

University of North Carolina at Asheville

Confronting the Consequences of Cultural Exchange: Post-Contact Oral Histories among the  
Kiowa and the Cherokee

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By

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In Kiowa oral tradition, there is a sinister visitor, a lone stranger calling himself Smallpox. He explains, “I have come across the Eastern sea with the White men. Where they go, I go...I am their gift to you.”<sup>1</sup> The Cherokee have no oral record of this evil visitor, but they do relate a story about two benevolent strangers at Kăna’ssta. These mysterious men offered protection from the “wars and sickness” the Cherokee suffered already, and from a “stronger enemy” that loomed on the horizon.<sup>2</sup> In his 1847 work on the Iroquois, ethnologist Henry R. Schoolcraft criticized American Indian oral histories such as these, writing, “If there be truth mingled in the man’s narrations, as there sometimes is, it must be judged by the lights of reason, common sense, science, sound philosophy, and religion.”<sup>3</sup> Despite the fact that these two tales feature personified disease and prophecy, they undoubtedly represent more than the mangled version of the truth that Schoolcraft’s “common sense” would have detected. The Kiowa *were* visited by epidemics of smallpox and the Cherokee *did* find themselves facing a new kind of enemy with the arrival of whites, but these tales indicate more than just a history of events. Indeed, Schoolcraft’s condemnation of such oral histories based on Euro-American standards reflected the same cultural confrontation addressed in both of these stories: the consequences of contact between American Indians and whites.

The Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache have little in common culturally with the Cherokee, yet the oral traditions of each group include stories like these that were probably the products of contact with Europeans. From the Kiowa-Apache tradition comes “The Underwater Village,” a

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<sup>1</sup> Maurice Boyd, *Kiowa Voices*, vol. 2, *Myths, Legends and Folktales* (Fort Worth, Texas: Texas Christian University Press, 1983), 298.

<sup>2</sup> James Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees* (Asheville, North Carolina: Bright Mountain Books, 1992), 341.

<sup>3</sup> Henry R. Schoolcraft, *Notes on the Iroquois* (New York: AMS Press, 1975. 1847), 264.

story which shares an emphasis on smallpox and isolation from white influences with the Kiowa tales “The White Man’s Gift” and “Saynday Sends Smallpox Away.” Though the oral history of the Cherokee does not feature the same focus on smallpox, stories like “The Removed Townhouses” and “Kăna’sta: The Lost Settlement” both demonstrate similar themes of isolation as the best way to avoid damaging contact with a new enemy. Such clearly post-contact constructions rarely appear among American Indian cultures, suggesting that despite their cultural differences, the Kiowa and the Cherokee had comparable responses to whites.

This explanation sounds simple, but becomes complex when considering the fact that their behavioral responses to Europeans were very different. The Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache cultures were in many ways built upon the exchange brought by contact, resulting in a nomadic, male-oriented, and horse-centric lifestyle. The Cherokee, by contrast, slowly altered their loosely-governed agricultural and matrilineal traditions in order to assimilate and adapt to European ways. Because oral histories often served to help the American Indians who created them explain and understand their world and the way it changed, it is possible that the parallels between these sets of stories arose from the similarities between the Kiowa and the Cherokee experiences with whites. Both groups were geographically located so that they likely heard of Europeans before they physically met any, both cultures were transformed by the cultural exchange, and both peoples suffered horrific negative consequences of contact, in the form of epidemic disease and removal. The nature of each group’s experiences with Europeans resulted in similar mental and emotional reactions, causing them to create parallel oral histories.

These post-contact oral stories have gone largely uninvestigated by scholars despite the abundance of secondary information about the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache, the Cherokee, the results of interactions with Europeans, smallpox, and oral histories in general. All of these

subjects are vital to understanding the context of the Kiowa and Cherokee traditions. However, by examining each topic separately most scholars have failed to notice how they have all worked together to create very distinct oral histories.

Scholars studying the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache have shown little interest in interpretation of their oral histories. Mildred P. Mayhall's book *The Kiowas* broadly canvasses the history and culture of the group, but she neglects the Kiowa's own voices and oral traditions. Her main assertion is that Kiowa culture was profoundly impacted by contact with whites. She establishes that the Kiowa were "typical Plains Indians" and writes, "...there was no such thing as a Plains culture or Plains Indians aboriginals. It developed within the period of white penetration into the Americas."<sup>4</sup> Though she addresses cultural traits like art and religion, the only kind of oral histories that Mayhall discusses are creation stories. For this reason, her exploration of the transformative consequences of contact, though apt, could be applied to almost any Plains culture, and she ignores the existence of a distinctly Kiowa response.

The second volume of Maurice Boyd's *Kiowa Voices* provides the perspective that Mayhall lacks, although his coverage of post-contact stories does not include a deep analysis of their implications. Boyd delineates the history of the Kiowa through their own traditions, and he includes post-contact tales in the collection of stories at the end of the book. He asserts, "Their [the Kiowa] life for thousands of years had been a struggle for survival; their ancient verbal images, cast into myths, reflect the search for origins and security."<sup>5</sup> Despite establishing the fact that oral traditions can reveal much about the worldview of the Kiowa, Boyd never tries to interpret the tales that he has collected.

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<sup>4</sup> Mildred P. Mayhall, *The Kiowas* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 92, 95.

<sup>5</sup> Boyd, 1.

Scholars writing about the Cherokee have neglected oral stories in much the same way, even though their assertions are often directly related to the content of these tales. In his book, *The Cherokee Nation*, Robert J. Conley describes the Cherokee from the time before contact through the 1900s. He focuses on Cherokee interactions with whites, arguing that even before physical contact occurred, the reputation of Europeans preceded them. He asserts, "...it is surely safe to say that because of the De Soto expedition, the Cherokees must have been painfully aware of the fact that there were new forces in their world...forces with which they would have to deal in the future."<sup>6</sup> Conley's argument is convincingly articulated, but although the Cherokee tales emphasizing isolation would tie into his thesis, he does not acknowledge them.

Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green are guilty of the same omission in their otherwise comprehensive book *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*. Perdue and Green thoroughly examine the Trail of Tears and the events leading up to it, providing substantial background information about the culture of the Cherokee and how it changed over time. Like Conley, they suggest that the Cherokee began to feel the effects of contact before the Europeans reached them, writing, "For the next century [after the De Soto expedition], Cherokees had little contact with Europeans, but they nevertheless felt their effect."<sup>7</sup> Though post-contact additions to the Cherokee oral history seem to support this assertion, these scholars completely ignore them.

Unsurprisingly, the more general sources that pertain to this phenomenon also ignore the existence of post-contact stories. Alfred W. Crosby Jr.'s *The Columbian Exchange* is a thorough examination of the mingling of the Old and New Worlds, describing both sides of the cultural

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<sup>6</sup> Robert J. Conley, *The Cherokee Nation: A History* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 19.

