

From Settler to Citizen

*New Mexican Economic Development and
the Creation of Vecino Society, 1750–1820*

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CHAPTER FIVE

Creating Vecinos

Cultural Transformation

The creation of a vecino culture in New Mexico, based on an experience and a worldview distinct from those in other areas of contemporary New Spain, arose as a cultural product of the economic developments of the late colonial period. The impetus for this transformation came from a growing vecino population, increased productivity, and the spurt of long-distance trade that sparked the economic boom in New Mexico. New Mexicans began the process of evolving from settlers laboring for survival on a difficult frontier to citizens living in a social and cultural context they had worked to create, in 1598, as soon as Juan de Oñate established the first Spanish towns in New Mexico. It started anew when Diego de Vargas reestablished the settlements a century later, after the Pueblo Revolt had driven the Spanish out of the province. However, development toward self-definition never occurred as rapidly or with such far-reaching consequences as in the 1780–1820 period. New Mexicans began to establish the core of what made them citizens at the end of the eighteenth century.

The economic and demographic developments that shaped New Mexico during the last decades of Spanish colonial rule directed and deepened social and cultural change and reorganized the dynamic of social and cultural relationships within the province. Through the increased yield of agricultural products, livestock, and finished goods that could be exported, vecino prosperity influenced the forms and techniques of craft production. Economic linkages with the rest of New Spain through interregional trade brought about new expressions of Spanish cultural forms, rearticulated by vecino hands. Like the development of the Río Grande style of blanket, vecino santeros and carpenters created unique provincial interpretations of Mexican religious imagery and forms of domestic furniture.

Population and commercial expansion in the province between 1780 and

1820 formed the basis for a mature and self-confident vecino generation in the process of developing an ethnic identity—as the “citizens” of the province of New Mexico. The same changes that manifested themselves in the creation of new forms of social behavior and religious expression worked to privilege Spanish and vecino components of this emerging identity and increasingly define them in contrast to the cultural practices and communities of Pueblo Indians. By the 1790s, success of the vecinos at dominating the social and economic life of the province attracted the Franciscan missionaries and led them away from their traditional defense of Pueblo Indian lands and other prerogatives. In turn, the Pueblos reacted to economic coercion and social subjugation with new and sophisticated forms of cultural resistance.

TRANSFORMING PUEBLO INDIAN-VECINO RELATIONS

Colonial marriage records provide striking evidence of the process of self-definition taking place within vecino society. By the 1780s the male:female ratio among vecinos had dropped to somewhere around 87 to 94 men per 100 women, the result of losses during the preceding decades of fighting and of increased vecino intermarriage with Pueblo women and Plains Indian captives. Compared with the sex ratio in the jurisdiction of Durango during the same period, New Mexico had a far higher percentage of women among its population. Work done by Ramón Gutiérrez using *diligencias matrimoniales* from the New Mexican missions—the investigation required by canon law in order to ensure that no impediments to marriage existed—shows that the age difference between spouses at first marriage decreased significantly at the same time.¹ Both phenomena indicate that the demographic profile of New Mexican vecinos had evolved from that of a young frontier population of settlers to a more stable and mature society at the end of the eighteenth century.

The census records also show a new concern with ethnic divisions of the population during the 1760–1800 period. Ethnic classifications based on the product of mixed marriages appear in the New Mexican documents from the early years of the province, but their usage underwent a marked change toward the end of the eighteenth century. After 1760, the ethnic designations of respondents appear in increasing number in the records of the *diligencias matrimoniales*. In addition, for the first time the investigating friar consistently included in his report ethnic labels denoting the offspring of mixed marriages, such as *Color Quebrado*, *Coyote*, *Lobo*, and *Mulato*. This change reflected two trends: the increasing frequency of endogamous, cross-ethnic marriages encouraged by a quarter-century of close proximity and collaboration due to the Plains Indian threat; and a heightened sensitivity to racial designations, at least on the part of the missionaries responsible for recording the censuses.²

Two changes of great significance to the understanding of late colonial New Mexican society took place corresponding to the period of rapid growth in vecino economic activity. During the last decade of the eighteenth century, vecinos and Pueblo Indians for the most part stopped intermarrying. At the same time, interest in mixed-race classifications that so preoccupied officials and missionaries in the 1760s and 1770s began to disappear.

Gutiérrez, in his investigation of the diligencias matrimoniales, divided the marriage population into vecinos, Indios, and Castas and tested the association of bride's and groom's racial designations against a model assuming the random selection of a mate.³ He found that the partners of marriages represented in his sample expressed a marked preference for a spouse from their own racial category through the 1760s. This association decreased dramatically through the 1770s and into the 1780s, when spouses appeared to marry with little regard for ethnic status. Beginning around 1790 the trend reversed, and by the early 1800s the statistic used for demonstrating marriage preference indicates that virtually all couples married within their own ethnic group.

Additional analysis of the data collected by Gutiérrez confirms that vecinos chose fewer Pueblo Indians in marriage and shows that the change took place after the 1780s. Figure 12 includes all marriages recorded in the diligencias matrimoniales in which Gutiérrez identified at least one of the spouses as a Pueblo Indian. From the point of view of the Pueblo marriage partners through the 1780s, the diligencias show a very large percentage of exogamous marriages, but since the friars could only investigate impediments to marriages made with partners outside the Pueblo, only a small number of total Pueblo marriages became subject to investigation. Figure 12 shows that the percentage of marriages between Pueblo Indians and vecinos declined substantially after 1789, even as the number of total marriages with at least one Pueblo partner went up. After 1800 the number of Indians marrying a partner from another pueblo rose markedly, perhaps in lieu of outside marriages to non-Pueblos. Consequently, Franciscans conducted more diligencias matrimoniales covering Pueblo marriages.

Simultaneously, the proliferation of ethnic classifications found in the diligencias starting in the 1760s had disappeared almost entirely by the end of the century. Similarly, many census documents that had counted vecinos, Indios, and Castas in the 1760s through 1780s listed only two classifications, "Indios" and "vecinos y Castas," or just "vecinos" (or "Españoles"), later in the century. As in other parts of New Spain, the self-designation of racial status in marriage documents had rendered such labels increasingly inaccurate during the eighteenth century.⁴ When asked by missionaries to identify their race at baptisms or marriages, respondents often replied in ways calculated to improve their status in the eyes of Spanish society. In New Mexico, the new currents of economic activity added to the incentive for passing from Color

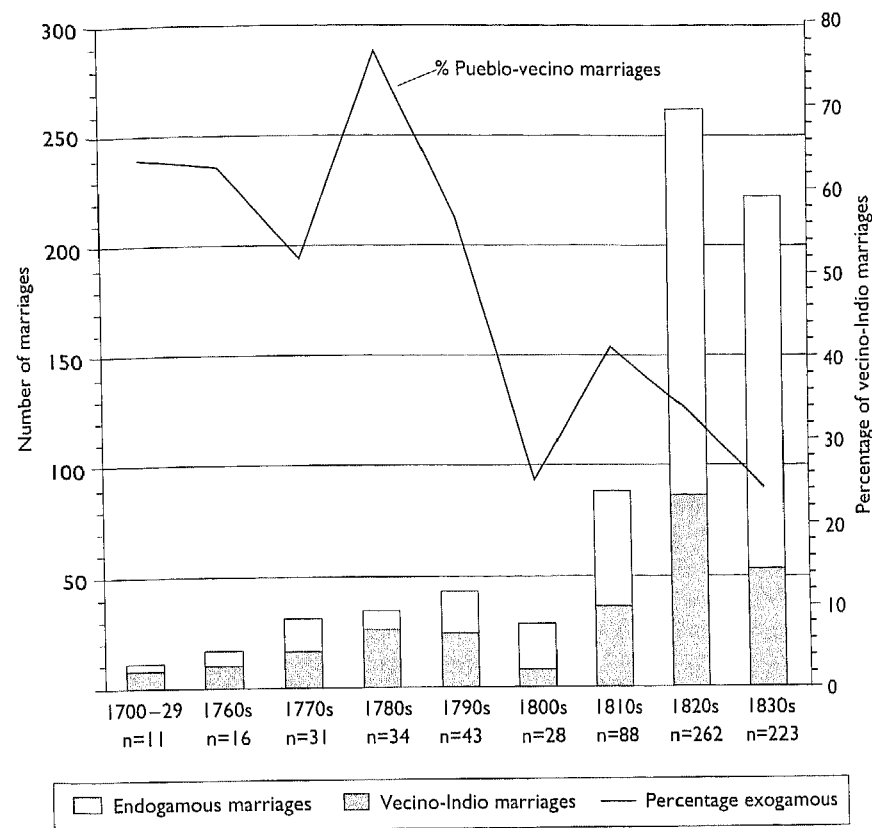


Figure 12. Vecino-Indio marriages as a percentage of those represented in diligencias matrimoniales, New Mexico, 1700-1839. Source: Table showing place of residence at marriage, by decade, courtesy of Ramón Gutiérrez, University of California, San Diego, compiled from AASF:DM.

Quebrado, Coyote, Lobo, Genízaro, or other Castas to vecino or Español through self-identification. For Pueblo Indians, however, lack of interest in the system of classification or Franciscan missionaries who assigned racial status based on residence in a Pueblo served to increase the differentiation between Indios and vecinos.⁵

The New Mexican response to the Revillagigedo census of 1790 presents a notable exception to the trend toward fewer ethnic labels, made more significant because of the tendency of scholars to emphasize this particular census in their research. Spanish officials conducted the 1790 census throughout New Spain, and nearly complete responses from New Mexico survive.⁶ The census organized the populace according to six racial classifications,

including designations not often found in other colonial documents from New Mexico of the same period. Printed census forms and instructions sent to New Mexican officials from Mexico in preparation for a consistent enumeration throughout New Spain caused the racial categories to appear or reappear suddenly in 1790, and they did not necessarily reflect contemporary local practice.⁷

The mixed-race classifications in use in New Mexico during the third quarter of the century—Genízaro, Casta, Color Quebrado—became incorporated during the next generation into the vecino label. The collapse of the terms describing mixed-race peoples into one non-Indian group left a bipolar system that resembled the early-eighteenth-century distinction between vecinos and Naturales, before the elaboration of mixed-race classifications. “Vecino” indicated one’s Spanish settler neighbors, and “Natural” signified the “uncivilized” Pueblo Indians before conversion. However, while the old terms represented different racial groups, their meaning at the end of the century signified a distinction in cultural terms. The redefined category of vecino, or Español, now encompassed hispanicized Genízaros and Castas.⁸ Labeling groups by a set of primarily cultural, rather than racial, characteristics underscores the significance of this period in the transformation of frontier society in New Mexico. After three decades of co-operation and intermarriage between Pueblo Indians and their neighbors, vecinos at the end of the eighteenth century had begun to fashion their own cultural identity, defined in large part in contradistinction to that of the Pueblos.

The movement of ethnic markers in New Mexico differs in interesting ways from what researchers have found in other areas of northern New Spain. A number of scholars agree that the racial categories understood in central Mexico broke down in northern communities and that provincial communities created new ethnic identities from the categories previously ascribed to them by others. However similar the process, the nature of the changes depended largely on the economic and cultural contours of the locality. Cynthia Radding has shown in the Sonoran highlands that the policy of *reducción*, reducing the scattered villages to larger communities, created a period of flux in ethnic categories. Uprooted Pima and Opata migrated to non-Indian villages, where they supplied their labor and worked to gain vecino status. At the same time, settlers encroached upon Indian villages and mission lands to expand their herds and fields. Other groups of seminomadic Indians also moved seasonally in and out of the villages to trade and to work at harvests. These movements, each in its own way tied to Bourbon policy, formed vecino communities by a steady process of accretion. Mining, and to a lesser extent agriculture, combined with the effect of the reducciones, provided a strong pull toward social integration in Sonora.⁹

All of these elements existed in late colonial New Mexico in some sense:

Pueblo Indian outcasts and some who married outside the pueblo formed a steady stream of new Casta or Coyote members of vecino communities; vecino encroachment on Pueblo lands intensified beginning in the late 1780s (discussed below); and Genízaros, slaves, and semi-nomadic groups of allies and refugees had increasing contact with both Pueblo and vecino communities. In contrast to Sonora, Pueblo Indian cultural boundaries and Bourbon economic forces each worked to reinforce a process that made Pueblo Indians marginal to vecino society and subjected them to somewhat indirect forms of vecino economic exploitation but that still afforded them a measure of cultural autonomy.

Vecino cultural change brought with it a hardening of socially constructed racial-ethnic distinctions into class lines. Spanish folktales collected in New Mexico appear to illustrate this development further. In one story, a wealthy young man saw Beatrice, the daughter of a count, while attending Mass, and they fell madly in love with each other.¹⁰ When he applied to her father to ascertain his chances of winning her, the count replied that custom made the gap between their social positions too much of a barrier for any hope of success. When the count next saw his daughter talking to the young man he had her placed at night in a convent under orders of strict silence. Her lover tried to help her escape, but the count, having been forewarned, appeared suddenly to stop them. In the exchange of blows that followed, the father fell and the man fled, believing that he had killed the count.

After going to war and becoming a captive of the Indians, a young Coyote¹¹ woman named Sicay chose the young man as her husband. Although she lived with the Indians, Sicay had refused ever to marry an Indian, in deference to the Spanish blood of her mother. Together they planned to flee to the Spanish, but the Indians apprehended them and placed the husband in prison. Meanwhile, Beatrice persuaded her father to let her marry her exiled lover, and she dressed herself as a man in order to lead the troop attempting his rescue. Beatrice freed her lover, and together they killed the old witch who had imprisoned Sicay. When Sicay greeted her husband with joy, he refused to embrace her: “You no longer want me?” asked Sicay. “No, no longer, because my first love has come,” said the young man.

