developed with the coming of the Spanish explorers, possibly even before they came), at least long enough to have allowed for the development of slight differences between the dances and artistry of the Kachina dolls themselves. This idea that the network of communications was already in place, will be considered in more depth later when the different theories about the origin and the development of the Kachina Cult are further examined.

Evidence that the Spanish were unsuccessful in their attempts to Christianize, or influence the religion of, the Hopi Indians and other practitioners of the Kachina Cult comes from the *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution, 1896*. This report states that “the habit of placing mortuary votive offerings was almost universal, and almost every grave excavated contained one or more objects of pottery, stone implements, ceremonial paraphernalia, and the like.” These ceremonial paraphernalia most likely included the Kachina dolls that were used for religious purposes, or even the Kachina masks used in their religious ceremonies. Though it is not implicit that there was no evidence of Spanish influence, it can be inferred from the practices pertaining to the burial of their dead and the graves they use. The type of things found in the graves excavated suggests more of a multi-deity burial with things buried to protect the person. This would not coincide with the Catholic religion of the early Spanish missionaries who believed in heaven as the afterlife. This burial practice is probably a component of the Kachina Cult that was not influenced by the early Spanish missionaries.

Just over two decades after the Smithsonian Institute report came the *Archeological Explorations in Northeastern Arizona (1919)*. This report shows how the Kachina Cult may

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have spread to different native tribes throughout the geographic region the Hopi Indians were located in. In reference to the “cliff-house culture,” they found what they call the “sunflower cache.” They then had Dr. Fewkes, a specialist connect to these explorations, examine what they found, and he says “the ‘sunflowers’ were perhaps attached to the sides of helmet masks like those worn by the impersonators of Hopi Kachinas.” The fact that Dr. Fewkes would compare this “ceremonial paraphernalia” found in the Sunflower Cache to the Hopi Kachinas suggests the spread of influence of the Kachina Cult among the various tribes that inhabited the same geographic region of the modern southwest United States. This also implies that the Hopi Indians may have been the most noted for their use of the Kachina Cult, as they have been the most widely discussed Pueblo Indian tribe in reference to the Kachina Cult.

The above information gives light to a variety of primary sources which, directly and indirectly, reference the Kachina Cult. There has been much debate as to whether scholars can really suggest a strictly native-developed foundation for the Kachina Cult. The debate over how much influence the Spanish really had over the Kachina Cult and the Pueblo Indians who practiced it has been going on for some time. Many scholars have written their ideas as to the origins of the Kachina Cult. These various theories must be examined in greater detail before a conclusion as to what the origin of the Kachina Cult is. It is important to take into consideration these many scholars and their evidence to determine the accuracy of the proposed claim of this


paper - that the Kachina Cult is strictly a native-born religion, and that the influence of the Spanish was fairly superficial.

However, not all scholars have interpreted the primary sources as evidence that the Kachina Cult was strictly a native religion. It is worthwhile to examine the many different interpretations of the primary sources of the different scholars to determine how the origin of the Kachina Cult has been viewed over the years. Mamie Ruth Tanquist Miller offers one of the early examinations of the influence of the Spanish over the Pueblo Indians. Throughout her dissertation, she analyzes the many different Spanish expeditions that came into contact with the Pueblo Indians. This source offers a brief compilation of these early expeditions which gives the reader a general idea of what the Pueblo Indians were like when they first came into contact with the Spanish. She mentions in her analysis of the Oñate Expedition that “[Pueblo Indian] religion consists in worshipping idols of which they have many.”

Miller focuses on the fact that the Kachina Cult was in place when the Spanish explorers began arriving in what is the present day Southwest United States. This is because they described the Kachina Cult in terms that would still be used today to describe this religion. Miller’s analysis and interpretation of the early primary sources that reference the Kachina Cult is consistent with the claim of this paper. That is, the Kachina Cult was already established in the region by the time the Spanish explorers began to arrive in the sixteenth century.

Just over ten years after Miller, Frank G. Anderson tried to push the discussion of the Kachina Cult to a more middle ground, suggesting that it was in fact influenced by the early Spanish explorers who came into contact with the Pueblo Indians. He claims, in reference to the

origin of the Kachina Cult, that “it is not necessary to take the extreme position.”\textsuperscript{32} He claims that “there are logically three possible sources for [the origin of the Kachina Cult]: (1) local inventiveness among the Pueblos themselves, (2) other Indian groups, and (3) Whites.”\textsuperscript{33} He then goes on to explain the reasoning behind the three possible explanations for the origin of the Kachina Cult. What is important from the writings of Anderson is the third source for the Kachina Cult -- Whites. Anderson appears to be unsure of where he stands because he does not believe the evidence to be very conclusive as to what the origin of the Kachina Cult was.\textsuperscript{34} This problem seems to show up over and over again when it comes to the explanation of the Spanish having a major influence on the Kachina Cult. Anderson bases a lot of his conclusions on the fact that the evidence for the origin of the Kachina Cult is inconclusive, yet he seems to disregard the evidence that comes from the journals and writings of the Spanish explorers as was examined above.

