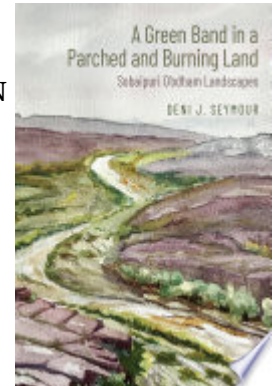


Deni J. Seymour. *A Green Band in a Parched and Burning Land: Sobaipuri O'odham Landscapes.* University Press of Colorado, 2022. 235 pp. \$68.00, cloth, ISBN 978-1-64642-296-8.



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Deni J. Seymour has spent four decades researching the Sobaipuri O'odham and other Indigenous groups native to what is now southern Arizona and northern Sonora. *A Green Band in a Parched and Burning Land* presents her latest research on the Sobaipuri O'odham, significantly challenging previous assumptions about the locations of important Sobaipuri settlements. While Seymour focuses on the late seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, her research indicates that the Sobaipuri resided in this region both earlier and later than previously thought. Seymour's work extensively cross-references archaeological research—surveys, excavations, and chronometric dating—with colonial-era documentary sources, including maps, diaries, letters, and mission records. Her work clearly illustrates that combining archaeological and archival research allows for a deeper and more accurate understanding of Sobaipuri history than either field by itself can provide.

Chapters 1 and 2 introduce Sobaipuri lifeways and settlement patterns. The Sobaipuri O'odham were a powerful group of Akimel O'odham, or River O'odham, meaning they resided along the rivers of southeastern Arizona—the San Pedro, Santa Cruz, and middle Gila Rivers. Seymour explains how geographic features determined where exactly the Sobaipuri settled along these rivers. Because portions of the Santa Cruz and San Pedro Rivers lack consistent aboveground flow, the Sobaipuri settled along sections of the rivers that did have reliable surface flow. These portions, Seymour shows, were typically downstream from narrows where bedrock forced water to the surface. Seymour's analysis of toponyms (relying on the linguistic knowledge of present-day O'odham) supports the importance of the geographic features of water and bedrock to the Sobaipuri. An agricultural people, the Sobaipuri used canal systems to irrigate their fields with river water. Villages were generally situated alongside rivers and

overlooked the fields. They were laid out with a consistent and uniquely Sobaipuri pattern of paired structures often arranged in orderly rows. Seymour's findings on village layout contradict earlier beliefs about Sobaipuri settlement patterns, replacing the notion of dispersed *rancherías* with small unified villages.

The remaining chapters are devoted to determining where exactly the Sobaipuri resided, and when. Much of this work stems from Seymour's fieldwork on Bureau of Land Management lands, previously published in a 2011 report and revised for the current book. Many of her findings conflict with those previously proposed by early to mid-twentieth-century scholars Herbert Bolton and Charles Di Peso. Seymour is not shy about critiquing erroneous conclusions drawn by Bolton and Di Peso; however, to her credit, she also readily debunks her own previous arguments about Sobaipuri settlements where new research has led to different conclusions.

In chapters 3, 4, and 5, Seymour argues that despite earlier suggestions by Bolton, the middle Gila River, upper and middle Santa Cruz, Babocomari River, and San Pedro headwaters were all Sobaipuri territory. These chapters rely on a close reading of writings and maps by Jesuit Father Eusebio Kino recording his visits to Pimería Alta, or what is now southern Arizona, in addition to other Jesuit maps, court records, and writings of colonial administrators. Seymour again incorporates the meanings of toponyms to argue for Sobaipuri settlement further south than previously acknowledged (i.e., Huachuca in what is now northern Sonora).

Chapters 6 through 10 identify specific archaeological sites with names from the documentary record and time periods. Of particular interest is chapter 7, which corroborates archival sources and archaeological data related to the numerous sites known as "Quiburi" along the San Pedro River. Seymour finds at least six different Quiburis in the documentary record (San Pablo de Quiburi,

San Juan Quiburi, El Quiburi, etc.) from 1686 to 1784. Di Peso believed that San Pablo de Quiburi lay beneath what later became the Santa Cruz de Terrenate presidio. However, basing her argument on new excavations, distances listed in Kino's writings, and chronometric dates, Seymour argues convincingly that San Pablo de Quiburi was actually located at a different site along the San Pedro River.

Seymour's research presents important conclusions about time depth and relative mobility of the Sobaipuri O'odham within their historical territory. Her excavation of Sobaipuri settlements has found a number of sites with superimposed houses, showing that many places were reused over time with new structures built atop old ones. Site excavations and chronometric dating have led Seymour to conclude that the Sobaipuri relationship to place represented "segmented sedentism" (p. 199). That is, though the Sobaipuri lived in non-nomadic villages, these villages moved up and down the rivers over the years, sometimes from one side of the river to the other, rather than staying permanently in one exact location. However, each village remained along a specific part, or segment, of the river (the segments with reliable surface water). These superimposed houses and multiple nearby settlements explain why any given Sobaipuri village may present a short time depth even as overall Sobaipuri presence is found to extend further in time than previously known.

This book attests to the extensive archaeological and archival research Seymour has conducted for decades. Its findings offer significantly revised understandings of Sobaipuri settlement locations, patterns, and timespans. The work will be of particular interest to archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians of Arizona and northern Mexico. Scholars of the Jesuit missionaries and other Indigenous groups of the region, such as the Apache and Jcome, will find important insights about these groups' relationships to the Sobaipuri. Seymour provides a clear explanation of the

Sobaipuri's relationship to the geography and geology of the region they inhabited. Finally, her extensive use of both documentary sources and archaeological methods is a strong example of how interdisciplinary methodologies can lead to deeper understandings of the past.

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