The Indians in the tale appear to be a strange combination of Pueblo and Plains; the Spanish fight them, yet among these Indians lived a priest who counseled Sicay, encouraged her engagement to the young man, and joined them in a Catholic marriage. Ultimately, an advantageous marriage with a woman of high Spanish birth took precedence over a properly consummated marriage with a beautiful half-Indian woman. The folktale embodies the social preferences of vecino society in the late colonial period. Beatrice, the wealthy young man, Sicay, and the full-blooded Indians represented, in descending order, the ranks of New Mexican social hierarchy by the first decade of the nineteenth century.

SANTOS AND FURNITURE:
NEW FORMS OF VECINO CULTURAL EXPRESSION

Population growth and economic development in New Mexico had a direct influence on the components of vecino identity that emerged at the end of the colonial period. Beginning in the 1780s, vecinos suddenly expanded their repertoire of forms for cultural expression and acquired new channels for the social articulation of a self-confident, distinct Spanish subculture on the northern frontier of New Spain. A vecino religious movement emerged at the end of the eighteenth century, characterized by santos and by the renewal and expansion of *cofradías*, including the foundation of La Hermandad Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno, commonly referred to as *Los Penitentes*. Vecino craftsmen began to produce images of saints for the missions, chapels, and churches around 1790, complementing a movement to rebuild and decorate religious edifices.

Given the expansion of the vecino population at the end of the eighteenth century, one would expect to find a contemporary surge in the construction of churches and other religious buildings in New Mexico. As settlers from the established areas of vecino settlement founded new villages, they built churches and chapels, often without any way to obtain an ecclesiastical license and almost always without a resident priest. Due to a chronic shortage of secular priests, in new villages, as in the older settlements, the friar from the nearest pueblo mission attended to the sacraments and the occasional Mass when convenient. When Bishop Don José Antonio de Zubiría visited New Mexico in 1833, he authorized more than thirty licenses for new churches, chapels, and oratories in all parts of the province.¹² Pedro Tamarón y Romeral in 1760 had conducted the last visitation of New Mexico made by a bishop of Durango. Since Fray Atanasio Domínguez's visitation occurred in 1776, many of these buildings had functioned without the benefit of official sanction. Among others, Bishop Zubiría issued licenses to the church at Ranchos de Taos, begun by the late 1780s, the church of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in the plaza of San Fernando de Taos, the chapel also dedicated to the Guadalupe in La Cuesta, near San Miguel del Vado, and the church of the Santuario del Señor de Esquipulas at Chimayo, constructed around 1816. Vecino communities built between 1780 and 1820 period represented almost all the religious edifices that Bishop Zubiría licensed during his visitation.

In addition to the construction of new religious buildings needed to keep up with an increasing laity, vecinos undertook a program of reconstruction and refurbishment of long-standing structures on a scale not seen in New Mexico since the reconquest. A portion of the attention lavished on existing churches and on new chapels and oratories came from the hands of vecino *santeros*, who established at this time a new artistic tradition in the province.

Architectural evidence and documents describing construction and dedication attest to the tremendous activity undertaken between 1780 and 1820 to erect, rebuild, repair, and decorate religious structures. Important support and patronage for many of these projects came from members of the emerging vecino commercial elite involved in the trade with Chihuahua.¹³

Don Antonio José Ortiz provides an outstanding example of the natural links between provincial economic development and the cultural enrichment that followed. Ortiz came from a well-established vecino family. His great-grandfather, a sergeant from Zacatecas, moved his family of six and entered the province with Governor Vargas.¹⁴ His father served as *teniente* in the Presidio of Santa Fe. In April 1750 he married Gertrudis Páez Hurtado, daughter of Vargas's *teniente* general, Juan Páez Hurtado. Born in 1734, at the age of 20 José Antonio married Rosa Bustamante, the daughter of Don Bernardo de Bustamante y Tagle, who served as lieutenant governor in 1722–1731 under his close relative, Governor Juan Domingo de Bustamante. Ortiz rose to prominence in Santa Fe in the 1770s, becoming patron of the fiesta held by the Confraternity of La Conquistadora in 1772 and, after 1776, perpetual *majordomo* of the organization. The money that Ortiz lavished on religious donations came from a profitable career as a merchant and public official. In 1778, as *alcalde* mayor of Santa Fe, he attempted unsuccessfully to win the tithe contract for New Mexico.

A glimpse of Ortiz's commercial activities in the trade to Chihuahua appears in the *alcabala* records for 1783. He paid the tax on fifty sarapes, which he carried in the annual convoy from New Mexico.¹⁵ Two years later he successfully bid for the tithe and held it for the 1785–1786 biennium. At that time he held the title of captain of the Santa Fe militia in addition to his position as *alcalde* mayor of the villa. When Governor Concha wrote his instructions to his successor in 1794, he commended *Alcalde* Mayor Don Antonio José Ortiz as the man "in whom resides the necessary knowledge of all of the inhabitants." He recommended that incoming Governor Chacón seek the advice of Ortiz on the appointment of future *alcaldes* mayores.

Beginning in the 1790s and until his death in 1806, Ortiz provided patronage for a number of projects of religious renewal.¹⁶ Before 1797, work funded by Ortiz had begun on a new chapel dedicated to San José attached to the parish church of San Francisco in Santa Fe. As portions of the church had deteriorated almost to ruins, Ortiz had the structure renovated. He had already repaired and refurbished the Rosario chapel attached to the parish church, the San Miguel chapel in Santa Fe, and the mission church at Pojoaque Pueblo, close to his ranch. In 1798 he petitioned the bishop of Durango for permission to build an *oratorio* near his house, due to his poor health. He received the license for an already finished *oratorio* the following year. At the same time, part of the parish church collapsed, and Ortiz undertook to repair the damage. By 1804, work had progressed to the point

that the structure awaited *vigas*, when lightning struck. The disaster forced Ortiz to begin the project again. This time he tore down the existing walls and had the church considerably enlarged. In the early years of the nineteenth century, Don Antonio also constructed a second private chapel at his ranch at Pojoaque.

Ortiz's patronage illustrates the natural connection between the New Mexican economic boom and the late-eighteenth-century renewal of provincial religious buildings. However, the cultural ramifications of religious patronage ran even more deeply, encouraging the development of a direct religious expression of the late colonial vecino experience. Don Antonio again provides a fine example. Ortiz supplemented his considerable program of construction with gifts of interior decoration and furnishings calculated to make the buildings more attractive and serviceable to meet the religious needs of his family and the Santa Fe community. In a letter to the bishop of Durango in 1805, he listed some of his donations: "The sanctuary and high altar [of San Francisco] have been renewed by me, also the chapel of Nuestra Señora del Rosario and the chapel of San José, in which Your Lordship has granted me the privilege and grace to have, all, from their foundations to their conclusion, sanctuary, and other ornaments have been placed by me. The sanctuary of the chapel of San Miguel outside the parish I made myself. I have given various jewels to the parish church, not only in adornment but in services to the Mission of San Diego at Tesuque; I have made the principal sanctuary at the Mission of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe."¹⁷ The ornaments and adornments mentioned by Ortiz link his patronage to a corpus of santos made by the Laguna Santero, one of the earliest and most influential saint makers working in New Mexico.

Other documentary sources and inscriptions on the works confirm that Ortiz commissioned the altar screen for the sanctuary in the chapel of San Miguel, a large *reredo* in the mission church at Pojoaque, an altar screen in the chapel of San José in the Santa Fe parish church, and similar "adornment" for the sister chapel of Nuestra Señora del Rosario. Similar stylistic elements indicate that the artist who crafted the altar screen in the San Miguel chapel in Santa Fe also fashioned altar screens at Laguna (Plate 10), Acoma, and probably those at Zia and Santa Ana. The alcalde mayor of the Laguna district, Don José Manuel Aragón, commissioned both the Laguna and Acoma altar screens, and Vitor Sandoval and his wife, Doña María Manuela Ortiz, donated the ones at Zia and Santa Ana. Both groups of patrons had a connection to Don Antonio José Ortiz. Second cousins María Manuela Ortiz and Don Antonio belonged to the same wealthy Ortiz family.¹⁸ The will of Don Antonio José Ortiz mentioned forty-eight cows due to him, at the time in the hands of José Manuel Aragón as the result of a *partido*. Patronage from the Ortiz family and business associates who were equally active in the second commercial economy accounted for the completion of the known al-

tar screens carved and painted under the artistic direction of the Laguna Santero. Scholars have named this anonymous artist after the altar screen he completed in the Laguna mission church, his last and best-preserved monumental work.

The Laguna Santero worked in New Mexico from approximately 1795 until about 1808, judging from documents, inscriptions found on panels, and dates supplied by a dendrochronological analysis of wood used by the artist.¹⁹ The short span of his career in the province and the fully formed style apparent in the earliest of his works has led to the suggestion that Antonio José Ortiz contracted with an artist from Mexico who returned there a few years after the death of his primary patron. Despite the brevity of his activity in New Mexico, the Laguna Santero bridged the gap between style and technique current elsewhere in New Spain and an artistic expression in harmony with the needs and sensibilities of vecino society. Although perhaps not a vecino by birth, he created an original New Mexican vocabulary of religious imagery that continued to evolve long after the end of his active career in the province. During this period of fourteen years or so, the Laguna Santero completed at least eight major commissions for Ortiz, Aragón, and Sandoval-Ortiz, and in addition left a number of *retablos*, paintings on hide, bas-reliefs made of gesso, niches for statues, and a group of *bultos*. Recently, restoration of the church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada reclaimed an altar screen made by the Laguna Santero, and he also may have worked on the church of San Francisco at Ranchos de Taos, at least for a time. The Laguna Santero established a workshop of painters, wood carvers, and carpenters to execute commissions under his direction. At the same time—and in much the same vein—the government of the Provincias Internas took the suggestions of Fray Morfi, Governors Concha and Chacón, and others and contracted with the Bazán brothers to heighten the quality of the vecino weaving industry in New Mexico.

The artistic production of the Laguna Santero established a number of stylistic interpretations of the baroque tradition of New Spain that directed the development of a provincial industry, producing religious images for churches, chapels, oratorios, private homes, and Penitente meeting places during the succeeding generation.²⁰ In general, the Laguna artist translated the complicated architectural structure and exuberant decoration of eighteenth-century Mexican religious furnishings into a simplified form carved in the soft woods available in New Mexico (principally pine and cottonwood) or painted on a flat surface in two-dimensional perspective.

In carving and painting the altar screen at Laguna (see Plate 10) the artist brought together a number of innovations begun in earlier works to create a unified provincial style. The architecture of the altar screen blends three-dimensional, carved, and painted Salomonic pillars with painted, flat boards forming arches to create niches for the display of the patron saint, San José,

in the center, flanked by Santa Barbara and San Juan Nepomuceno (Nepomucene) on the right and left, respectively. In the earlier altar screens made for San Miguel Chapel and the mission church at Pojoaque, the altar screen forged a similar architectural space meant to house either sculptures of saints or oil paintings imported from Mexico, or occasionally from Spain. These altar screens conformed to the basic design and function of their contemporary counterparts in Mexico and Spain. Beginning with the altar screen at Zia, and gaining maturity with the works at Acoma and Laguna, the *santero* began to supply the saints in addition to the architectural frame. The Laguna *Santero* painted the figures of the saints on wood panels and inset them within his decorated frames in the traditional manner as if they were separate works imported from Mexico or Spain. Scholars have postulated that the Laguna master also fashioned *bultos* to serve as the focal point for his altar screens, but apparently no large figures have survived.²¹

The integration of the picture of the saint and the Spanish tradition of elaborate architectural frames for *santos* altered the function of the screen, merging the two elements into a single visual unit. The image of the saint now included a large frame made up of decorative conceits in a complimentary style, instead of a separate structure designed to set off the central image in contrast to its elaborately ornamented architectural space. Unifying the simplified baroque elements and the central religious image in a single, consistent form created one of the basic ingredients developed by the succeeding vecino *santo* tradition. The concept appears in individual *retablos* with saints depicted in gesso as a *bas-relief* associated with the Laguna *Santero* or his workshop, and it took on new life in the hands of indigenous vecino *santeros* who followed. In replacing the scarce and highly valued piece of imported religious art with the picture or statue of a saint made by his own hand, Laguna *Santero* also expressed the self-confidence of the new vecino laity in their own provincial forms of religious expression.