Frederick J. Dockstader agrees with Anderson about the lack of evidence being a problem in determining the origin of the Kachina Cult, however, Dockstader does admit that “the prehistoric origin of the Kachina Cult, however, has often been denied.”\textsuperscript{35} This suggests that Dockstader supports the idea of the Kachina Cult being more of a Spanish influenced religion. He then explains that “the theory has been long maintained by many authorities that the Kachina complex was but an outgrowth of Catholic hagiolatry interwoven with Pueblo religious


\textsuperscript{35} Frederick J. Dockstader, \textit{The Kachina and the White Man: The Influences of White Culture on the Hopi Kachina Cult} (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985) 33 and 31.
practice.” This brings up questions about where the evidence came from that supported this “long maintained” theory. This could be a result of recent research and new evidence from the Spanish explorers and others who have come into contact with the Kachina Cult. However, there is no indication that the primary source evidence used in this paper was available to the early scholars who were trying to determine where the Kachina Cult originated.

E. Charles Adams wrote a book, *The Origin and Development of the Pueblo Katsina Cult* in which he tries to examine the evidence to determine where the Kachina Cult came from originally. This book gives a different view on how the Spanish influenced the Kachina Cult. This book suggests that the Spanish did not necessarily influence the artistry of the Kachina Cult, but the practices in that “the missionizing forced the Pueblo to cloak much of their ceremonialism in veils of secrecy.” This is an interesting position to take, because it does suggest that the Spanish may have changed certain practices of the Kachina Cult. However, this secrecy has continued on into modern times, and it has been suggested that “secrecy guarantees that every Hopi religious society is important and irreplaceable.” This idea claims that the Pueblo Indians have a secretive religious society, yet the Kachina dolls can be purchased by anyone. This also relates back to the aspect of the Kachina sash. It is very possible that the Kachina doll is used in a way that the Pueblo Indians are comfortable with to spread knowledge of the Kachina Cult.

Along the lines of the secrecy aspect, Adams says that “the long-term effects of Spanish

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Catholicism and systematic attempts to exterminate Pueblo religion have disrupted many of the Rio Grande villages and their native ceremonialism.”\textsuperscript{39} This would result, over an extended period of time, in the Pueblo Indians not only becoming more secretive about their ceremonies and religious practices, but also would encourage them to close off their communication with non-Pueblo Indians. This would explain why the Pueblo Indians do not like to talk about their religious practices, because they are somewhat justified in believing that the Euro-American religions, like Catholicism, would try to stamp out their religion once again.

Inadvertently, the above evidence, which suggests that the Spanish did not have a lot of influence over the Kachina Cult, also suggests that the early Spanish explorers were unsuccessful in their attempts to convert the Pueblo Indians to Catholicism. As was mentioned before, the Catholic Spanish explorers saw the Pueblo Indians and their Kachina Cult as idolatrous. By suggesting that there were “systematic attempts to exterminate Pueblo religion,”\textsuperscript{40} Adams acknowledges that the Spanish attempts were unsuccessful. This supports the claim that even if the Spanish did have some influence over the Kachina Cult, like forcing the Pueblo Indians to make their religion more secretive, it was very superficial and did not affect the religious practices themselves. The “long-term effects” are most likely the turn towards secrecy which would essentially keep all non-Pueblo Indians from viewing the ceremonies of the Kachina Cult.

Adams also reflects on the language used to describe the Kachina Cult. This provides more evidence to the claim that the Kachina Cult is of native origin and development. Adams states that “the word katsina is borrowed from the Hopi word for really three interrelated

\textsuperscript{39} E. Charles Adams, \textit{The Origin and Development of the Pueblo Katsina Cult} (Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1991) 3.

\textsuperscript{40} E. Charles Adams, \textit{The Origin and Development of the Pueblo Katsina Cult} (Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1991) 3.
concepts: dolls, masked dancers, and supernatural beings.” Of course it could be explained that a Hopi word was used so that the Pueblo Indians would have a better understanding, but everything was influenced and developed by the Spanish explorers. However, with the way the Spanish explorers ran things, it would have been more plausible for them to use Spanish words and incorporate more specific Catholic practices. It can be assumed that the Catholics would most likely have used words that were related to Catholic practices, not words from the native languages to try and influence the natives more towards Catholicism in hopes of converting them.