<sup>7</sup> Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears* (New York: The Penguin Group, 2007), 11.

interaction. He argues, "...the most important changes brought on by the Columbian voyages were biological in nature."<sup>8</sup> Crosby's argument is primarily about biology, and he does not discuss the Kiowa, the Cherokee, or oral histories at all. He does address the psychological ramifications of contact, and because the changes to oral literature were probably an outgrowth of these effects, post-contact stories could be used to support his argument even though he never mentions them.

Likewise, Elizabeth A. Fenn's *Pox Americana* contextualizes the ravages of smallpox but never mentions oral histories. *Pox Americana* is the story of the smallpox epidemic that swept North America in the late 1700s, one that Fenn believes was of great significance. She writes, "With the exception of the [Revolutionary] war itself, epidemic smallpox was the greatest upheaval to afflict the continent in these years."<sup>9</sup> Because she covers the outbreak as it affected everyone in North America, not just American Indians, an analysis of oral tales about the disease would be a digression from her main point. The background about smallpox that Fenn provides is, like Crosby's work, helpful in understanding the distinct oral histories of the Kiowa and the Cherokee even though she does not connect the disease to the stories.

Peter Nabokov's focus on the purposes and meanings of oral traditions in his book, *A Forest of Time*, contrasts sharply with the works of other scholars, but even he leaves out any reference to post-contact stories. He asserts that the traits that make Native American ways of history unique, such as fluidity and prophesy, do not necessarily make them less genuine, useful, or significant. Nabokov identifies a question at the heart of the academic discussion of oral

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<sup>8</sup> Alfred W. Crosby Jr., *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequence of 1492*, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ed. (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2003), xxvi.

<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1777-82* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 9.

histories: "...we often note a deeper disagreement about the very nature of history: should its priority be facts and chronologies or themes and attitudes?"<sup>10</sup> Perhaps because *A Forest of Time* is a broad overview of oral traditions, Nabokov never offers a detailed discussion of the effects of contact on oral traditions beyond the introduction of writing. Just as many other scholars have omitted analysis of oral stories altogether, Nabokov overlooks the effect of interaction with whites on American Indian traditions evidenced by the Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, and Cherokee tales.

This paper demonstrates the connection between contact experiences and oral traditions that so many other scholars have ignored. Information from secondary sources such as works by Conley, Mayhall, and Fenn as well as from firsthand accounts of explorers, fur traders, and missionaries provides a solid background for the interpretation of what contact meant to both the Kiowa and the Cherokee. Using this information as a backdrop for the analysis of stories collected by ethnologists and applying Nabokov's approach to American Indian oral histories, the function of post-contact stories within the Kiowa and the Cherokee cultures can be understood.

In order to understand the function and value of their oral histories, it is important first to understand the history and culture of the Kiowa and the Kiowa-Apache themselves. Before contact the Kiowa were hunters that had slowly migrated southward from what is today Yellowstone National Park.<sup>11</sup> According to Kiowa tradition, it was during their days in this area

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<sup>10</sup> Peter Nabokov, *A Forest of Time: American Indian Ways of History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 67.

<sup>11</sup> Mayhall, 1, 8.

that they became linked to the Kiowa-Apache.<sup>12</sup> The Kiowa-Apache remained related to the Kiowa, and despite the fact that they each spoke different languages, the two groups were connected in all political and cultural matters.<sup>13</sup> While other groups living near the Kiowa had an agricultural past, the Kiowa themselves had no memory of such a lifestyle, but rather they maintained that they had always been hunters.<sup>14</sup>

With the arrival of Europeans came a cultural exchange that fundamentally altered the culture and lifestyle of the Kiowa and the Kiowa-Apache, primarily through the introduction of horses. By the time that whites came to America, the Kiowa were living in the southern Great Plains.<sup>15</sup> The Spaniards brought horses with them to the southwest, and use of these animals spread rapidly among the Plains Indians through intertribal trade, transforming everyday life by allowing them to be more nomadic and to hunt buffalo.<sup>16</sup> The exact details about the first acquisition of horses among the Kiowa are unclear. Scholars believe that they obtained these animals through their trade networks with the Crow or the Comanche, and not initially from direct contact with the Spanish.<sup>17</sup> This method suggests that the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache felt the first effects of the cultural exchange indirectly, and that they likely heard of Europeans from

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<sup>12</sup> Boyd, 41.

<sup>13</sup> Mayhall, 9-10.

<sup>14</sup> James Mooney, *Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979), 153.

<sup>15</sup> Mayhall, 1.

<sup>16</sup> Collin G. Calloway, ed., *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground: Plains Indian Views of How the West was Lost* (New York: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996), 3; Mayhall, 94-95.

<sup>17</sup> Boyd, 65; Mooney, *Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians*, 160-161.



other tribes before they physically encountered any themselves. Regardless of where they got them, the Kiowa had horses by the 1700s.<sup>18</sup>

Horses opened up new possibilities for the Kiowa and the Kiowa-Apache, not only for hunting buffalo but also in military terms. With beasts of burden better suited for a nomadic lifestyle, they could travel further during military expeditions.<sup>19</sup> The result was a distinctly Great Plains culture, dependent not only on buffalo, but also on raids to steal horses and captives.<sup>20</sup> The emphasis on raids meant that military prowess was of the greatest value and, because men were the ones engaging in such activities, the culture became male-oriented.<sup>21</sup> The male-dominated, military-driven culture of the Kiowa is evidenced by the honor of Kiowa chief Kicking Bird, as observed by missionary and teacher Thomas C. Battey in 1872. Battey wrote that in response to charges of being womanlike for his friendship with whites, Kicking Bird “...raised a force, conducted a raid into Texas, and had a severe engagement with the white soldiers, where he conducted his men with such ability and coolness as to...win a testimony of respect from the commander of his enemy’s forces.”<sup>22</sup> Kicking Bird was able to rehabilitate his reputation for being cowardly and feminine by exhibiting his superior skills in battle, exposing just how important male bravery and military exploits were to the Kiowa after the introduction of horses transformed their culture.

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<sup>18</sup> Mayhall, 93, 98.

<sup>19</sup> Boyd, 65.

<sup>20</sup> Mayhall, 96.

<sup>21</sup> Jane Richardson, *Law and Status among the Kiowa Indians* (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 1966), 8, 12.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas C. Battey, *The Life and Adventures of a Quaker among the Indians* (Williamstown, Massachusetts: Corner House Publishers, 1972. 1875), 103.