The Laguna *Santero* translated other aspects of prevailing Mexican baroque styles into forms that communicated in two dimensions, eschewing the complication of three-dimensional perspective. In the Laguna panel, the robes of the figures of the Trinity that form the *remate* and that of San José below appeared as a simplified version of the swirling, naturalistic movement and detail that provided sentiment to Mexican baroque painting. As a result, the figures seem to lack mass, and their clothes appear merely decorative, rather than adding emotion to the scene. The faces of the saints also lack the intense baroque naturalism that gave them emotive power in contemporary Mexican painting. Instead, the Laguna *Santero* provided his subjects with a sense of solemn detachment. Only the eyes of the saints pierce the two-dimensional space, searching for those of the viewer. Finally, the decorations that fill most of the remaining space have become two-dimensional patterns and emblems instead of the exuberant baroque foliage that typified Mexi-

can artwork. The frescolike painting on the side walls at Laguna seem like a patterned tapestry, although they still resemble the plant motifs sculptured on the exterior walls at the entrances of the cathedrals of Chihuahua and Durango, or even the more elaborate growth decorating the *Retablo Mayor* of the chapels of San Pedro and Los Arcáγγελos in the cathedral of Mexico City.²²

The demand for religious images among a growing vecino population created an indigenous *santo* industry before the turn of the nineteenth century. The Laguna *Santero* provided a coherent artistic style adapted to New Mexican conditions and a workshop of followers with some training gained from the master. The career of *santero* Don Pedro Antonio Fresquis also began in the 1790s, creating *santos* in a style independent of influence from the Laguna *Santero*. Fresquis represented one of the earliest vecino craftsman catering to a popular, rural demand for religious images. His work often drew directly on imagery from popular European prints and engravings imported throughout New Spain. Fresquis painted with thin, flowing lines and the precision of a draftsman. He rendered the conventional perspective found in his printed models to flat, two-dimensional form to create the illusion of space by using cross-hatching and other techniques borrowed from Spanish and Flemish prints. Before the identification of Fresquis as the artist responsible for this style, his technique provided the title "Calligraphic *Santero*." The wide range of religious subjects that Fresquis depicted, and the iconography he drew upon, attest to the influence of imported materials. Another early *santero*, known as Molleno, worked in the early nineteenth century. Molleno probably received his training as an apprentice of the Laguna *Santero*.²³

The innovation of the Laguna *Santero* and Pedro Antonio Fresquis in developing a vecino language of religious imagery occurred through a process that George Kubler called "form-splitting" (*Formenspaltungen*) common elsewhere in colonial Latin America and in Europe during the Middle Ages. The term, introduced by the German art historian Adolf Goldschmidt in 1936, referred to artists using other artifacts, instead of nature, as models for new art. Form-splitting describes the transmission and translation of fashions current in the metropolitan centers to distant regions. Kubler provided the example of "the tendril-like proliferation of Plateresque scrollwork in provincial hands, when we compare Acolman with Yurutia in Mexico," as a New World equivalent to the process that took place in medieval art described by Goldschmidt. The early New Mexican *santeros* also employed form-splitting as a means of adapting styles current elsewhere in New Spain. This phenomenon accounts in large part for the aspects of *santo* form and style that appear to derive from the seventeenth or early eighteenth century, or even from medieval Spain, instead of contemporary Mexico.²⁴

Despite the emphasis on an itinerant folk tradition of New Mexican *santeros* in much of the literature, the beginnings of the vecino *santo* industry

relied heavily on commissions from wealthy patrons or newly established communities to fashion larger altar screens and individual bultos and retablos for the furnishing of religious buildings. Religious patronage of the arts functioned in a manner similar to that of Mexico City or a provincial capital, albeit on a smaller scale. Fresquis painted a major altar screen for the church at Truchas around 1818, and he received a commission from the family of Antonio José Ortiz for a wooden collateral for the Rosario chapel mentioned above. He designed the work to house the statue of Nuestra Señora del Rosario, known as La Conquistadora in New Mexico, held to have first been brought to the province by Fray Alonso de Benavides in 1623 and again by Governor Vargas during the reconquest. Documents also mention work—no longer extant—executed at the churches of Santa Cruz de la Cañada and Chimayo. Molleno completed the altar screen in the side chapel dedicated to Nuestro Señor de Esquipulas at the Church of San Francisco, Ranchos de Taos, between about 1815 and 1817, and may also have painted the original main altar.²⁵

The Rosario and Ranchos commissions demonstrate the continuing connection between the vecino elite and the early development of the santero tradition and the passing of the mantle of innovation from the Laguna master to native vecino craftsmen. Although smaller, individual retablos and bultos became common during the next generation, catering to a truly popular demand for religious images and patrons of fewer means, larger projects proved an important source of support for santeros well into the nineteenth century. The numerous altar screens commissioned from nineteenth-century santero José Rafael Aragón (working dates circa 1820–1862) appear in religious buildings throughout the Río Arriba region. Examples include the pueblo mission of San Lorenzo de Picurís (completed by 1826), the private Durán chapel at Talpa, near Taos (1838), and a public chapel in Córdova, near Santa Cruz de la Cañada (1834–1838).²⁶

The secular brotherhood of Penitentes also emerged in New Mexico during the last decades of the Spanish period. Very little information exists to shed light on the origin or precise date of the beginning of La Hermandad de Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno. The religious movement arose in New Mexico between 1776 and 1833, when Bishop Zubiría made specific mention of the “abuses” of corporal penance practiced by the *cofradía* at Santa Cruz. The Penitente organization grew in the context of a general resurgence of confraternities in the province.²⁷ The Penitente emphasis on reliving the suffering and redemption of Christ—taken to the extent of elaborate rituals of flagellation and the reenactment of the Passion—represented a popular religious movement whose spiritualism and iconography exemplified the articulation of this powerful, self-confident, vecino worldview emerging from the changes and ordeals of the preceding half-century.

The development of the New Mexican *santo* at the end of the eighteenth century coincided with the establishment of vecino techniques and styles of furniture production. In addition to providing religious structures with devotional imagery and decoration, the transformation of forms and styles from elsewhere in New Spain also took place within the domestic setting of vecino homes. Assigning dates to vecino furniture remains difficult because fewer documents, inscriptions, or groups of works representing individual styles survive for utilitarian goods than do records of church renovation or the commission of altar screens. Although provincial wills and inventories show that settlers produced some furniture throughout the eighteenth century, no documents describe the way it looked in any detail. In contrast to surviving examples of Franciscan styles of religious imagery that preceded the blossoming of the art of the *santero*, no New Mexican furniture known today can be confidently dated before the late eighteenth century.²⁸

The earliest examples of New Mexican furniture that survive represent another node on the roots of late colonial vecino material culture. Like the innovation of the Río Grande blanket style and associated textiles and the establishment of a native *santo*-making tradition, vecino furniture production at the end of the eighteenth century constituted a resurgent craft that also responded to New Mexican demographic change and economic growth. The argument presented here rests on three observations: Most of the items of early furniture mentioned in wills and extant examples came from wealthy families likely to patronize carpenters and to commission furniture as a means of displaying status; the process of rendering Mexican furniture prototypes and decoration into a vecino aesthetic form operated in a fashion similar to that of the development of *santos*; two innovative vecino furniture types exist, the New Mexican framed chest developed late in the late eighteenth century and the *harinero*, from the early nineteenth century and directly linked to expanding agricultural production.

Descriptions of vecino households by American visitors after the opening of the Santa Fe trade with the United States in 1821 emphasize the sparseness of the domestic interiors of most New Mexican homes.²⁹ Josiah Gregg, an American who first entered New Mexico with a trade caravan in 1831, wrote a dozen years later that:

The immense expense attending the purchase of suitable furniture and kitchen-ware, indeed, the frequent impossibility of obtaining these articles at any price, caused the early settlers of northern Mexico to resort to inventions of necessity, or adopt Indian customs altogether, many of which have been found so comfortable and convenient, that most of those who are now able to indulge in luxuries, feel but little inclination to introduce any change. Even the few pine-board chairs and settees [*sic*] that are to be found about the houses are seldom used; the prevailing fashion being to fold mattresses against the

walls, which, being covered over with blankets, are thus converted into sofas. Females, indeed, most usually prefer accommodating themselves, *à l'Indienne*, upon a mere blanket spread simply on the floor.

Gregg responded to the relative indifference of New Mexicans to furniture compared with contemporary Anglo-American households.

Nonetheless, late colonial wills and private inventories show that both native-made and imported pieces of furniture had significant value. Wooden chests, the most frequently mentioned type of furniture, received values of 2–12 pesos in wills from the 1780–1820 period. The wills containing the most furniture pertained to the estates of the wealthier families of the province, always closely connected to the second commercial economy. Don Clemente Gutiérrez died in 1785 as one of the richest men in New Mexico. He made his fortune in the Chihuahua trade, after emigrating from Aragón, Spain. Gutiérrez held the tithe contract for New Mexico from 1779 until the year before his death. He left an assortment of furniture that had adorned an eighteen-room house: two trunks and nineteen chests and boxes of various kinds, six chairs, five tables, two beds, four benches, three *armarios*, and a desk from Michoacán. Of the twenty-one chests, boxes, and trunks, six came from Michoacán. In contrast, Tomasa Benavides died in 1762 leaving only one piece of furniture, a chest. The probate record attested that the “deceased had always been a poor woman.”³⁰

Don Manuel Delgado died in 1815 without having made out a will. Delgado had become a wealthy merchant also involved in trade with Chihuahua and had served in the military for more than thirty years. His estate included twenty-five pieces of furniture, not including forty-one stools, which may have formed part of his commercial inventory. All of this material apparently came from New Mexico, as the only mention of imported furnishings concerned six washbasins from Michoacán. One year earlier, Rosa Bustamante swore out her will in Santa Fe in front of her notary and the required witnesses. Bustamante, the widow of Antonio José Ortiz, patron of the Laguna Santero, assigned to her heirs two writing desks, twelve stools, two or three tables, two sofas, and a wardrobe. Three of the estates that contained furniture belonged to *alcaldes mayores*, pointing to the link between provincial posts, wealth, and family status.³¹

Given the social status of the families most likely to possess furniture in any quantity, one might expect vecino craftsmen to rethink Spanish furniture types in provincial terms in much the same manner as did the New Mexican *santeros*. Plate 15 shows a chest made in New Mexico for the storage of household goods during the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. The carpenter made this piece, called a board chest, by joining four panels together with dovetail joints and attaching the bottom board to the edges of the sides with pegs.³² The construction differed very little from that of Span-

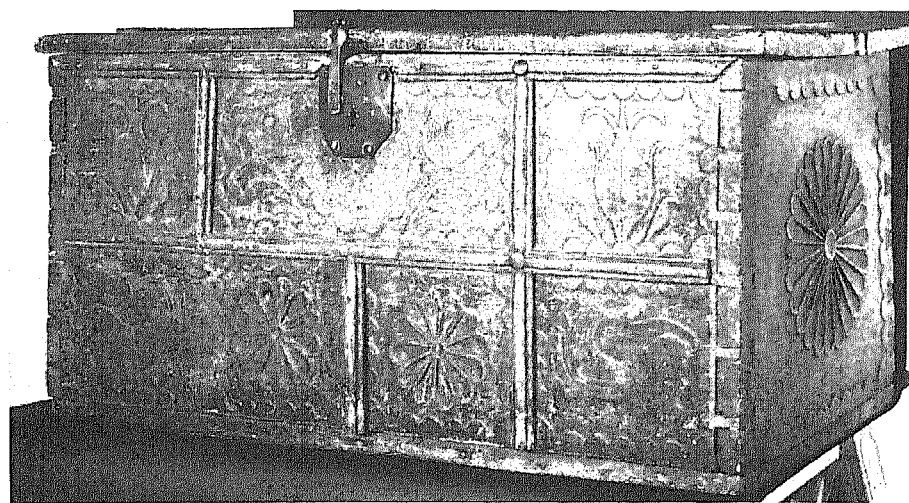


Plate 15. New Mexican board chest, late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. 23.6" × 50.8" × 22". (Photograph by Mary Peck; courtesy of the Museum of International Folk Art, a unit of the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico, A.82.10-1 [NMF #31])

ish or Mexican boxes. Some board chests retained a proportional scheme of one-half vara squares for either end of the box and two for the front and back, making them one vara wide. The arrangement of the decoration followed Mexican guild requirements for borders and divisions of Roman molding and proportional design elements.

Various features identify this chest as unmistakably New Mexican. Lacking hardwoods in the province, the pine boards used in furniture construction could not have taken the elaborate, deeply-carved designs in relief used in chests from Spain.³³ Instead, the New Mexican craftsman chose one traditional motif carved in low-relief as an emblem for each panel, framed by a simplified border pattern. Rosettes, stylized vines in the upper center panel, regardant lions, and pomegranate motifs all hail from the Spanish and Moorish decorative tradition but appear in a patterned, two-dimensional form. The process paralleled the relationship of the Laguna Santero's decoration to that found on contemporary Mexican churches. A number of extant board chests exhibit an exterior painted in bright colors, emphasizing another connection between vecino furniture and *santo* production. The similarity in baroque motifs used on furniture and *santos* has become the basis for dating early examples. Finally, due to limited access to iron, the artisan kept the use of metal hardware to a minimum, reserving it for the latch, simple hinges, and strap iron reinforcements of the corners for added strength in some pieces.