Also, what the word means reinforces the idea that the Kachina Cult was a native born religion. The three concepts discussed above are the same as the key three aspects of the Kachina Cult mentioned above. Adams said the word was borrowed, which suggests that katsina was already a Hopi word. The Spanish explorers suggested it, but it would make more sense if the various Pueblo Indian tribes agreed that “katsina” was the best word to describe what they believed and practiced for their religion. If the Spanish did have such a heavy influence over the Kachina Cult, they probably would have suggested the use of a word that did not represent three things that are not really accepted in the Catholic church as sacred or righteous. Therefore, it can be surmised that the use of a native Hopi word to describe the religious beliefs and practices of the Pueblo Indians implies a native origin for the Kachina Cult.

Adams also suggest that “under a variety of names and interpretations, it is evident that the katsina cult was widely distributed from the beginning of the Spanish period.” He then

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uses documents discussed earlier in this paper to support the idea that the Kachina Cult was already widely distributed by the time the Spanish explorers began to arrive in this region. This was evidenced by the Espejo expedition which visited both the Zuñi Indian tribe and the Hopi Indian tribe and related the similarities between the religion of these two tribes, as was discussed early on in this paper. Through the examination of the early documentation of the Spanish explorers, it is implied that the Kachina Cult was a native religion that had already spread throughout the present day Southwest United States where the Pueblo Indians were located.

Carrol L. Riley, one of the the most recent scholars to try and determine the influence of the Spanish on the Kachina Cult brings up another interesting point. He states “that the Spaniards were powerful was obvious; that they were also vulnerable became known in 1532. In that year a ship sent northward by Cortés... were killed by local indians.” Even though this piece of evidence does not relate directly to the Kachina Cult, it shows that the Pueblo Indians realized that the Spanish explorers were not invincible. When the heads of Spanish explorations began sending groups northward, the Indians began to realize that they could resist. This would give the Pueblo Indians motivation to resist Spanish influence, especially on their religious beliefs and practices which played a very large part in their culture.

Riley also brings up another interesting piece of evidence later on in his book. He suggests that “many Christian elements have entered the native religion, and indeed, a vigorous folk Christianity is practiced side by side with that religion. However, the traditional religious


ceremonies and beliefs are at heart autochthonous.”\textsuperscript{45} Riley makes this interesting interpretation, that even if there were Spanish and Christian influences on the Kachina Cult, the native Pueblo Indians honestly believe that the Spanish did not influence their religion. This belief by the Pueblo Indians that their religion is strictly of native origins further complicates any modern research that may be done about the Kachina Cult, especially any interviews that may be done with a member of the Kachina Cult who would be willing to talk about their beliefs and practices. These people honestly believe that the Kachina Cult was strictly native in origin even though people may suggest otherwise. However, the fact that much of the Kachina Cult was already in place by the time the Spanish explorers began to arrive in the sixteenth century suggests that the Christian elements most likely did not significantly affect the practices and beliefs of the members of the Kachina Cult.

Finally, there have been recent publications specifically referring to the Kachina doll aspect of the Kachina Cult. Barton Wright wrote a book entitled \textit{Hopi Kachinas: The Complete Guide to Collecting Kachina Dolls}, in which he describes the many Kachina dolls for collectors with a brief introduction on the Kachina Cult and its practices. In the beginning of his book, Wright states that “the pressure of Spanish domination, pestilence and, more recently, cultural inundation have diminished but not destroyed [Hopi] traditional pattern of life.”\textsuperscript{46} Then he suggests that “to the intruding Spanish, however, Hopi religion was a challenge to be overcome and a belief to be destroyed as quickly as possible so that Catholicism could be substituted.”\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{45} Carroll L. Riley, \textit{The Kachina and the Cross: Indians and Spaniards in the Early Southwest} (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1999) 105.


These two statements support some of the theories presented above. They also support the claim of this paper in that the Kachina Cult was of native origin and somewhat successful in resisting being destroyed by the early Catholic missionaries.

The Kachina Cult is very difficult to break down and examine. The problem arises from limited sources, and virtually no sources from a Pueblo Indian view. However, after examining many of the chronicles written by the Spanish explorers who encountered the Kachina Cult, it can be concluded that the Kachina Cult was of native origin. Even though the primary sources for this particular subject are biased in a Euro-American direction, the evidence they give suggests that as much as the Spanish Catholics tried, they could not completely destroy the Kachina Cult. It would be very unlikely for the Spanish to make the statements that were discussed above if they were not true because they do expose the failure to get rid of the Kachina Cult. Therefore, after examining the evidence and the positions taken by prominent scholars in this particular field it can be determined that the Spanish influence on the Kachina Cult was superficial and did not affect the fundamental practices and beliefs of the Kachina Cult.
Bibliography

**Primary Sources**


**Secondary Sources**