In his report on the Kiowa from 1895 and 1896, ethnologist James Mooney expressed his belief that the acquisition of the horse, a result of contact, was the best thing that could have happened to the Kiowa. He wrote, “It is unnecessary to dilate on the revolution made in the life of the Indian by the possession of the horse. Without it he was a half-starved skulker in the timber...With the horse he was transformed into the daring buffalo hunter.”<sup>23</sup> The description of a Kiowa before contact as “a half-starved skulker” calls Mooney’s academic credibility into question, because it suggests bias. Valid or not, Mooney’s assessment of the pre and post-contact lifestyles of the Kiowa ignores the negative effects of the cultural exchange.

Contact with Europeans not only introduced horses to the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache, it also introduced them to diseases to which they had no natural immunity. Increased contact with whites occurred as more and more settlers pushed into the territory where the Kiowa resided, sometimes resulting in warfare. More contact meant more chances for the spread of epidemic diseases like smallpox, measles, and cholera, which had already begun to filter west through intertribal trade.<sup>24</sup>

Most traumatic were their repeated experiences with smallpox, an altogether horrifying result of contact. Communication of smallpox, caused by a virus, occurred not only through the respiratory system, by breathing in infected droplets, but also by contact with dried bodily fluids, scabs, and contaminated fabric or surfaces.<sup>25</sup> Early symptoms included headache, backache, fever, vomiting, and anxiety, all of which manifested, and sometimes resulted in death, before the recognizable sores and rash ever appeared. Raised sores on the soles of the feet, the palms of

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<sup>23</sup> Mooney, *Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians*, 161.

<sup>24</sup> Calloway, 10-11, 37, 40.

<sup>25</sup> Crosby, 44; Fenn, 15.

the hands, the face, forearms, neck, and back occurred next, resulting in massive scabbing. In some cases, the disease attacked internally, causing hemorrhaging and bleeding from external orifices. These terrifying symptoms could culminate in only one of two things: immunity or death.<sup>26</sup> When death did not occur, patients were marked with the scars for the rest of their lives, and sometimes left blind.<sup>27</sup> First-hand accounts recorded by white settlers and traders describe the stench of infected American Indian camps, the high mortality rate of the disease, and the depression that followed in an epidemic's wake.<sup>28</sup> In his narrative, trader Charles Larpenteur recalled the devastating legacy of one outbreak. He wrote, "Many died, and those who recovered were so much disfigured that one could scarcely recognize them."<sup>29</sup>

The Kiowa suffered from outbreaks of smallpox multiple times, a consequence of the same indirect and direct exchanges with Europeans and Americans that brought them the horse. Records show that the Kiowa were hit with the disease in 1801, 1816, 1818, 1839, and 1861, with epidemics sometimes lasting over a year.<sup>30</sup> Living so far inland, the Kiowa escaped the ravages of disease longer than other American Indian groups. For example, by 1775, most people living in New Spain and the eastern part of the continent were likely to have immunity to smallpox, whereas such immunity was nonexistent in the west, where the Kiowa made their

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<sup>26</sup> Fenn, 5, 16-18.

<sup>27</sup> Crosby, 57.

<sup>28</sup> *David Thompson's Narrative, 1784-1812*, ed. by Richard Glover (Toronto, Canada: The Champlain Society, 1962), 236-237.

<sup>29</sup> Charles Larpenteur, *Forty Years a Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri: The Personal Narrative of Charles Larpenteur, 1833-1872*, ed. by Elliot Coues, vol. 1 (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Ross and Haines, Inc., 1962), 133.

<sup>30</sup> Mooney, *Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians*, 168, 274, 311. The "records" that I am referring to here are found in Mooney's transcription of the Kiowa's own pictorial calendar.

home.<sup>31</sup> According to Mooney's interpretations of their history, the Kiowa often came into contact with smallpox through their interactions with other American Indian groups, not from direct exchange with whites.<sup>32</sup> Smallpox came to the Kiowa in the same secondhand way that horses did, and between the speed with which it could kill and the grotesqueness of its symptoms, the virus had just as transformative an impact as the new livestock did.<sup>33</sup>

The Kiowa-Apache story "The Underwater Village" speaks of the devastation that smallpox left among them, providing an explanation of why and how the disease came to their people. In the story, a lone hunter meets an old man emanating an awful stench and covered in oozing sores. As the hunter questions him, the man explains that he is Smallpox, that he comes from the east and from the white people, and that he is travelling this way to find the Indians and make them sick because "it is what was willed."<sup>34</sup> Because the hunter replies that his people have done nothing to deserve this, Smallpox lets him return home and flee with as many people as he wants. But no one will believe the inexperienced hunter, therefore only his family escapes, guided by a "spirit" to hide under a lake.<sup>35</sup> The rest of his tribe are killed by Smallpox, and later, other Kiowa-Apache people can see and hear the signs of those that escaped the epidemic, still living under the lake where no one can reach them.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Fenn, 42-43.

<sup>32</sup> Mooney, 168, 274.

<sup>33</sup> Crosby, 56.

<sup>34</sup> Story told by Eagle Plume (Frank Givens), translated by Ioleta MacElhaney, and recorded by Alice Marriott in Alice Marriott and Carol K. Rachlin, *American Indian Mythology* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968), 47-48.

<sup>35</sup> Eagle Plume, MacElhaney, and Marriott, 48.

<sup>36</sup> Eagle Plume, MacElhaney, and Marriott, 49-50.

“The Underwater Village” is clearly a post-contact construction because it indicates Kiowa-Apache experience with the destructive effects of smallpox. The human form of the disease emits an offensive smell and presents a sore-covered, swollen face, indicating familiarity with the running scabs and the stench characteristic of smallpox.<sup>37</sup> The character Smallpox’s appearance matches almost perfectly to first-hand accounts of the disease as it affected American Indian populations. Regarding an outbreak in the 1600s, William Bradford wrote, “... [the Indians] fall into a lamentable condition, as they lye [sic] on their hard matts [sic], the poxe [sic] breaking and mattering, and runing [sic] one into another...”<sup>38</sup> The problem that the story presents—an enemy that kills indiscriminately by something as inescapable as a smell—is solved only through isolation.<sup>39</sup> This suggests that the story originated in a time when the Kiowa-Apache had experienced smallpox, but did not yet understand how to avoid it. The logical solution to the problem was then to prevent contact with the enemy altogether.

The story also indicated that the Kiowa-Apache blamed whites for the disease’s scourge. The hunter protests against Smallpox’s advance by arguing, “The Indians haven’t hurt you. They haven’t hurt the white people, either, if it comes to that. They never even heard of them. Why do you want to be cruel to the Indians?”<sup>40</sup> Smallpox repeats that his coming was “willed,” though he eventually gives in and lets the hunter save some of his people.<sup>41</sup> Never in the story do white people actually appear or interact with the Kiowa-Apache, and yet their presence on the

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<sup>37</sup> Fenn, 16-18; Thompson, 236-237.