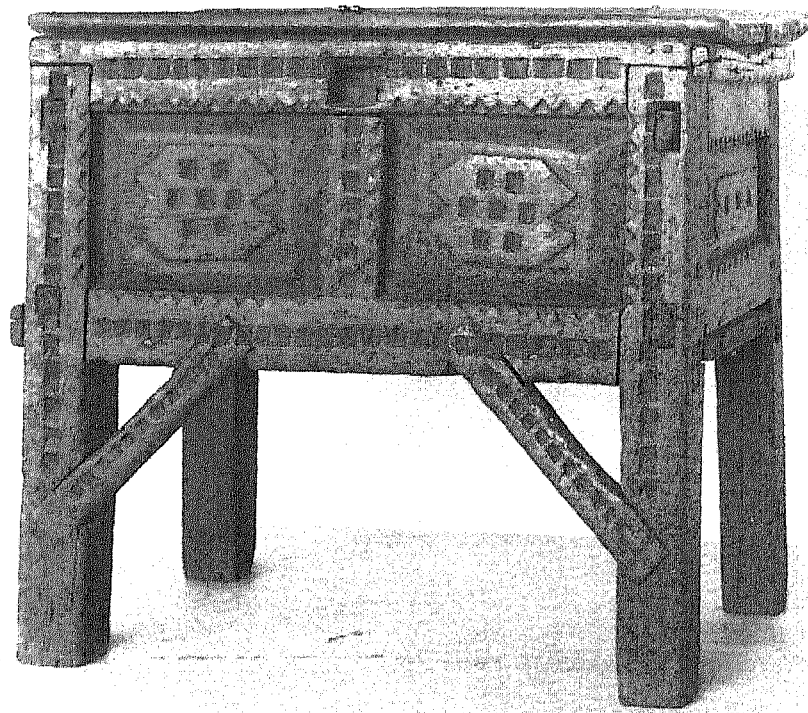


Plate 16. New Mexican framed chest, late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. 27.6" × 33.5" × 15.8". (Photograph by Mary Peck; courtesy of the Millicent Rogers Museum, Taos, New Mexico, MRM 1967-3-53 [NMF #465])

Board chests, such as the one in Plate 15, often sat on wooden stands to protect the bottom from rotting and to provide some protection against rodents. Late in the eighteenth century vecino craftsmen developed framed chests with legs that built the stand into the structure of the piece. One example appears in Plate 16. The frame required eight horizontal rails and five vertical stiles, four at the corners and one dividing the front, center panel.³⁴ The artist secured the elements of the frame by using mortise-and-tenon joints, pinned with a wooden peg instead of a nail. Four or more panels fit inside the framing rails to form the sides, which the artist then decorated with chip-carved gouged designs in relief. While this type of decoration did not have the elegance or sophistication of the heraldic figures found on the chest in Plate 15, the design concept remained similar to furniture made

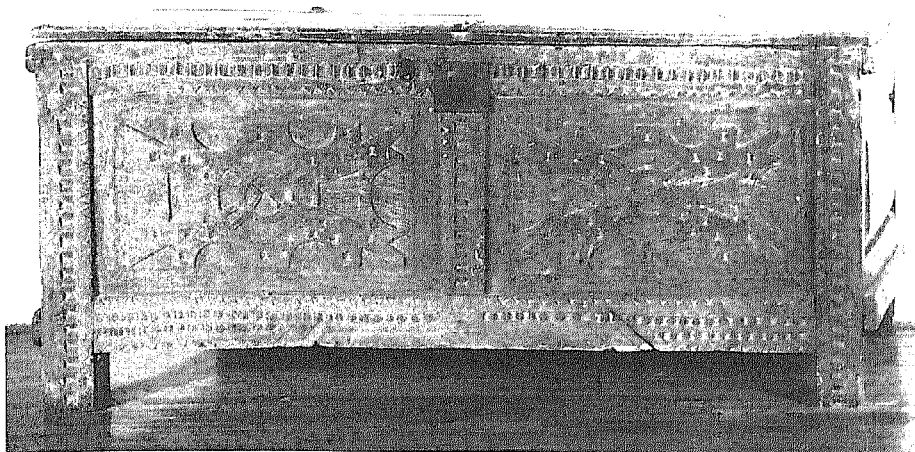


Plate 17. New Mexican harinero, late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. 26" × 71.1" × 33.1". Made by the Valdez family. (Harwood Museum of the University of New Mexico, Taos, New Mexico, 1980.0083 [NMF #10]; photograph by Mary Peck; courtesy of the Museum of International Folk Art, a unit of the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico)

outside the province. The bottom panel slid between the lower rails, and pegs gave it additional strength and stability. Because the mortise-and-tenon frame bore the load of the contents instead of the dovetailed joints of board chests, framed construction suited chests made for heavy objects, such as grain.

The extension of the stiles of a framed chest downward to create short legs represented a particular characteristic of furniture made in the north of Spain, particularly in the regions of Asturias and Navarra. Although similar in concept, the long legs with angled braces found on New Mexican framed chests, such as the piece in Plate 16, represented another New Mexican innovation. The uniqueness of the extended legs on framed chests has led to the suggestion that a carpenter came from these parts of Spain and influenced local techniques or that vecinos copied an imported specimen. In either case, New Mexicans lengthened the legs without regard for Spanish tradition.

Of the framed chests that currently reside in museums and private collections, eighteen samples of the type shown in Plate 17 display such great similarities in form and design that they probably came from the same workshop or community. Information regarding provenance that has accompanied a number of these pieces points to a source from the Río Arriba region,

in the vicinity of Taos. The chest in Plate 17 came with documentation that allowed Lonn Taylor and Dessa Bokides to identify the carpenter as a member of the Valdez family, a part of the generation that resided in 1790 in the vicinity of La Joya (present-day Velarde). The Valdez family may have operated a workshop for the production of furniture in the Velarde area, again similar to the workshop run by saint makers such as the Laguna Santero. Workshops represented a method of increasing output while maintaining quality and hence assumed some of the functions of the craft guilds found in other parts of New Spain.³⁵ The identification of at least one Valdez family carpenter also dates this innovative and uniquely vecino woodworking style to the end of the eighteenth century.

The framed chest in the Velarde style pictured in Plate 17 once had diagonal braces reinforcing long legs like the piece in Plate 16. The legs have been shortened and the braces cut off, but diagonal traces of the supports remain on the bottom rail on either side of the center stile. Larger chests like this piece served to hold grain or flour and appeared as *harineros* in wills and inventories. The earliest documented mention of an *harinero* occurs in the will made in 1804 by Manuel Mares of Santa Fe. At his death in 1815, Manuel Delgado owned two *harineros*. The wills of the 1780s do not mention this type of chest—not even in the lengthy inventory of the estate of Clemente Gutiérrez, who died a far wealthier man than Delgado.³⁶

The *harinero* represented a new form of chest, making its appearance by the first decade of the nineteenth century, just as increased New Mexican agricultural productivity created surpluses that required storage year around. Because of the weight of flour or grain and the need to prevent spoilage by mice and other pests, carpenters resorted to more elaborate and complicated joinery. Slats that fit into mortises in the bottom front and back rails often gave additional strength to the bottom panels. An *harinero* generally had four panels at each end, and twelve to sixteen panels could make up the front, depending on its size. Because of the dimension and weight of the boards, the artisan hinged only a central panel that became the lid, or the front portion of the top as shown in this example. *Harineros* were the largest pieces of furniture used in vecino houses, and possession of one or more of them attested to the owner's status and prosperity.³⁷ Vecino craftsmen also made tables, chairs, cupboards, wardrobes, and other kinds of furniture at the turn of the nineteenth century using the same framed technique.

However, if one hypothesizes that the framed construction of furniture represented a new technique introduced at the end of the eighteenth century and adapted for use with chests meant to hold heavy loads, the extension of the corner stiles of the frame would serve as a substitute for the separate wooden stands generally made for board chests. Legs added directly to board chests could not have held the weight of a heavy load, since without stiles they did not form a structural part of the box. The frame provided the bottom of

board chests with additional support while raising it above the floor, making redundant a separate stand to accompany a board chest. Legs that formed part of the structure of a framed chest presented a logical replacement for the board chest stands, and they also saved materials and labor. Although the framed chest clearly followed carpentry practices standard in Mexico at the time, the idea of fashioning long, built-in legs to keep the chest off the ground used by vecino artisans may well not have originated in northern Spain.

The board chests with relief carving (Plate 15) exhibit such a different method of construction and design from other documented early New Mexican furniture, and framed chests in particular, that they call for some explanation. Heraldic designs carved in relief on the board chests contrast with both chip or gouge carving and the raised panels cut in geometric patterns common on most framed chests. After reviewing extant chests from all periods, Taylor and Bokides suggest that the board chest may have derived from inexpensive military furniture, representing a Río Abajo style different from that of the Río Arriba framed chest. They also suggest that the large number of chests from Michoacán that appear in colonial inventories might refer to a form of the board chest.

New Mexican carpenters showed a remarkable ability to adapt Spanish furniture-making tradition to meet the tastes and needs of vecino patrons at the end of the eighteenth century. The evidence from the inventories of the period appears to confirm the impression gained from looking at the material record, although one cannot rely on either source alone: that more furniture entered vecino homes, and that most of it came from the hands of vecino craftsmen.³⁸

The redefinition and expansion of three important vecino craft industries—textile weaving, *santo* making, and the production of furniture—occurred at the end of the eighteenth century as a part of the fundamental transformation of the New Mexican economy. The florescence of these forms of vecino material culture signaled a wave of cultural change sweeping through all aspects of vecino society. On one hand, the development of vecino material culture received nourishment from, and contributed directly to, the creation of a diverse and active market system within New Mexico and greater commercial interaction with provincial neighbors. On the other hand, changes in material culture fed the transformation of facets of colonial lifeways and society, helping to propel a fundamental redefinition of the vecino perception of their own society.

The vecino culture and society that emerged through two generations of demographic and economic change provided powerful incentives that dramatically altered the position of both the Franciscan missionaries and the Pueblo Indians. In each case the tide of change worked to marginalize those groups, but in very different ways.

REORIENTING FRANCISCANS TO A VECINO CULTURE

At the end of the eighteenth century the Franciscan missions in New Mexico differed from the mission systems in neighboring provinces in northern Mexico in significant ways. Unlike the missions of Alta California, and to a lesser extent in Texas and the Pimería Alta, the mission system in New Mexico sat relatively lightly on the Pueblos during most of the eighteenth century, both in terms of the economic demands made on the Indians, discussed in chapter 1, and in the pressure for cultural change placed upon them by the Franciscans, discussed below. In contrast to other areas of northern New Spain, competition and enmity between missionaries and secular officials over control of the Indians grew less, instead of greater, toward the end of the eighteenth century. Where the secularization of the missions became an issue during the early nineteenth century in Alta California and Texas, or occurred due to Indian abandonment and pressure from settlers to occupy mission lands, secularization of the Franciscan missions in New Mexico never became a serious point of contention.

Before the turn of the nineteenth century, changes in the economy, cultural framework, and population of the new Spanish society rendered the original role of the Franciscan missions irrelevant and reoriented the interests of the missionaries toward those of the New Mexican settlers. The waning of the mission influence in New Mexico at the end of the eighteenth century did not occur because of official neglect or lack of missionaries to maintain the system. Long before secularization, or before the last Franciscan left the province, the system was peaceably overcome by the vibrant vecino society that late colonial prosperity had engendered.

During the 1750s and 1760s the Franciscan missionaries leveled serious charges of abuse and exploitation of the Pueblo Indians against the governors and *alcaldes mayores* of the province. If the reports of the Franciscans seem prejudiced against the Spanish secular officials, their bias stemmed from the frustration and realization among the fathers that two generations after the reconquest, the conversion of the Pueblos remained incomplete and superficial. In searching for the reasons for their failure, the friars concluded that oppression by the civil government bore the responsibility. In a broadside against the secular government of New Mexico, Fray Carlos Delgado listed the evils perpetrated by the governors and *alcalde mayores*: forced sales of goods to the Indians, arbitrary requisitions, the consorting with and violation of Indian women, and the whipping or incarceration of Indians for the smallest infractions.³⁹

Fray Delgado concluded that the "inequities" of the Spanish officials brought the Indians to the point where: "losing patience and possessed by fear, they turn their backs to our Holy Mother, the church, abandon their pueblos and missions, and flee to the heathen, there to worship the devil, and

most lamentable of all, to confirm in idolatries those who have never been illumined by the light of our holy faith, so that they will never give ear or credit to the preaching of the gospel. Because of all this, every day new conversions become more difficult."⁴⁰ The Indians did not in fact abandon their pueblos, and only eight years earlier Fray Delgado himself had led a number of Hopi and all of the Pueblo Indian refugees, except for the Hano, from the Hopi mesas to settle at the abandoned pueblo of Sandía, north of Albuquerque.

Fray Delgado's own disappointments help to provide a reason for the stridency of his accusations. In 1748 he founded the two pueblos of La Cebolleta and El Encinal, settled by "converted" Apache and Navajo, respectively. The Plains Indians fled their newly constructed pueblos in early 1750, prompting the report to Fray Jimeno quoted above, which blamed this disaster on the governor and the *alcaldes mayores*. Fray Juan Sanz de Lezaún, who worked for five months "catechizing," wrote ten years later that the sight of the neighboring Acoma and Laguna Indians, forced to build the new pueblos and their churches, "created such a schism among the Apache that the latter desisted from their intended conversion and revolted."⁴¹

In response to the situation described by Delgado, Governor Cachupín sent his lieutenant governor and Vice-Custo Father Trigo to investigate the matter, and they arrived at very different conclusions. According to their report, the Indians of La Cebolleta and El Encinal had rebelled against Fray Manuel Bermejo and Fray Lezaún, not fled as a result of witnessing the labor of the Pueblo Indians. Fray Juan Miguel Menchero had promised them that upon settling in a pueblo they would receive "many mares, mules, cows, sheep, and clothing," much of which they had not seen. The Indians testified "that they did not want pueblos now nor did they desire to be Christians, nor had they ever asked for the fathers; and that what they had all said . . . to Father Menchero was that they were grown up, and could not become like Christians or stay in one place because they had been raised like deer."⁴²

Faced with nomadic Indians who quite consciously rejected Christianity, and by Pueblo Indians who maintained their kivas and traditional ceremonies, the Franciscans directed their bitterness against the secular officials of the province. Under the circumstances, their accusations reveal less about the relations of the governor and *alcaldes mayores* with the Pueblo Indians than about their own sense of failure in attempting to the extend the spiritual care of the mission to new Indian populations. Stymied within the Pueblos by the resilience of native institutions—and among the Navajo and Apache by lack of adequate means of persuasion—the missions in New Mexico lost one of the fundamental reasons for their existence: to teach and expand the faith.

By the end of the eighteenth century, conditions in New Mexico had changed in ways that compounded the difficulties faced by the Franciscans and left them increasingly attached to the vecino settlements in the vicinity

of the missions. During the last quarter of the century the number of vecinos living in the province grew significantly (see Figure 9). By the end of the colonial period the vecino population of New Mexico numbered more than 28,000. The Pueblo Indian population, on the other hand, had remained relatively stable, numbering from 9,000 to 10,000 through most of the 1750–1821 period. The cadre of Franciscans available to serve the twenty-two missions and three or so largest vecino towns fluctuated during the same period but generally moved between eighteen and twenty-five missionaries, with the exception of the 1780s. Although the Franciscans established the missions for the conversion and spiritual care of the Pueblo Indians, missionaries in New Mexico also served the spiritual needs of the residents of the neighboring vecino villages. The marked demographic growth among the vecinos, and to some extent within the Pueblos as well toward the end of the century, placed increasing demands on the small group of Franciscans residing in the missions.

In theory, the Franciscan missionaries owed their services primarily to the Indians of the Pueblo missions, not to the vecino communities nearby. In practice, the rapid increase in the vecino population after 1770, the vigorous economy rejuvenated by the vecinos beginning in the 1780s, and the vecino demand for spiritual care not reciprocated to the same degree by the Pueblos drew the Franciscans more closely to the vecinos. After the smallpox epidemic in 1780–1781, the missionaries lost the benefit of the personal servants they had enjoyed. The end of this tradition proceeded from the drastic reduction of the population in many of the missions by smallpox and the steps that Governor Anza then took to reduce the number of resident missionaries from twenty-three to seventeen. Without a missionary living in each mission, the friars could not expect the pueblo to provide the five to ten people weekly to attend the missionary. Only the sacristan continued to aid in the maintenance of the church. The loss of services from the host pueblo caused the missionary to rely more heavily on the obventions of the vecino communities near the pueblos. It also eroded the loyalty that the friar might have felt for his Native American charges. The Franciscan practice of rotating the missionaries throughout the New Mexican missions every few years further exacerbated the forces pulling the friars away from the Pueblo Indians.⁴³

In 1789, when Governor Concha wrote to the comandante general to explain why he needed to restore the missions at San Ildefonso, Tesuque, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, and Acoma to residency status, he also initiated a new attack on the privileges of the friars.⁴⁴ He explained that when he entered the province, the friars had exaggerated their expenses and had hidden from him “the increases in the obventions and first fruits drawn from the vecindario Español dependent on the missions.” Now he had discovered that, ex-

cept for the friars at Laguna and Zuñi, the *sínodo* and the payments from the vecinos proved more than enough for the missionaries to live decently. These same obligations had become onerous to the vecinos and the Castas. “It is the common opinion in this land,” he continued, “that however much the individuals earn and work, the religious absorb it for the baptisms, marriages, and funerals that they perform.” Concha explained that the schedule of fees charged for services set in 1730, the *arancel*, still functioned unchanged. Bishop Crespo’s *arancel* pegged fees to values in silver which, by the 1780s, New Mexicans had to pay with increasing amounts of their goods. A more money-conscious society, and the effect of a dose of inflation on New Mexican produce, altered the perception of the vecinos, who found themselves paying for the sacraments in more valuable commodities. The high cost of services caused constant disputes over the just valuation of payment in kind. Concha proposed a thorough investigation of the religious tariff and the revaluation of fees on the basis of goods rather than silver.

The investigation that followed demonstrated that, as a whole, the friars had done quite well. By the early 1790s the vecinos in the vicinity of the missions contributed significantly to the friar’s annual stipend of 330 pesos. The vecinos neighboring the mission at Isleta contributed the largest amount, supplementing the income of the missionary by 250 pesos, more than two-thirds of his original stipend.⁴⁵ The vecinos at San Juan and Abiquíu each contributed 150 pesos toward the upkeep of their missionaries, in addition to the *sínodo*. The friar at Santa Clara received 125 pesos from his vecino flock. The missionaries at Cochití, Sandía, and Taos added 75 pesos to their income. The other friars gained less, from the chaplain at the presidio chapel in Santa Fe, a Franciscan due to the lack of secular priests, who supplemented his income of 480 pesos by an additional 70, to the missionary at Zia Pueblo, who received only 25 pesos in obventions. As Concha had mentioned, the missionaries at Zuñi and Acoma received no obventions because of the absence of vecino communities nearby.

While the investigation continued, Governor Concha repeated his call for a change in the tariff for religious services and petitioned Comandante General Pedro de Nava for a new church at Belén to serve the growing population of vecinos and Genízaros. He asked for one-half of a subsidy to supplement the contributions made by the vecinos for the maintenance of the friar, since the forty families of Genízaros at Sabinal could not contribute due to their extreme poverty. If granted, this would bring the number of missions to twenty, supported by twenty-one and a half *sínodos*. The comandante general supported Concha’s request, and in 1792 Viceroy Revillagigedo approved the new mission.⁴⁶

The establishment of the church at Belén with a subsidy from the Crown marked a watershed of sorts. For the first time the civil government approved

the commitment of Franciscan missionary resources to a region without an Indian pueblo and dominated by a vecino population, a striking indication of the changing role of the Franciscans in New Mexico.

Meanwhile, the related problem of the schedule of charges for the sacraments still rankled the secular officials. The bishop of Sonora declined to interfere, pointing out that he did not have jurisdiction over New Mexico. The Audiencia of Guadalajara sent the request to the bishop of Durango, who should have received it in the first place, but Bishop Tristán refused to make any changes. After receiving the bishop's decision, Comandante General Nava proposed an alternative method of limiting the contributions collected by the New Mexican friars. After consultation with his fiscal, Nava moved to reduce the remaining obligation paid by each pueblo to its missionary still further, allowing only one-half fanega of maize each year, or other products worth the equivalent of 12 reales. After agreement from the viceroy and the fiscal, the plan won the approval of Bishop Tristán in Durango, who emphasized that even this first fruit was strictly voluntary on the part of the Pueblos.⁴⁷ Limiting the contribution to one-half fanega reduced the long tradition of Pueblo Indian service and the provision of food and other supplies to the missionary to no more than a ceremonial offering. The practical effect of this change, and the collapse after 1793 of the high prices brought by New Mexican produce, left the missionaries still more dependent on vecino contributions for their sustenance.

The obventions accepted by the friars from their vecino parishioners reflected a need for spiritual care that only the missionaries could provide in New Mexico and, at the same time, an obligation of pastoral care on the part of the missionary that he could only provide at the expense of the Pueblo Indians. The Franciscan missionaries began to view vecino interests by the mid-1790s within the context of a bond formed by the cultural and economic circumstances that drew them together. In the notes that accompanied the two tables that make up the 1794 census, six friars began a concerted attack on the privileges held by the Pueblo Indians, which they had come to believe hindered the growth of vecino prosperity against the best interests of the province. They depicted the Pueblos as lacking respect for Christianity, shirking work, and not using their land efficiently for production: "But what is most astonishing is that, despite almost 200 years that these Indians have been under the teaching, they do not obey the Church but with very rare exceptions (excepting the Genízaros of Abiquíu). Despite their natural laziness for work, rare is he who does not labor on the most festive days of the year, and they even reprimand those who do not, from which one knows that they work with contempt for the precept of God and the church."⁴⁸ The Pueblo Indians held their functions in the kivas "which should be demolished," or outside in the field, "since in those days they are

very observant, like Jews on the Sabbath, and on which they guard and they order to keep their inviolate secret." When the missionaries tried to correct these failings through punishment by the fiscales, the Indians ignored and made fun of these Pueblo officials. The friars received little help from secular authorities, and whenever they tried to enforce their authority, the Pueblos petitioned the comandante general or other authorities "without any fear of God," against their actions.

The missionaries suggested two remedies for the situation in the pueblos that illustrate how far they had departed from the protective stance of their counterparts in the 1750s and 1760s. They advocated forcing the Pueblo Indians to speak Castilian instead of their native languages, which they would enforce by placing a royal judge in each pueblo to support the friar. Secondly, they recommended following the process used in Sonora of allowing settlers to claim and enclose the communal lands of the indigenous highland communities.⁴⁹ "Where there are surplus lands in the pueblos," wrote the friars, "give them, as they do in Sonora, to the many vecinos, poor men of good reputation and customs, that would live in those same pueblos . . . , and with luck they would go discouraging the vain gentile observances and idolatries that every day are on the rise." The missionaries also used the specter of Pueblo Indian economic domination over landless vecinos to move secular authorities to take action.

The census notes prepared by Fray Diego Turado and Fray Ramón Antonio Gonzalez explained that although the pueblos "enjoy a good deal and fine lands," they did not work as hard as they could at farming maize, wheat, or vegetables. Instead, "part [of their land] they rent to the vecinos for whatever serves them, or for an excessive price," purchasing with pottery whatever provisions they needed from the vecinos. Cochiti and Santo Domingo in particular produced enough to sell outside the pueblo. According to the friars, these two pueblos had so much extra, fertile land that they could not work it "without having the assistance of many vecinos, who are obliged from their necessity to serve them, and this service of vecinos to the Indians also occurs in other missions of the province."⁵⁰ In a remarkable display of blaming the victims for their predicament, Fray Turado and Fray Gonzalez suggested that taking away the means of Pueblo production, and giving the land to vecinos instead, would provide the solution for Pueblo reluctance to produce for a system that coercively extracted goods for the vecino economy!

The call of the Franciscan hierarchy in 1795 to give Pueblo Indian land to the settlers did not fall on deaf ears, although vecinos proved not to need much encouragement. Another aspect of the assertion of a vecino cultural identity, directly related to the economic boom at the end of the eighteenth century, appears in the aggressive manner in which vecinos began to usurp

Pueblo lands after 1780. In addition to settling new fertile areas that were too dangerous to farm or had previously been vacated due to Comanche and Apache activity, vecinos began wresting choice lands away from Pueblo communal ownership, repeating a pattern well established in other areas of Bourbon New Spain.⁵¹ Unlike in other areas, however, the Franciscan missionaries in New Mexico did not constitute a voice of opposition to vecino encroachment on Pueblo lands.

In general, during most of the eighteenth century the Pueblo Indians had access to Spanish justice in New Mexico. During the period from 1740 to 1770 suits brought by or on behalf of the Pueblos enjoyed a good chance of success.⁵² Indian plaintiffs or petitioners won verdicts in their favor in every case brought to the attention of the governor between 1740 and 1770 in which a decision survives.⁵³ However, beginning in the late 1780s until after 1810, the Indians relied much less heavily on the legal system, either because they found such channels blocked or because they had become of little use in redressing their grievances.

Law suits involving land survive in sufficient number to illustrate the decline in Pueblo Indian participation in the vecino administration of justice. During the 1760s and 1770s, pressure from the growing vecino population also prompted petitions from settlers for new land grants, often nearby and potentially prejudicial to Pueblo territory. A number of cases show a careful consideration of Indian claims by the governor before any making any new land grants. In 1763, for example, Cristóbal and Nerio Montoya sued Antonio Baca over the sale of a piece of land that Santa Ana Pueblo claimed to have purchased from Baca. The proceeding ended with the Indians in possession of the land and Baca in debt to the plaintiffs for the sum of 400 pesos. Governor Mendinueta, who served his second term between 1767 and 1778, took pains to respect the rights of Jémez Pueblo when authorizing a grant to Paulín Montoya. In response to protest that the proposed boundary would endanger the pueblo title to an orchard, Mendinueta ordered the line moved 2,800 varas farther from the pueblo.⁵⁴

As vecino society grew and became more commercial during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the Pueblo Indians suffered a marked erosion of property rights and protection of their titles, which they had enjoyed under Spanish law and New Mexican practice. Between 1740 and 1820, more than thirty cases for which documents survive involving Indian lands came before the governor for judgment. Of these cases, only one received a hearing between 1770 and 1812, indicating the extent to which the Pueblo Indians had lost the access enjoyed both before and after this period.⁵⁵

The next surviving land action brought to the governor on behalf of the Pueblo Indians dates from August 1812, after the outbreak of the Hidalgo revolt in Mexico two years earlier and the Morelos insurgency of the previous March. Between 1813 and 1819 a relative flood of fourteen Indian petitions

and cases reached the governor for investigation and judgment. The timing of the apparent shift in Indian access to vecino justice seems to indicate the desire to prevent any similar uprisings on the part of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico. After 1810, Governor José Manrique supported the Pueblo Indian use of the newly resurrected office of *Protector de Indios*, dormant in New Mexico since the second decade of the eighteenth century.⁵⁶ In fact, a large number of the legal proceedings initiated after 1810 stemmed from vecino purchase of, or encroachment on, Indian lands carried out in the period from the 1780s through the first decade of the nineteenth century.