<sup>38</sup> William Bradford, *Bradford’s History of Plymouth Plantation, 1606-1646*, ed. by William T. Davis (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1964), 313.

<sup>39</sup> Eagle Plume, MacElhane, and Marriott, 49.

<sup>40</sup> Eagle Plume, MacElhane, and Marriott, 47.

<sup>41</sup> Eagle Plume, MacElhane, and Marriott, 47-48.

continent seeps into American Indian lives in the form of Smallpox, devastating without ever being provoked.

The hunter's confusion over why Smallpox would harm this Kiowa-Apache village when there was never any offense committed against the disease or the people who brought it implies some of the larger purposes of this kind of oral history. One reason why critics think that oral histories are unreliable is that they sometimes include mythic events or prophecies.<sup>42</sup> From a scholarly viewpoint, it is unlikely that the hunter literally met the physical embodiment of a disease, let alone that this disease warned him to flee or die. However, the fact that "The Underwater Village" includes a prophetic scene demonstrates how oral cultures sometimes employed predictions of the future to help explain why epidemics and other tragic events happened.

The Kiowa-Apache were deeply influenced by the arrival of the Europeans before they were hit by smallpox, but these influences came in the form of the introduction of horses. Horses were foreign, but they were absorbed and adapted to create a Kiowa-Apache lifestyle distinct from that of whites. Smallpox and other diseases were a different kind of consequence of contact, however, one that could not necessarily be physically confronted or adopted. Perhaps the Kiowa-Apache, who already had experience turning the results of cultural exchange with whites into something uniquely theirs, coped with the population loss they suffered by incorporating the disease into their own narrative of history.<sup>43</sup> When Smallpox tells the hunter that his arrival is "willed," he suggests that decimation is an inevitable occurrence. In the absence of a concrete reason why the disease killed so many of their people, the Kiowa-Apache

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<sup>42</sup> Nabokov, 6-7, 223.

<sup>43</sup> Nabokov, 100, 224, 234.

conceptualized an answer and made it a permanent part of their oral history: some villages were taken out because they did not isolate themselves in accordance with warnings sent to them, and so they succumbed to fate. The prophetic element of the story may also have been tied to the fact that the Kiowa-Apache were removed from the first outbreaks of smallpox in the New World, and their exchanges with whites sometimes came secondhand, filtered through other tribes who might have had more experience with the more negative aspects of contact. The Kiowa-Apache's history with whites led them to make the negative aspects of the cultural exchange a part of their own oral traditions.

Like "The Underwater Village," the Kiowa stories entitled "The White Man's Gift" and "Saynday Sends Smallpox Away" feature a telling encounter with Smallpox as he crosses America. Unlike the other story, however, these two include the Kiowa trickster hero, Saynday, rather than a nameless hunter. Both tales are essentially the same in terms of plot. They each begin with Saynday noticing the changes that the white man has wrought upon the Plains and wondering if it is time for the trickster to leave this world. Then he meets a man on a black horse coming from the east. In "Saynday Sends Smallpox Away," the trickster remarks that though "good things" have occasionally come from the east, this visitor comes with "a cold, dark chill."<sup>44</sup> This is Smallpox, described in "The White Man's Gift" as a man with a pockmarked face and a hat that looks like the kind missionaries wear. He and Saynday introduce themselves, and though Smallpox has never heard of the Kiowa he tries to get the trickster to show him his village so he can kill everyone there. Saynday cleverly mentions the Pawnees, Kiowa enemies who live clustered together and possess a lot of bedding and robes. Smallpox likes the crowding

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<sup>44</sup> Story told by Eagle Plume (Frank Givens), recorded by Alice Marriott in Alice Marriott and Carol K. Rachlin, *American Indian Mythology* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968), 143-144; Boyd, 297.

and the robes, which he suggests are good “to creep into and hide.”<sup>45</sup> At the end of the story Smallpox heads off to kill the Pawnees first and asks Saynday to tell the Kiowa to put out their fires in preparation for his coming. As he leaves, Saynday makes a ring of fire around his people to isolate them from the threat, thinking that maybe he should not leave them yet after all.<sup>46</sup> In “Saynday Sends Smallpox Away,” the details about the robes and the fire are left out, but the message is still the same.

The similarities between these two stories and “The Underwater Village” suggest that they are all connected. In all three tales, Smallpox is walking along and meets a Kiowa or Kiowa-Apache. He shows all the outward signs of the disease and warns of the death that he spreads. Yet in one tale the Kiowa-Apache are decimated, while in the other two Saynday saves his people. It is possible that “The White Man’s Gift” and “Saynday Sends Smallpox Away” grew out of “The Underwater Village.” The fact that Smallpox is scarred rather than covered with sores in Saynday’s story suggests more familiarity with the long term effects of the disease than the hunter’s tale. Lending further support to this inference is the fact that when Smallpox speaks to Saynday in “The White Man’s Gift” he emphasizes not just indiscriminate death, but a whole host of consequences. He says, “My breath causes children to wither...No matter how beautiful a woman is, once she has looked at me she becomes as ugly as death. And to men I bring not death alone, but the destruction of their children and the blighting of their wives.”<sup>47</sup> Even Smallpox’s expressed preference for the Pawnees, who have many robes for him to hide in, indicates a more advanced knowledge of how the disease was really spread. For these reasons,

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<sup>45</sup> Eagle Plume and Marriott, 144-146.

<sup>46</sup> Eagle Plume and Marriott, 146.

<sup>47</sup> Eagle Plume and Marriott, 144-145.



this particular story more than likely came about in the nineteenth century, after the Kiowa had witnessed multiple epidemics.<sup>48</sup> The differences between the stories probably came as a result of the Kiowa's changing situation, as smallpox became a recurring problem and westward expansion of whites became a much more inescapable threat.

The existence of all of these tales despite the changes which separate the Saynday stories from that of the hunter demonstrates the fluidity of oral histories, which in this case shows how the impact of smallpox continued to grow and change in the Kiowa psyche. Many critics have argued that oral histories are unreliable because they are not written down, and hence they are more subject to change from their original form. In order to keep stories relevant and to allow for new cultural developments and discussions, American Indian oral histories are sometimes revised or adjusted and multiple versions of the same story are all believed true.<sup>49</sup> This explanation accounts for both their relation and their simultaneous existence despite the very different endings. It is likely that as time went on and American settlers pushed more and more into Kiowa territory, the old Kiowa-Apache story of Smallpox was revised and made into a trickster tale where the biggest symbols of contact consequences—smallpox and horses—ride in and are sent away at Saynday's clever suggestion. To the Kiowa, Saynday is an integral part of why the world is the way that it is.<sup>50</sup> Instead of using the story as an account of the approach of something inevitable, the Saynday tales seem to be an attempt to show how all European imports, whether livestock or pathogen, could be fought, resisted, or twisted to meet a Kiowa

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<sup>48</sup> Calloway, 50.

<sup>49</sup> Nabokov, 8-9, 47, 92.

<sup>50</sup> Alice Marriott, *Saynday's People: The Kiowa Indians and the Stories They Told* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), 1.

purpose like defeating a fierce enemy. Isolation, here enacted by Saynday's preventative measures, is the proposed solution for dealing with the consequences of contact just as it is in "The Underwater Village." Saynday's triumph suggests another way that the Kiowa used alterations to their oral history in order to adapt to a world that began changing before they felt the physical negative effects of the white agents of transformation.

The Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache stories that represent a reaction to Europeans are remarkably similar to the post-contact additions to the Cherokee oral history, despite significant differences between their cultures. Before Europeans came to America, the Cherokee held a territory that spread over about 40,000 square miles in what is now the southeastern United States.<sup>51</sup> Unlike the Kiowa, the Cherokee were a primarily agricultural society, though they also relied on hunting game. Labor was divided according to gender, and women did most of the farming on land that was shared among all the people. Clan affiliations and kinship ties were determined by the mother, in sharp contrast to the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache male-dominated culture. The Cherokee had no central government and no concept of themselves as a nation at this time, though they did share a linguistic and cultural identity tied to their homeland.<sup>52</sup>

The inland location of the Cherokee homeland was a major factor in their experience with contact, not unlike the way that the remoteness of the west altered the experience of the Kiowa. European and American Indian contact began on the whole in 1492, but the Cherokee most likely felt the first results of it after the de Soto expedition around 1540.<sup>53</sup> It is unclear whether

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<sup>51</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 14.

<sup>52</sup> Perdue and Green, 6, 9, 10.

<sup>53</sup> Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc. 1975), 42; Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 23.

de Soto and his men actually encountered the Cherokee. Regardless, word of his journey and those of other explorers on the continent must have reached Cherokee ears.<sup>54</sup> Though there is no physical proof that they heard of the Spanish via word of mouth, accounts from de Soto's expedition provide ample evidence that these particular Europeans made a lasting impression on all those they met in the New World. In his first-hand narrative of the expedition, Fidalgo of Elvas noted that in one instance, "a hundred [American Indian] men and women were taken... They were led off in chains, with collars about the neck, to carry luggage and grind corn, doing the labour proper to servants. Sometimes it happened that, going with them for wood or maize, they would kill the Christian, and flee, with the chain on..."<sup>55</sup> Enslavement, death, or submission were the options that the Spanish presented to those that they physically encountered. The Cherokee managed to escape the worst of these fates, either through friendly behavior towards the Europeans or due to the fact that their homeland was remote and mountainous.<sup>56</sup> The de Soto party was by no means the only one with which the Cherokee could have come into contact. Fidalgo and other members of the expedition found a survivor of a previous party living among the natives as well as multiple signs of European presence.<sup>57</sup> Yet based on Fidalgo's admission that new indigenous slaves sometimes got away, it is highly likely that whatever their

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<sup>54</sup> Conley, 17-19; Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 29.

<sup>55</sup> "True Relation of the Vicissitudes That Attended the Governor Don Hernando de Soto and Some Nobles of Portugal in the Discovery of the Province of Florida now just Given by a Fidalgo of Elvas," in *Narratives of the Career of Hernando de Soto in the Conquest of Florida*, vol. 1, ed. by Edward Gaylord Bourne (New York: Allerton Book Co., 1973), 45-46.

<sup>56</sup> Conley, 19; Perdue and Green, 12.

<sup>57</sup> Elvas, Fidalgo, "True Relation," in *Narratives of the Career of Hernando de Soto in the Conquest of Florida*, vol. 1, ed. by Edward Gaylord Bourne, (New York: Allerton Book Co., 1973), 27-28; "Relation of the Conquest of Florida Presented by Luys Hernandez De Biedma in the Year 1544 to the King of Spain in Council," trans. by Buckingham Smith, in *Narratives of the Career of Hernando de Soto*, vol. 2, ed. by Edward Gaylord Bourne, (New York: Allerton Book Co., 1973), 3, 7, 14.

personal experience with Europeans, the Cherokee developed at least some knowledge of whites in the same secondhand method that the Kiowa received horses and smallpox.

No matter the exact date of the first Cherokee-European interaction, opportunities for contact multiplied fast and brought a transformation of Cherokee culture comparable to that of the Kiowa. By 1562, both the Spanish and the French had begun settlements in South Carolina, putting them in a closer proximity to Cherokee territory, and by 1673 the English had met the Cherokee.<sup>58</sup> As the white population grew, manufactured goods brought by traders to Cherokee communities changed their way of life just as horses had changed the lives of the Kiowa. Guns, ammunition, brass kettles, and metal tools altered Cherokee habits in warfare, hunting, and farming.<sup>59</sup> Without the knowledge or skills to recreate such products on their own, the Cherokee, like many other American Indians, became increasingly dependent on trade with whites.<sup>60</sup> More traditional cooking and farming practices fell into disuse as the Cherokee began to adapt to their changing world.<sup>61</sup>

Whereas the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache response to contact was to convert European imports into a more efficiently nomadic culture outside of white norms, the Cherokee assimilated some aspects of white lifestyles as a response to economic and government pressure. They learned to read and write English, lived on individual plots of land, wore Western-style clothing, and adopted a republican government in accordance with Henry Knox's criteria for "civilization." Some Cherokee began to accumulate individual capital and land, and though

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<sup>58</sup> Conley, 19 and 21.

<sup>59</sup> Perdue and Green, 13; Conley, 40-41.

<sup>60</sup> Jennings, 41.

<sup>61</sup> Conley, 40-41.

gender roles did not entirely shift, wealthy women stopped working in the larger fields and some Cherokee acquired slaves. Most notably, in 1827 the Cherokee drafted their own constitution, after the American model.<sup>62</sup> The Cherokee behavioral reaction to contact was thus radically different than that of the Kiowa though it still represented an attempt to blend European and American Indian elements.

Because the Cherokee changed in ways that made them seem more compliant with white society, many felt that they had indeed become “civilized.” Mooney, who did an extensive study on the Cherokee long before being assigned to investigate the Kiowa, treated the two very differently in his writings because of this apparent civilization.<sup>63</sup> In 1886 he wrote, “It might seem at first thought that the Cherokee, with their civilized code of laws, their national press, their schools and seminaries, are so far advanced along the white man’s road as to offer but little inducement for ethnologic study.”<sup>64</sup> His respectful description contrasts sharply with an unflattering assertion made in his later work about the Kiowa: “The savage is intellectually a child, and from the point of view of civilized man his history is shaped by trivial things, as will be sufficiently apparent from a study of the calendars.”<sup>65</sup> This statement shows that between the two forms of adaptation to contact represented by the Kiowa and the Cherokee, white contemporaries much preferred the Cherokee method.