The case of Taos Pueblo serves as an indicative example. From 1760 until the late 1780s the vecino population of Taos lived in the pueblo because of the danger from Comanche raids. By the mid-1790s the settlers had moved into the recently built plazas of Ranchos de Taos and Don Fernando de Taos, and the population of the valley began to increase rapidly. The growth of the vecino population underlay the subsequent encroachment on Taos Pueblo land and litigation.⁵⁷

In 1795 the Taos Pueblo purchased a tract of land from an heir of Sebastián Martín, a vecino who supposedly had received the land in grant early in the century. The Pueblo in 1800 bought a larger tract from the same person. Both these pieces of land lay inside the time-honored grant of 4 square leagues around the pueblo, so that in theory the Indians already owned the land. Apparently they feared imminent or future trouble if they did not make further efforts to secure their title by whatever means available. During the same time, Governor Chacón gave a grant of land in 1796 to a group of vecinos moving out of the pueblo in order to establish Don Fernando de Taos, also clearly within the Pueblo league. In 1796 and 1797, Alcalde Antonio José Ortiz placed three groups of families in possession of the land. In 1799, Governor Chacón reconfirmed these actions.

In 1815 the governor of Taos Pueblo brought suit against the large number of vecino trespassers settled within the standard 4-league area at Don Fernando de Taos, as well as against the new settlement of Arroyo Hondo, 12 miles to the northwest but abutting land that the pueblo farmed. Significantly, the friar serving at the Taos Mission, José Benito Pereyro, as well as Pedro Martínez, the new alcalde of Taos, came to the defense of the Arroyo Hondo settlers. They argued that "the said descendants of the conquering nation [the Spanish] should be entitled to the lands which the Indians do not develop and cultivate."⁵⁸ In his judgment of 1815, Governor Alberto Maynez ruled unequivocally against the settlers of Don Fernando de Taos. In acknowledgment of the impropriety of the previous grants, he ordered the vecinos to vacate the land belonging to the pueblo. As uprooting the newly settled village proved impractical, Maynez ordered the alcalde to try to arrange any possible compromise with the Taos Pueblo, in order to prevent the settlers from losing all of their improvements. In the event, the outcome of

the suit did not bring about a complete removal of vecinos from Indian lands, but the Pueblo had reestablished its title and recovered crucial legal rights lost during the 1790s and earlier.

Another case, involving Cochití Pueblo, demonstrates the network of vecino power used to defraud the Indians. In 1792, when Luís María Cabeza de Baca (Vaca) occupied the post of *teniente* under *Alcalde Mayor* Don García de la Mora, the governors of Cochití, Santo Domingo, and San Felipe, with the help of the missionary from Santo Domingo, accused Baca of forcing the Indians to cultivate his land without pay, "except for lashes, beatings, and abusive language." He ordered Indians to transport *vigas* to his property, and, "in one word, he treats the Indians like they were slaves, against the Bulls of the Holy Pope Alexander . . . and against so many Royal *cédulas*." Governor Concha had *Alcalde Mora* conduct an examination of these charges. After lengthy hearings, Mora concluded that the accusations made by the Pueblos had no basis in fact. Governor Concha decided that Luís Baca had not improperly used his position, and he asked *Alcalde Mora* to "determine if the Indians have made any representation against him [the *teniente*], or if he knows if the vecinos *Espaníoles* have established them due to hatred of the *teniente*, or personal interest could have induced the Indians to [say] that which they exposed to the Reverend Father minister those matters that made up the representation here, with the idea of upsetting the good administration of justice and harmony so necessary and recommended for the peace and for the laws." The *alcalde* did not record his thoughts on these matters. Upon referral to the legal council for the *comandante general*, however, Baca had to pay the Cochití Indians for the labor he had suborned and for the legal costs of the case.⁵⁹

In 1805 Baca occupied the land around the Santa Cruz springs, land that Cochití had purchased in 1744, and produced a deed showing that he had bought it from the pueblo for 1,200 pesos. In 1815, representatives from Cochití formally petitioned for the invalidation of Baca's deed, claiming that some members of the pueblo had sold land to him and other vecinos illegally. Governor Maynez decided the case in favor of the plaintiffs in 1815, ordering Baca to give up the property and abandon the improvements he had made to the Cochití. Baca did not leave, however, and the protests of the pueblo went unheeded until 1817, when the Cochití once again renewed their suit before the assessor in Durango. From there the proceedings moved to the Audiencia in Mexico City, before landing at the Audiencia of Guadalajara for a final decision. In 1819, after fourteen years of appeals, the audiencia decided in favor of Cochití Pueblo and ordered Baca to vacate the land and pay court costs.

Despite the victory, the copy of the verdict and restoration of ownership sent by the audiencia never reached Cochití. Even with the knowledge of the

verdict, without the documents issued by the Audiencia of Guadalajara, the Pueblo could not prove title to the land to the satisfaction of either the Mexican or American authorities after the end of Spanish colonial government. At the time of the audiencia judgment against Baca, his son, Juan Antonio Cabeza de Vaca, occupied the post of *alcalde mayor* of the Cochití district. Some years previously, while serving as a justice for Peña Blanca, officials had charged the younger Baca with intercepting and suppressing a letter concerning a debt owed by his father to the Santo Domingo Pueblo. Given the wealth and power of the Baca family in that area of the province, it seems likely that similar action ensured that the critical document never arrived in Cochití Pueblo. By accident, William B. Taylor uncovered the original record of the document transmitting the verdict in 1979 in the archives at Guadalajara, and an act of Congress restored the tract to the pueblo.⁶⁰

In stark contrast to the Franciscan actions of the 1750s and 1760s, at the end of the eighteenth century the missionaries made no accusations against vecinos or the officials who aided them in the taking of Pueblo lands; nor did they react to the general tightening of economic control over the Indians. Toward the end of the century, the Franciscans had by and large identified themselves with the social and economic aspirations that defined the new vecino culture. The Franciscan journey, from protector of the temporal well-being of the Pueblo Indians in the hope of achieving their spiritual transformation, to the recognition that their efforts among the vecinos ultimately held more significance, serves as a marker for the effect that economic change had on social relations inside New Mexico.

The development of the vecino santo industry at the end of the colonial period also suggests that a closer working relationship with the Franciscan missionaries had arisen since midcentury. Due to the difficulty of obtaining religious devotional objects for churches and chapels in New Mexico during the eighteenth century, artisans within the province began making santos shortly after the reconquest.⁶¹ The first pieces fashioned in New Mexico until approximately midcentury conform to a formal, linear style, modeled after the religious frescos created elsewhere in New Spain in a provincial neo-Renaissance style. Grouped by E. Boyd into the "Franciscan F" and "Franciscan B" styles, missionaries executed these religious works, possibly with Indian assistance, for the decoration of the Pueblo missions, rather than the settler-dominated churches of Santa Fe, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, and Albuquerque.

Fray Domínguez's 1776 report and other documentary sources identify by name the earliest santeros to have worked in New Mexico as Fray Andrés García and Capitán Bernardo Miera y Pacheco, the mapmaker, explorer, and painter from the Presidio of Santa Fe. Both men immigrated to New Mexico in midcentury, Fray García from Puebla in 1747 and Spanish-born Miera y

Pacheco around 1754. Boyd attributed extant pieces of sculpture to each of these men and extrapolated from their sculptural style to link to each artist a body of oil paintings executed on cloth, animal hides, and pine panels. García resided in the missions of Santa Fe, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, and Albuquerque and in many of the pueblos during his thirty-two years of service, dying after 1779 in Mexico City. Miera y Pacheco died in Santa Fe in 1785.⁶² Although the santos currently in museum collections or New Mexican churches cannot all be attributed to a particular santero at this time, they fit into three recognizable styles, each a provincial rendering of the academic styles of religious painting then prevailing in New Spain.

The late-eighteenth-century works show considerably more stylistic and iconographic complexity than do the simpler, more didactic, early Franciscan styles. Unlike the Franciscan "F" and "B" styles, the artists of the Provincial Academic styles use baroque painting conventions and techniques to portray naturalistic movement and emotional expression characteristic of devotional images. In addition to work done for the Pueblo missions, vecino patrons commissioned santos attributed to both Miera y Pacheco and Fray García for use in vecino churches and chapels. The most clearly documented work by Fray García, an almost life-sized figure of Santo Entierro, resides in the vecino church at Santa Cruz for which it was crafted. One of the sculptures and three panels attributed to Miera y Pacheco have inscriptions commemorating their vecino donors.⁶³

Beginning in the 1790s, vecinos undertook an extensive redecoration of New Mexican churches and expanded the availability of santos by creating a local craft tradition. During the same period, vecino santeros developed the religious art first improvised by the Franciscan missionaries for the Pueblo missions into a provincial folk style that fulfilled their need for devotional images. The earlier Franciscan-made religious images in the Provincial Academic style, and the few works of art imported into New Mexico from Mexico and Spain, provided the only stylistic and iconographical models available within the province to the developing santo industry. The Franciscans provided the encouragement and perhaps the prototypes for the vecino tradition that followed. In addition, the success of vecino projects to build, rebuild, and refurbish New Mexican churches, chapels, and oratories depended on the support and active cooperation of the Franciscan missionaries. The friars encouraged or fomented no such development on the part of the Pueblo Indians, in contrast to the early Franciscans in Mexico, for example, who trained and facilitated the decoration of the walls of sixteenth-century missions by Náhuatl artists.⁶⁴

At the turn of the nineteenth century the Franciscan missions in New Mexico continued to offer spiritual services and the sacraments to the Pueblo Indians, in much the same way as they had during the previous century. The

role of the missionaries, however, had changed dramatically during the preceding quarter-century. Increasingly, the Franciscans who worked in New Mexico toward the end of the century identified with the young, dynamically evolving vecino society, rather than with their less receptive Pueblo charges.

The shifts in the relationship between Franciscan missionaries, their Pueblo spiritual charges, vecino parishioners, and Spanish officials in New Mexico mirrored profound changes in the position of priests in colonial New Spain. William Taylor has shown that Bourbon administrators focused their power and policies on extending a measure of control over and access to the communal property and financial resources of Indian pueblos in the central regions of New Spain.⁶⁵ This often involved identifying and limiting the administrative roles that parish priests customarily had played in pueblo affairs. Bourbon reformers also worked to separate secular functions from the religious ones in areas where custom and tradition had blurred the distinctions between them.

In the 1760s the interest of the Spanish Crown in standardizing and centralizing relationships of power began to reach into the church in New Spain. In 1767 Antonio Lorenzana, the archbishop of Mexico, instituted a new arancel. Disputes over the proper fees for baptisms, funerals, masses, and other services occurred throughout the colonial period, but Taylor shows that the gradual campaign by high secular and ecclesiastical officials to replace local custom with a fixed rule increasingly put local priests at odds with Indian officials. The establishment of the intendancy system in New Spain in the 1780s also curbed "excessive" fees in favor of "equitable aranceles."⁶⁶ Bourbon officials provided rural pueblos with the incentive and the tools to restrict their obligations to the lower clergy, and the resulting changes served increasingly to portray the relationship between priest and parishioner as a financial transaction. At the same time, Bourbon officials applied other types of fixed rules, such as the royal monopolies that raised the tax burden for Indian pueblos in central Mexico, thereby worsening the general climate within which the priest had to work.

In New Mexico, the fees charged for religious services provoked the same kind of complaints and official concern. Governor Anza used the smallpox epidemic of 1780–1781 to restrict missionary access to Pueblo labor and services when he consolidated the missions into groups under the care of a single missionary. A few years later, when Governor Concha began his investigation into the arancel in New Mexico, the missionaries had few interests within the Indian pueblos to protect. The Pueblos had not responded to the church with enthusiasm since the reconquest in the 1690s, and in practice the actions of Governors Anza and Concha had ended the customary Pueblo support of the missionaries. In contrast to the dynamics at work in the dioceses of Mexico and Guadalajara, where the arancel created disputes

between pueblos and their priests and lawsuits between priests and Spanish district officials, the arancel reforms in New Mexico made it clear to Franciscan missionaries that their future was in the hands of vecino parishioners.

Bourbon innovations also reached the religious *cofradías* in Indian communities throughout New Spain. *Cofradías* owned lands and livestock in common, and the parish priest generally managed this property or shared the oversight with Indian majordomos. Bourbon administrators had an interest in defining *cofradía* wealth as communal, rather than as religious property that could not be taxed. Officials also encouraged individual, rather than communal, sponsorship of civic and pious celebrations, as a means of channeling popular culture into forms that reinforced colonial authority.⁶⁷ The Real Ordenanza de Intendentes set up in 1786 called for *cofradía* members to choose their Indian majordomos in elections presided over by Spanish judges. *Cofradías* had to submit detailed reports of community property to the regional intendant. In central Mexico, Guadalajara, and elsewhere in New Spain, this drive to separate the communal ownership of assets from the participation of the parish priest in the management of these "pious funds" led to a prolonged struggle that the priests ultimately lost.

In New Mexico, the issue of *cofradía* wealth and proper management also emerged; hence the detailed accounts of their operation written in 1776 by Fray Domínguez and in 1791 at the request of the archbishop of Durango. Franciscans did not have any success introducing *cofradías* into Pueblo religious life after the reconquest. Domínguez's account demonstrates the precarious state of the *cofradías* in the vecino towns of Santa Fe, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, and Albuquerque in 1776. They existed due to gifts from past governors and a few other elite donors and to the perseverance of the missionaries who supervised their management. By 1791, however, vecino *cofradías* had become a potent vehicle of popular religious expression, individual sponsorship of pious activities, and the owners of great flocks of sheep and other property, just as Bourbon officials might have hoped. By that time the missionaries had given up the management of the *cofradías*, seemingly without protest.