But this preference did not spare the Cherokee from the negative effects of contact that the Kiowa suffered, nor did it protect them from the painful experience of removal. Epidemic

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<sup>62</sup> Perdue and Green, 25, 34-35, 40-41.

<sup>63</sup> Michael A. Elliott, “Ethnography, Reform, and the Problem of the Real: James Mooney’s Ghost Dance Religion,” *American Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (1998), 213, JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/](http://www.jstor.org/).

<sup>64</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 11-12.

<sup>65</sup> Mooney, *Calendar History of the Kiowa*, 154.

disease first came to the Cherokee in 1697, and eventually such illness depopulated them more than any other force.<sup>66</sup> Smallpox, which maimed the Kiowa multiple times, devastated the Cherokee at least three times. An outbreak in 1738 or 1739 reportedly killed half the tribe, partially because their remedy for it involved an icy bath in a stream which only made their condition worse. Like the Kiowa, the Cherokee had no immunity and no knowledge of smallpox before contact, leaving them practically powerless in the face of the epidemic. Mooney states that the psychological effect of smallpox at this time was enormous. He wrote, “Hundreds of the warriors committed suicide on beholding their frightful disfigurement...”<sup>67</sup> Though these numbers cannot be substantiated, this assertion certainly indicates that even by the time that the ethnologist began studying the history and culture of the Kiowa in 1886, the memory of an epidemic more than one hundred years past still horrified the Cherokee. Smallpox struck them again around 1760 and 1783. Whether they became “civilized” or not, the Cherokee were decimated by Old World pathogens as indiscriminately as the Kiowa.

The Cherokee memory of removal was, like their memory of smallpox, another deeply planted emotional effect of contact. The post-contact stories found in the oral history of the Cherokee are among the Eastern Band—those that were able to stay behind in North Carolina and the mountains of Tennessee after the members of the Cherokee Nation were removed in 1838.<sup>68</sup> Despite the fact that these people were not forced along the Trail of Tears, they could not forget the violence of the government’s methods and their pity for those ripped from their homeland. Of the initial stages of removal Mooney wrote, “...squad[s] of troops were sent to

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<sup>66</sup> Perdue and Green, 11.

<sup>67</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 36.

<sup>68</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 130, 159.

search out with rifle and bayonet every small cabin...to seize and bring in as prisoners all the occupants, however or wherever they might be found.”<sup>69</sup> Like the epidemics suffered by both the Kiowa and the Cherokee, coerced removal and the division of the nation left a lasting impact.

“The Removed Townhouses” is a Cherokee story that suggests contact should be avoided in much the same way as “The Underwater Village” does. According to the story, “Long ago, long before the Cherokee were driven from their homes in 1838...” the Nûññě’hĩ or immortals called out to Cherokee communities, alerting them to coming dangers.<sup>70</sup> Mooney’s version of the tale did not specify the nature of the threat, but in another version, titled “Nûññě’hĩ, The Gentle People,” the immortals describe it more carefully. They explain, “Something terrible is going to happen. Worse than any flood or any famine that you have ever known before. Some dark and terrible day is coming, and you have to leave now to save yourselves.”<sup>71</sup> After some deliberation, the majority of the community follows the instructions of the immortals, who are only visible when they so wish it, and join them inside of a mountain where they are never seen or heard from again.<sup>72</sup> “The Removed Townhouses” clarifies the mode of Cherokee transportation, which is left vague in the other version, explaining that the Nûññě’hĩ picked up the entire townhouse and lifted it to its new home. This transcription of the story also includes mention of a second community warned of danger, the town on Hiwassee, which was moved by the immortals to a secure place under water.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 130.

<sup>70</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 335.

<sup>71</sup> Story told by Kathi Littlejohn, recorded by Barbara R. Duncan in *The Origin of the Milky Way and other Living Stories of the Cherokee* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 81.

<sup>72</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 335; Littlejohn and Duncan, 82.

<sup>73</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 335-336.

This oral story is less straightforward than the Kiowa-Apache tale “The Underwater Village,” but it operates in much the same way. Despite the fact that the threat is never explicitly identified, the Nûñně’hĩ’s dark warnings bring to mind a whole host of contact consequences that the Cherokee experienced. Because both versions of this story mention the Trail of Tears, this event is probably part of what the immortals are protecting them from.<sup>74</sup> However, the prophesy might just have easily been created in response to smallpox or other epidemic diseases that decimated their people in the wake of the cultural exchange. Aside from the obvious similarity between the Hiwassee hidden underwater and the smallpox survivors under a lake in the Kiowa-Apache tale, there is also the implication from both oral traditions that isolation from contact would have been the best way to avoid its negative results.

But while “The Underwater Village” demonstrates the use of prophecy in oral history as a form of coping by providing an answer as to why these events occurred, “The Removed Townhouses” works a little differently. One version of the story describes a group of townspeople dying during the move, but this outcome does not explain why only some survived contact the way that the Kiowa-Apache story does.<sup>75</sup> At the same time, “The Removed Townhouses” features a supernatural helper both prophesying about what will come and offering an alternative to the pain. In this way, the tale is similar to the Kiowa Saynday stories. To the Cherokee, the Nûñně’hĩ are a friendly race known to occasionally help their people whenever it looks as if a battle might end in defeat.<sup>76</sup> The immortals are not tricksters, but they do preempt a problem in the same way that Saynday does. Prophecy and revision of historic events coincide

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<sup>74</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 335; Littlejohn and Duncan, 82.

<sup>75</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 335.

<sup>76</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 331.



in this oral tradition, perhaps reordering real events in a way that helps make sense of them.<sup>77</sup>

Just as the Kiowa-Apache and the Kiowa post-contact stories were constructed to explain and encourage in the wake of disasters caused by whites, “The Removed Townhouses” creates a new context for the word “removal”—one that the Cherokee own in its entirety—while at the same time conveying the message that the supernatural had a way of looking out for them even in the face of decimation and disease.

In the same way that all of the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache stories seem to be related, “The Removed Townhouses” appears to be an earlier version of another Cherokee tale, “Kăna’sta, The Lost Settlement.” The plots of the two stories are nearly identical, but the people of Kăna’sta do not receive their warning or aid from the Nûñně’hĩ. Instead, they are approached by mortal men who live hidden in the mountains. These strangers tell the Kăna’sta community, “Here you have wars and sickness, with enemies on every side, and after a while a stronger enemy will come to take your country from you. We are always happy, and we have come to invite you to live with us in our town...” After following the instructions of the strangers, the townspeople are led through a secret door in the side of the rocky mountainside, and they are never seen again.<sup>78</sup>

At first glance, “Kăna’sta, The Lost Settlement” might seem to have no significant differences to set it apart from “The Removed Townhouses.” However, this tale is more indicative of experience with contact and lacks the supernatural element of the other story. The people of the mountain give much more specific warnings than the immortals did, talking not only of “sickness” but also of a “stronger enemy.” The prophecy never says that the approaching

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<sup>77</sup> Nabokov, 90 and 234.

<sup>78</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 341, 342.

danger is contact with whites, but the prediction about the loss of Cherokee land indicates that this is the enemy to which the strangers refer.

While this story, like “The Removed Townhouses,” incorporates prophesy and the revision of events, it does so without the help of any supernatural guardian. The visitors to Kăna’sta specifically identify themselves as something separate from the Nûñně’hĩ, explaining, “We do not live forever, and do not always find game when we go for it...but we have peace always and need not think of danger.”<sup>79</sup> This makes the Kăna’sta community’s successful isolation from the cultural exchange even more powerful than that of the people in the other stories, because they require no non-mortal aid to subvert the negative consequences of interaction with whites. The message seems to be that through isolation in reaction to advance warnings of danger—warnings that the Cherokee may really have had, since they likely heard of Europeans long before they met any—the devastating and transformative influence of whites can be entirely sidestepped. This meaning is more complex than that of “The Removed Townhouses,” implying that it was the result of more long-term experience with whites. If the story was a later construction, displaying the fluidity of the Cherokee oral history, the changes to the story suggest that the Cherokee people were by this time using a practical approach to deal with whites. Rather than twist European imports in such a way as to develop their own culture or story of contact outside of white norms, as the Kiowa did, the Cherokee saw themselves saved by their own people wisely pursuing a path halfway between retention of the old ways and avoidance of violent confrontation with whites.

Given the physical and emotional stress that the arrival of Europeans brought upon American Indians across the continent, it is not surprising that the Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, and

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<sup>79</sup> Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, 341.

Cherokee oral histories bear the marks of contact. In fact, the only surprising thing about the existence of such stories is that so few can be found, because the cultural exchange had earth-shaking results for those on both sides of the interaction.<sup>80</sup> Perhaps why these two groups have tales that allude to contact while most other American Indians do not is a question that cannot be answered by a comparative study of their experiences and responses to the European presence. However, the similarities between the Kiowa and Cherokee situations and methods of coping cannot mean nothing. Meeting whites only after they had become reasonably established in America and feeling the subsequent transformative effect of the white presence, both groups made additions to their oral histories emphasizing the success of isolation as a means of dealing with a sinister future. After suffering from post-contact traumas such as disease and removal, both constructed evolving stories that suggested how supernatural help and adaptation had affected their situations. Regardless of the fact that the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache culture incorporated European imports into their culture in a radically different way than the Cherokee did, the emotional and psychological response to a similar pattern of interaction resulted in oral traditions that are distinctly different than those of other American Indian groups.

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<sup>80</sup> Nabokov, 100.

### Primary Source Bibliography

Battey, Thomas C. *The Life and Adventures of a Quaker among the Indians*. Williamstown, Massachusetts: Corner House Publishers, 1972.

Originally published in 1875, this is Battey's diary from when he worked as a teacher among the Caddoes and later lived among the Kiowa beginning in 1871. It gives valuable background information about life among the Kiowa. Battey also includes some oral stories that he heard, one of which is a tale about whites that I have found recorded nowhere else. His acceptance as truth of oral stories that tell history with no supernatural elements provides a contrast to Schoolcraft's opinions.

Bradford, William. *Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation, 1606-1646*. Edited by William T. Davis. New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1964.

This account includes does not specifically mention either of the Native American groups I am focusing on. However, Bradford does describe in almost sickening detail one American Indian community's experience with smallpox. Though Bradford provides a white view of the disease and its ravages, his firsthand narration can provide insights about the effect that smallpox had on Native Americans.

Bourne, Edward Gaylord, ed. *Narratives of the Career of Hernando de Soto in the Conquest of Florida*. Vols. 1 and 2. New York: Allerton Book Co., 1973.

This two volume work is a collection of firsthand accounts of de Soto's travels in North America. Though these accounts do not reference the Cherokee by that name and de Soto's party probably did not encounter the Kiowa at all, they are still valuable resources because they contextualize the post contact stories I have found. Many of my secondary sources emphasize the amount of trade that existed between different groups of American Indians, making it likely that word of the encounters described in these narratives reached the groups I am interested in.

*David Thompson's Narrative, 1784-1812*. Edited by Richard Glover. Toronto, Canada: the Champlain Society, 1962.

Thompson's account is useful for my research in the same way that Bradford and Larpenteur's books are. He did not encounter the groups that I am researching, but he does provide context about the American Indian reaction to smallpox in general through his observations about epidemics. In addition, Thompson includes within his narrative the autobiography of an old Nahahaway man as it was told to him. Though this story cannot be held as absolute truth (it is, after all, hearsay, since we get it filtered through Thompson), it does shed some light on the native reaction to smallpox.

Duncan, Barbara R., ed. *The Origin of the Milky Way and other Living Stories of the Cherokee*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

In this collection, I found a story that appears in both books that is especially pertinent to my research. It is a different version of a story found in Mooney's work on the Cherokee, told here by Kathi Littlejohn and titled "Nunnehi, the Gentle People." In the story, some Cherokee people join the Nunnehi in their hidden home in order to escape the coming danger predicted by the Gentle People. The danger seems to me to be the Europeans, making this a post contact story in the vein of those from the Kiowa. Duncan also includes great contextual information in her introduction.

Larpenteur, Charles. *Forty Years a Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri: The Personal Narrative of Charles Larpenteur, 1833-1872*. Edited by Elliot Coues. Vol. 1. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Ross and Haines, Inc., 1962.

Like Bradford's narrative, Larpenteur's work is helpful because it discusses the effect of smallpox on American Indians, though not specifically the two groups that I am researching. Larpenteur remarks not only on the physical ravages of the disease, but also on the emotional reaction of both the Native Americans and the whites to the epidemic. Hopefully his account can contextualize the stories I have found that emphasize isolation.

Marriott, Alice Lee. *Saynday's People, the Kiowa Indians and the Stories they Told*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1963.

Aside from containing a lot of useful secondary information, this work by Marriott is also a collection of tales about the Kiowa trickster hero. There is one story I find particularly significant (though I could not use it) called "Indian Saynday and White Saynday." This is the story that is likely connected to the one in Lopez's work, only in this version, the man that Saynday tricks is white, the two share the same name, and the clothes that are stolen with the horse are distinctly European-American (like a Stetson hat, for example).

---and Carol K. Rachlin. *American Indian Mythology*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968.