The Franciscans paid a price for their attention to vecino religious and cultural needs. By giving up their original obligation to the Pueblos, the missionaries in New Mexico placed themselves at the political margin in their dealings with provincial Spanish officials.

Governor Concha's warning to his successor about the new relationship of the friars to the vecino population indicates the extent of Franciscan marginalization at the turn of the nineteenth century. Concha contrasted the lack of Pueblo Indian litigation to the vecino propensity to renew every petition and suit upon the arrival of a new governor. He then described the frequent Pueblo petitions for the removal of their missionary as acts of collusion between the neighboring vecinos and the missionary: "They generally have

no other object for this pretense than to oblige the missionaries who seek that specific destination, joining together with the vecindario annexed to the administration of the same pueblos, to which end, one or another [pueblo] implies and alleges a number of deeds against the missionaries in possession that generally turn out to be false. For this reason one needs a very steady hand in order to proceed in these matters. It is necessary to make a tedious examination and take individual notice of what motivates the religious and citizenry to this kind of conduct." The Franciscans had increasingly less political weight to use against Spanish officials toward the end of colonial rule, and the cooperation forged between the missionaries and their vecino parishioners accounts for the lack of interest in secularization or expulsion of the missionaries throughout the Mexican period. In fact, the mission period in New Mexico ended in 1848—and then by attrition—when the last Franciscan, Fray Mariano de Jesús López, died at Isleta.⁶⁸

LOCATING PUEBLO CULTURAL RESISTANCE: THE TEWA SEDITION TRIALS OF 1793

Franciscans responded more readily to the emerging vecino culture than to pastoral obligations owed to the Pueblo Indians by the end of the eighteenth century, in part due to the changing nature of relations between vecino and Pueblo societies. A number of cases against Pueblo Indians for sedition emphasize the fears among Spanish officials and vecinos of another Pueblo rebellion of the same magnitude as the great revolt a century earlier. A close examination of the most spectacular of these trials enables one to delve into the Pueblo cultural response to the assertion of vecino dominance at the end of the colonial period. Like the changes that took place in the attitude of the Franciscans toward Pueblo and vecino lifeways, the Pueblo strategies of self-protection show the broader social and cultural mark left on the Pueblo Indians by the period of late colonial vecino florescence.

The investigation of the Indian leaders of the six Tewa Pueblos for sedition, mounted in 1793 by Spanish officials, provides a rare glimpse of the formation of a pattern of Pueblo resistance to outside vecino influence. This case shows the development of a concerted mode of opposition to the extension of Spanish authority at the end of the eighteenth century. In conjunction with well-established obstruction to religious interference within the Pueblos already discussed, this new form of resistance gave rise to the cultural pattern that, more than a century and a half later, anthropologists dubbed "compartmentalization."⁶⁹

Understanding the significance of the 1793 Tewa trials requires a reordering of current views in two important areas. The first, largely the product of historians, emphasizes one of the results of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, which drove the Spanish and their Indian collaborators out of the Río

Grande Valley. The system that the Spanish reestablished after their reconquest in 1692 represented less of an imposition on Native American society and culture and allowed for increasingly close cooperation and social contact during the eighteenth century.⁷⁰ The second theme concerns an anthropological concept, which Edward H. Spicer and Edward P. Dozier began to apply to the Pueblos in their work published in the 1950s and early 1960s.⁷¹ Spicer's term, "compartmentalization," described a practice of walling off critical portions of Pueblo socioreligious life from the view or influence of outside authority, first from Spanish clergy and officials and later from Anglo-Americans.

Both views have valid implications for interpreting the history of the Río Grande Pueblos, but in their current form they manifest serious historical and methodological difficulties. The notion that the Pueblos fared relatively well under Spanish rule in the eighteenth century and that compartmentalization formed the key Pueblo strategy for their protection have combined to obscure the critical late colonial watershed that marked the end of the period of vecino-Pueblo cooperation and created the conditions for compartmentalization. Compartmentalization began to function effectively at the end of the eighteenth century as a direct result of the changing economic and social relationship with the vecino population of New Mexico. During this period, Pueblo adaptation to the new circumstances of vecino dominance gave rise, for the first time, to a sophisticated, full-fledged strategy calculated to stymie any attempt by Spanish authorities to interfere directly in crucial internal Pueblo matters. The Tewa trials of 1793 demonstrate this type of Pueblo resistance in action.

The trials took place precisely during the period of economic and social ferment, and they reveal the tension introduced into vecino-Pueblo relations during the last decades of Spanish colonial rule. On May 30 the alcalde mayor of the district containing the Tewa Indian pueblo of San Juan convened an extraordinary gathering. "I, the Alcalde Mayor Don Manuel García de la Mora of the pueblo of San Juan de los Caballeros," he recorded, "together with the people of the said pueblo, begin to make the investigations . . . with the goal of knowing the motives that the pueblos of the Tewa nation had in making or forming the meeting that they had in the pueblo of San Ildefonso."⁷² Following the order of the previous day from Governor Concha to investigate this illegal gathering, the alcalde and his assistants began the interrogation of one Bentura Piche, Indian of San Juan.

The richly documented case against the Tewa pueblos in 1793 provides a unique opportunity to view aspects of the relationship between the vecino population and the Pueblo Indians at a point when radical change in the provincial demography and economy began to manifest itself in the deterioration of relations between the two primary ethnic groups. For the first

time since the early years of the reconquest a century earlier, Spanish officials feared that the Pueblo Indians planned to join the nomadic Indian groups in rebellion, as they had in 1680.⁷³ The text of the court proceedings speaks of the exercise of Spanish power to determine the extent and tenor of illicit gatherings in the Indian pueblos and to bring to justice those responsible for holding them. The subtext of the same proceedings reflects a change in the underlying relationship between the two peoples. In the face of the hardening of Spanish society in contradistinction to that of the Pueblos, the Tewa responded with more organized and sophisticated forms of cultural resistance. Under the Tewa trial lies a striking demonstration of a complete Pueblo strategy developed to deflect the direct application of vecino authority in important native social and cultural institutions.

The Tewa labyrinth presented here follows the same path along which forty-seven Indians and one vecino led Alcalde Mora and his team during this seventeen-day trial. Among those interrogated figured ten Pueblo Indian officials from the six Pueblos. Both the involvement of so many Indian officials and the sheer scope of the proceedings make this trial unusual, if not unique, among surviving colonial New Mexican materials. In the end, Governor Concha found all but two of these Pueblo officials, and the lone vecino, guilty of sedition.

Alcalde Mora began his investigation with the San Juan Indian, Bentura Piche. Mora asked what had transpired during the meeting at San Ildefonso, apparently led by a San Ildefonso Indian named Asencio Peña. Piche answered in Peña's words "that among the Spanish they endured difficulties; that he had thought this in his heart so that for this they had been congregated; that all were brothers, parents, and friends, and compadres; that they should follow and leave with the Comanche, Ute, or Navajo, or Moqui; and that only in this manner would they be given a mountain with corn and wheat and all that they ate among the Spanish, so that their women and children could eat; and . . . Peña said that it was true that the God of the Spanish was great, but that theirs was also equal."

At first only Antonio Beitia, a vecino from the nearby Plaza de San Rafael, and Juan Diego Pinda, from San Juan, consented to this plan. Piche said that Peña later ordered the governor of San Juan, Miguel Cacugé, to advise his people to consider carefully the consenting position of Antonio Beitia and Juan Diego Pinda "and they should not bring them trouble." According to Piche, Governor Cacugé apparently complied after returning to San Juan.

Any hint of an organized meeting piqued the alcalde's interest, given the recent revolt in 1781 of the Yuma in Sonora, and New Mexico's own Pueblo Revolt of 1680. However, when the Alcalde Mora asked the same question to the second witness from San Juan pueblo, Juan Domingo Tuque, he received a similar answer, along with a conflicting interpretation of the same event.

In Tuque's version, Peña had solicited their presence at the meeting in San Ildefonso and had said that he "called them and congregated them to propose to them what he had in his heart was that among the Spanish they endured difficulties and that if it seemed [correct] they should go with the Comanche, Ute, or Navajo, or Moqui, or Apache."

At this point, according to Tuque, of the twelve men from San Juan attending the meeting, four—namely he, Bentura Piche, another San Juan named Miguel Ortiz, and for good measure the governor of San Juan—refused Peña's proposal, asking for payment in advance for their allegiance: "If six leaders were evil (that is, the assenting six), theirs were not, and that if they gave them a mountain of corn and wheat and of that which the Spanish eat so that they could maintain their children and women, that then they would say yes." Tuque had turned the meaning Piche's version of Peña's speech on its head.

To the Spanish officials attending the trial, the confirmation of Pueblo collaboration intensified the serious tone of the interrogation. Returning to Piche, the alcalde asked him to confirm his previous testimony. Piche refused, declaring "that he had been made crazy [se había hecho loco]; that his testimony had been built up for his people in saying that they wanted to go to the Gentile Nations; [and] that it was only true that they had a meeting." In this version Peña had called the gathering to "give them advice that they should look well to their people and to Antonio Beitia, and to Juan Diego Pinda." In his second declaration, Juan Domingo Tuque agreed with that of Piche, adding that he did not say that the people wanted to go to the Gentile Nations [the Comanche, Ute, Navajo, Moqui, and Apache]. "Perhaps," Tuque offered, "the interpreter did not hear it well."⁷⁴ Tuque and Piche had begun to use their answers to counter the intent of the investigation, fighting back with a skillful, subtle pattern of deliberate obfuscation.

Mora reported the information that he had collected from the first two witnesses to Governor Concha, who, due to its alarming nature, ordered the alcalde to change the venue to Santa Fe. There Mora began the task of taking sworn declarations from all the Indians involved. Between the hearing at the end of May and June 8, when the proceedings reconvened, Spanish authorities assembled at least forty-four Indians from the six Tewa pueblos and the vecino, Antonio Beitia, at the jail in Santa Fe.

Alcalde Mora and his team began taking depositions in Santa Fe, having formulated a set of six standard questions that they put to each of the Pueblo prisoners with little variation. They designed four of the questions to probe the events leading up to and within the meetings: Who suggested to you that you go to the meetings, and what causes moved you to go to them? How many did you go to? Who was the leader of the meeting, and who was the first to speak? What words did you hear, how, and of whom? One question chal-

lenged the witness to defend his attendance: Did you not know that this pretext was not sufficient and consequently you should not have gone? The last question revealed somewhat more about the suspicions of the interrogators: In the meeting, was there discussion against any justice or religious, or about any revolt?

The officials slowly pieced together the outlines of the case, even though the Pueblo witnesses tried to contradict each other at every point. All told, the Tewa pueblos held three separate meetings without the required approval of either the appropriate alcalde mayor, the missionary in charge, or the provincial governor.⁷⁵ Two took place in Santa Clara and one, later, at San Ildefonso.

The invitation to the various pueblos to attend the large meeting held at San Ildefonso represents a rare view of a network of interpueblo communication. In each case, Peña or the governor of San Ildefonso, Antonio el Guille, visited or sent an envoy to the other Pueblos. The officials of the other Pueblos then instructed their members to attend the meeting at San Ildefonso. In keeping with the established pattern of defense, when asked about who had organized the meeting, Governor Guille and Asencio Peña each blamed the other.

The chain of invitations from Peña or Governor Guille to the various participants seemed to represent a familiarity and trust in representatives from other pueblos that Alcalde Mora found disturbing. "What right or power did you have to convene this meeting," he asked Guille. The governor responded "that he had none, [and] that he knew that he had done wrong in having trampled underfoot the higher orders." Governor Chiche of Nambé answered more diplomatically that "he did not know of any authority vested in Asencio Peña, but that he went because of the order from Governor Guille of San Ildefonso, understanding that [the meeting] was to give him an order from the Señor Governor [Concha] or from the alcalde, just as they have called for various matters in the past."

If the team of local Spanish officials had problems understanding the source of power to convoke such a gathering, they had a much more difficult time sorting out what occurred within the meetings, especially the assembly held at San Ildefonso. Judging from the first declarations of Bentura Piche and Juan Domingo Tuque, in that meeting Peña proposed that the Pueblos rise up against the "troubles" they had endured among the Spanish, joining in some manner with their erstwhile Plains Indians enemies. The Indians of San Juan had at least entertained the notion. From this point on, much like the Pueblo obfuscation of Spanish attempts to investigate Indian religion, the shifting, contradictory, and unpredictable responses of the Tewa Indians seemed calculated to prevent any reconcilable theory as to what really occurred from forming in the minds of the interrogators.

Alcalde Mora reconvened the proceedings in Santa Fe starting with the prisoners from San Juan pueblo. Governor Cacugé further complicated matters by saying that the meeting was about the banishment that he had imposed on Juan Diego Pinda and Juan Ramos (whose deposition does not appear in these records). Asencio Peña had told him “that he should not be involved in fighting with his people, nor should they continue introducing troubles, and that the rest of the group said the same.” He added “that he knew that he ought not to have gone to heed the call, but he became crazy and went anyway.” Still another Tewa respondent, Miguel Ortiz, felt that Peña had called them to the meeting “to advise them that they should not be involved in conducting lawsuits.”

Cacugé and Ortiz had opened the initial salvo in a shifting barrage of language to confuse the matters at issue for the investigators. By offering subtle, continual variations of their answers, the Indians attempted to blur the formal legal language used by the Spanish in the proceedings, keeping them off balance, unable to grasp any single, solid theme. Where Cacugé used the phrase “*no anduvieran peleando*” (they should not be involved in fighting), Ortiz said, “*no anduvieran pleitando*” (they should not be involved in lawsuits). The next witness, the fiscal Juan Luís Trujillo, also said, “*no anduvieran pleitando*,” extending the confusion.