Though Marriott and Rachlin are listed as authors, this work is really a collection of stories which they heard and collected. There are six Kiowa stories in this collection, but only two that clearly appeared after contact with Europeans and which I will be focusing on. "The Underwater Village," told to Marriott and Rachlin by Eagle Plume (Frank Givens) and translated by Ioleta MacElhaney, is the story of a hunter who meets Smallpox in the form of a man, and is able to escape the devastation that it brings. "The White Man's Gift," also told to the authors by Eagle Plume, seems to be a variation on the same theme, only in this version it the Kiowa trickster hero who encounters Smallpox, and he tricks the disease into going after Kiowa enemies.

Mooney, James. *Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979.

Reprinted from the original report from 1895 and 1896 (which was published in 1898 by the Government Printing Office), this is a document which many of my Kiowa-focused secondary

sources cite. Mooney provides a solid history of the Kiowa, basing his findings off of a combination of oral knowledge, four calendars kept by the Kiowa, and on corroborating evidence from neighboring tribes or written accounts from whites. He includes a written explanation, photographs, and drawn reproductions of all the calendars he was able to see, providing historical documentation straight from the Kiowa themselves.

---*History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*. Asheville, North Carolina: Bright Mountain Books, 1992.

Originally published in 1900 and 1891 by the Bureau of American Ethnology, Mooney's work includes many, many stories of the Cherokee. There is one story with a passing mention of smallpox, which might connect to the Kiowa stories, but there are also two different stories that focus on isolation, not unlike "The Underwater Village." "The Removed Townhouses" tells of some Cherokee who leave their homes to live with the Immortals and be invisible. There is also "Kanasta, The Lost Settlement," which follows a similar plotline except that the people of the hidden village are not immortal, but offer protection from an enemy that "will come to take your country from you" (a reference to the coming of Europeans, page 341). The theme of isolation from white influences connects these stories to those of the Kiowa, and I think that I might include them in my thesis. Mooney also includes a detailed history of the Cherokee, which is helpful.

Schoolcraft, Henry R. *Notes on the Iroquois*. New York: AMS Press, 1975.

Originally published in 1847, Schoolcraft's work is primarily focused on the Iroquois. Despite this focus, he makes some sweeping statements about all American Indian oral histories. He argues that they are of little use because they include supernatural elements, but I would like to argue that this does not make them useless. In this way, Schoolcraft's work can help me prove how traditional opinions on oral histories are wrong.

#### Secondary Source Bibliography

Boyd, Maurice. *Kiowa Voices: Myths, Legends and Folktales*. Vol. 2. Fort Worth, Texas: The Texas Christian University Press, 1983.

This monograph includes a collection of Kiowa oral histories, but I will primarily be using it for the contextual information provided in the introductions of each chapter. What is most useful about this source as a secondary text is that it is very focused on the Kiowa view of events. Boyd provides some really good insights into how the Kiowa themselves see their oral history.

Calloway, Collin G., ed. *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground: Plains Indian Views of How the West was Lost*. New York: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996.

Though this work is a collection of primary documents, I found Calloway's introductions and contextual information very helpful. He includes both general information about the Plains

Indians as well as sections about specific groups (including the Kiowa), to lay a foundation of understanding of the cultures and contextualize the documents that he presents.

Conley, Robert J. *The Cherokee Nation: A History*. Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.

Conley's book is a history of the Cherokee people, beginning with their origin and running all the way through the 1900s. His work provides helpful information about Cherokee culture and their relations with Europeans and Americans that can contextualize the post contact stories I have found. In addition, Conley's bibliographies after each chapter are useful for mining.

Crosby, Alfred W. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ed. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2003.

Considered a classic, Crosby argues that the biological ramifications of contact between Europeans and Native Americans were the most transformative. He discusses the exchange of food products, plant and animal life, and syphilis, but the chapter most pertinent to my research is "Conquistador y Pestilencia." This section of the book addresses the effects of the exchange of diseases, including smallpox. Crosby also has copious endnotes after each chapter, so I may be able to mine his bibliography for good sources.

Elliott, Michael A. "Ethnography, Reform, and the Problem of the Real: James Mooney's Ghost-Dance Religion." *American Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (1998): 201-233. *JSTOR*.  
[www.jstor.org/](http://www.jstor.org/).

This article is mainly focused on Mooney's *The Ghost-Dance Religion*, and it argues that Mooney's approach was slightly better than that of others concerned with American Indian affairs at that time. I find the background information that Elliott provides about the Bureau of American Ethnology and Mooney himself very helpful.

Fenn, Elizabeth A. *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2001.

Fenn's book is the story of the smallpox epidemic that swept North America in the late 1700s. She argues that it was of great significance, and discusses the effects it had on everyone in North America at the time, not just American Indians. Her work is useful for providing context about smallpox.

Jennings, Francis. *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc, 1975.

In this work, Jennings argues that the Americas were not discovered by Europeans, but invaded by them. He claims that all estimates of the number of Native Americans that existed pre-contact are too low. Jennings explores the results of contact in terms of both biology and culture. Though I am not sure that I agree with every single point that Jennings makes, his work is

especially helpful because he also discusses the way that contact influenced even those American Indians that were yet to physically meet Europeans. I think that this is critical to understanding both the Kiowa and the Cherokee reactions, since both groups were geographically removed from initial contact with Europeans.

Mayhall, Mildred P. *The Kiowas*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962.

Mayhall gives an overview of Kiowa history and culture. Her work lays out Kiowa history without really making much of an argument about it. Though it was published in the 1960s, I have found this useful. Her monograph covers the Kiowa pretty thoroughly, providing a good base of knowledge for understanding certain cultural aspects of the Kiowa stories I am examining.

Nabokov, Peter. *A Forest of Time: American Indian Ways of History*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

This monograph argues that American Indian traditions of oral history have been wrongfully judged as unimportant in the past. He describes different American Indian viewpoints on history and how the stories are passed down. Though his approach is broad, the book gives a thorough treatment to the purposes and methods of American Indian oral history.

Perdue, Theda and Michael D. Green. *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*. New York: The Penguin Group, 2007.

Though Perdue and Green's book is mostly concerned with the Trail of Tears and the events leading up to it, much of the information that they provide early in the book about Cherokee culture before and after contact is helpful to me. In addition, the work chronicles the earliest cases of Cherokee interaction with Europeans and suggests that their reactions to whites were affected by what they heard from other American Indians. I think that this sheds light on the Cherokee stories I have found that emphasize isolation.

Richardson, Jane. *Law and Status among the Kiowa Indians*. Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 1966.

The main focus of Richardson's book is a case by case study of Kiowa crimes and punishments, which she uses as evidence to support the claim that prosecution of legal infringements among the Kiowa was highly variable based on the status of those involved in the crime. The background information about Kiowa culture that she provides at the beginning of her work is the part of the book that I find most helpful. She mainly covers social relationships and customs.