The war captain, Martín Ollí, led the topic away from lawsuits and fighting and toward attempts at communal harmony. According to Ollí, Peña called them to the meeting “to advise them that they should live well with Juan Diego [Pinda].” This new phrase, “*vivieran bien*,” proved most popular with the succeeding witnesses, presumably because it conveyed a suitably vague meaning. The endless variations now developed around just who should live well together. Each respondent had a different group of persons to whom Peña’s words applied. Meanwhile, Antonio Cruz added “that they should live like brothers” to the warning against fighting. Manuel Burro elaborated this theme: “they should live like brothers and parents.” Juan Diego Pinda, the banished Indian from San Juan, who seemed somehow to be one of the people at the bottom of this battle of words, did not help matters any with his testimony. Asked why he obeyed Peña and came to San Ildefonso, he replied “because something had made his head go crazy.”

Similarly, the vecino Antonio Beitia, the other central character and one of the targets for Peña’s advice to live well, added little to the alcalde’s search for a consistent explanation of what had transpired. Beitia amplified and further deflected the previous responses onto still newer paths, and he continued to perform this service effectively throughout the trial. Beitia had attended two meetings, one in Santa Clara and one at San Ildefonso. He answered that at the San Ildefonso meeting they were advised to “live well and keep the Commandments,” here adding another phrase that became popular in subsequent declarations. Beitia seemed to choose the new line specifi-

cally to allay the suspicions of the Spanish. As for the Santa Clara meeting, Beitia said that they only dealt with some lost leather breastplates.

The investigation turned to the six prisoners from Santa Clara. Governor Antonio Tafoya told his questioners that he led one of the meetings in his pueblo and that it focused on the matter of lost cuirasses and an irrigation ditch they planned to clean. With his response, Tafoya explained the presence of the outsiders, Beitia the vecino, Asencio Peña from San Juan, Governor Guille of San Ildefonso, and someone named Carlitos. All the other witnesses from Santa Clara agreed with their Governor. Peña led the meeting concerned only with cleaning the ditch and the missing breastplates, although perhaps the latter had been stolen.

When questioned about any discussion of revolt, the pattern of diffuse and opaque answers came full circle, touching once more on the original statements that Piche and Tuque had made to the investigating Alcalde Mora. Governor Tafoya, the first witness to respond with anything but a profession of ignorance, testified that the meeting with Peña and Guille in San Ildefonso took place because of a communication in which Antonio Beitia “had a feeling about Juan Diego [Pinda], who had been exiled the previous winter, that they could raise against him some evidence concerning the suits that they had previously pursued against him.”

If this admission sounded like a breakthrough of sorts, other witnesses soon extinguished any ray of hope. Juan Antonio Naranjo claimed that Peña “advised them by the Ten Commandments, telling them that they should look at their neighbor as to themselves, that he knew that they had been engaged in a lawsuit with Antonio Beitia, that they were not going to offer any other evidence such as they had done before, but those that brought evidence in those inquiries were only two people: Bentura [Piche] and Juan Domingo Tuque, and that those two should ask Beitia for his pardon.” Instead of confirmation of any portion of Governor Tafoya’s description of a lawsuit pitting Antonio Beitia against Juan Diego Pinda, Naranjo turned the story upside down. Peña, now fortified by the Ten Commandments, called on Piche and Tuque, the first two witnesses from San Juan, to beg the pardon of Beitia and put an end to it all. Naranjo not only played havoc with the declaration of his own governor but completely turned around the original testimony of Bentura Piche. Piche had located Beitia and Pinda on the same side, both consenting to the proposals of Peña about leaving with the Plains tribes. Naranjo made Piche and Tuque into troublemakers for stirring up the present suspicions and left Peña preaching the fundamental tenets of Christianity!

Given the complexity of this case and the constant variation of overwhelming detail, further investigation might seem pointless. Nonetheless, Alcalde Mora and his team continued to collect a further twenty-seven depositions during this portion of the proceedings. Other variations from the prisoners

of San Ildefonso: Governor Guille said that Peña gathered all the pueblos "to advise them to follow the Commandments as God ordered, and to live well." Juan Pedro Chulo thought that the meeting advocated living well, following the orders of the Governor Concha and his justices (an apt impression under the circumstances) and teaching the children to say their prayers. Francisco Sabe went one step farther, having been advised to take good care of their justices and the missionary father, and live well. Juan Chiracyo further embroidered the theme, saying that "they were advised in the company of Peña, that they will learn Castillian, to pray, and to have respect for their superiors and the father minister like Peña did, and that they should live like brothers." Antonio Caché, who did not attend the meeting at San Ildefonso because he had to help collect the tithe, nevertheless claimed that he heard it said that Peña had advised them only that they should learn to speak Spanish. Finally Asencio Peña testified that Governor Guille advised him to hold the meeting "to advise them that they should live according to the law of God; that they should tell the same to their little ones, teaching them to pray and speak Spanish, since there is not more than one God, he that bestows them favor by providing food, clothing, and the goods they possess, and that by the order of his governor he said all these things in Spanish."

Despite the increasingly tangled web woven by his Pueblo witnesses, Alcalde Mora persevered and questioned the fifteen remaining prisoners from Tesuque, Pojoaque, and Nambé. The Pueblo Indians had already shattered the Spanish judicial proceeding's goal of learning what had actually transpired at the meetings. Through their answers, the point of each question asked by the alcalde from Santa Cruz became at first muddled and then lost entirely in the cacophony of innovative, elaborate, and ultimately conflicting answers. The charges of illegal meetings discussing sedition culled from Bentura Piche's original statement turned into harmless interueblo meetings intended to settle a host of disconnected internal controversies, aided by the calming, civilizing, and Christian advice imparted by Asencio Peña. The Indians simply ignored the disturbing implications of the alcalde's question about talk of revolt or brushed off the question, as did Juan Pedro Chulo of San Ildefonso, saying amid a flurry of feinting responses: "that which you said above does not express the feeling of anyone."

At first the Tewa witnesses seemed to succeed. Upon receiving the mass of declarations from his alcalde mayor, on June 12 Governor Concha determined that he did not have the evidence necessary to decide the case. Instead, he turned it over to Alcalde Mora again, with instructions to question the leaders of each pueblo and the other principals in a more interrogatory fashion and to determine the level of their participation. This time Mora's questions concentrated on establishing the infractions committed by each of the accused and on eliciting a response to direct charges of collusion with the

enemy Indians and of sedition. These efforts ultimately produced no more answers than had the first and second rounds of depositions.

Facing the final and far more rigorous course of questions, the defendants took any of three positions in their answers: acknowledge their error and repent; profess complete ignorance of the matter at hand; or blame someone else. For example, when asked why, if he had any involvement with Juan Diego Pinda, he had not approached the alcalde at San Juan and asked for a sympathetic hearing, Governor Tafoya said "that he erred and that he was ready to suffer the penalty imposed upon him by his superiors."

Against more serious charges, the accused simply pled ignorance. Mora asked Asencio Peña "how come he said in his first declaration that [the meeting] was only a matter of advising them of his benefit and goodness, when it is evident from two [depositions] taken earlier and two other individuals that agree with them that his exhortation was directed to [the end] that all the Pueblos should unite and come out among the barbarous nations because of the bad treatment that they supposedly were receiving from the Spanish?" Peña replied "that nothing of this was touched on in the said meetings." Governor Chiche of Nambé elaborated somewhat ingenuously, "in the said meeting none of those things were touched on, and especially when you know that all of the pueblos are living well adjusted with the Spanish."

Along the same lines, the Spanish asked if any conversations with the Ute people had taken place and if they had used one of these meetings to gather with the Ute. When each of the Indians professed ignorance of any dealings with the Ute, Alcalde Mora asked, "How can you say that they did not gather or treat with the Ute when they have stated to the governor that only by being friends [of the New Mexicans] were the Tewa prisoners, as [the Ute] themselves have informed the Tewa?" Peña answered "that he knew nothing, nor had he heard any talk of this particular matter, and that he was ignorant of the Ute motive for saying it." The teniente of Pojoaque, Ysidro Mutí, deflected the question a bit more cleverly, saying "that he did not know the motives that the Ute might have in saying this, but he himself did not know anything." Intimating that the Ute fabricated the story to damage Pueblo-vecino trust made good strategic sense.

Although this round of interrogations also proceeded using set questions, Alcalde Mora tried to seize upon inconsistencies in the defendants' replies in order to force additional admissions, all to no avail. In the case of Antonio Beitia, the alcalde added a new question prompted by the answers of previous witnesses. After establishing the respondent's sense of the length of each meeting and his version of what took place, Mora asked, "Why did it take so long to talk about these four issues in the two meetings, since don't you know that an hour was enough to speak about them?" Beitia answered "that he knew well that they took a long time, but that they did not talk about more

items." In questioning Governor Cacugé, Mora used similarly aggressive tactics. When Cacugé admitted that Peña held no authority worthy of commanding such attention, the *alcalde* followed, "If you did not recognize any, at the same time it is clear proof that beforehand you had formed a plot of harmful designs, since otherwise it was not natural that all of the heads should gather at one assigned point." Cacugé replied, simply, "that he had not discussed anything beforehand."

On June 13, after the previous day of intense questioning, *Alcalde* Mora concluded his investigation and handed the case back to Governor Concha for his deliberation. Despite the efforts of the Tewa to confuse the wheels of justice beyond all hope of equilibrium, the governor had no problem discerning the Pueblo tactics and their irreverent undertone from the depositions. Concerning the "certain meetings held by the Indians of the Tewa pueblos," he wrote:

It is not possible to justify the object of these. With respect to the mutual joining together and convening that one is able to see, in order to declare one more or less unanimous cause; and being morally impossible that these meetings could have been because of any of these issues that they express in their declarations, paying attention that their conduct is diametrically opposed to that which they recounted, since far from striving to teach themselves and instruct their children in the obligations of Christianity, and in observing its precepts with exactitude . . . , they would attempt to free themselves so far as gathering precisely for the exhortations; and, at the same time, avoid obeying the just orders that have been passed by the respective justices under cover of different ill-founded pretexts, such as not knowing the language, and other similar examples.

Governor Concha condemned the Pueblo governors and the other leaders who took part in organizing the meetings, "in order by this means to contain and root out any similar proceedings in the future." Governor Guille and Asencio Peña received the stiffest sentences among the Tewa, since the testimony placed them at the center of the meetings. *Alcalde* Mora carried out their sentence, administering twenty-five lashes to each and placing them in chains for six months. Each had to serve without pay, working on public projects during that period. They most likely labored at building the new barracks then in progress for the soldiers of the Santa Fe Presidio. The governor fined Guille 30 pesos, which, in New Mexico in 1793, was enough to purchase a flock of 60 sheep. In an economy in which silver entered only by way of presidial salaries or the vecino trade to the south, accumulating the money in specie to pay his fine probably forced Guille to serve longer than his sentence. Due to his lack of official responsibility, Peña only owed 12 pesos.

The other Pueblo officials received similar sentences. Governors Cacugé, Tafoya, and Chiche and Teniente Francisco Pata of Tesuque each spent four months in chains working on public projects without pay. Each man had to

pay a fine of 10 pesos. Teniente Mutí served a term of one month and owed 6 pesos. In addition, Governor Concha barred the seven Native Americans from ever holding any official position or employment in their respective pueblos.

Antonio Beitia received a somewhat stiffer sentence. The third round of interrogations referred to Beitia as an Indian, originally from Santa Clara. In 1784, the *comandante general* of the Provincias Internas confirmed a decision of the governor then in office banishing Beitia from the pueblo for sedition and enjoining him not to participate in any of the normal functions or meetings held by the Tewa for their own government or ceremonies.⁷⁶ From that time he had counted as a vecino of the nearby Plaza de San Rafael. Because of his previous troubles and his deep implication in the current case, Governor Concha sentenced Beitia to a year of chains and employment in public works and imposed a fine of 20 pesos "as warning for the future." Beitia's position as an Indian, banished from his pueblo and made a vecino, underscores his role in shifting the direction of the Tewa responses during the investigation.

Juan Diego Pinda also existed between two societies. Bentura Piche mentioned in the first deposition that Pinda was a Coyote, the product of a Plains Indian-Pueblo marriage. It appears that the two men most likely to serve as cultural mediators between the Tewa and non-Tewa peoples functioned in some manner as catalysts for the entire episode.

While the governor's decision looks like a failure of sorts for the Tewa defendants, the front line of Pueblo defenses against the Spanish held admirably. Of the forty-seven Indians interrogated, the governor found only seven guilty, and these represented the civil officials appointed by the Tewa pueblos as intermediaries between the two cultures. Any of the other forty men may have held true religious power and authority in their Pueblo, but neither the Spanish nor we will ever know. Pueblo women do not enter into any part of the proceedings; only one reference appears in the case, ensuring that the Spanish handled the matter entirely within their own patriarchal view of society. Despite the perseverance of *Alcalde* Mora and his aides, the Spanish judicial machinery could not penetrate more deeply into Pueblo affairs. Even after the sentencing, the Spanish officials had learned little more about what had actually occurred inside the "secret councils" than they did before they began their investigations.

Furthermore, the punishment meted out by Governor Concha to the offenders does not appear harsh in context. Although no consolation to Peña, Guille, and the others, a conviction for sedition could carry with it far greater punishment. Compare, for example, the Tewa punishments to that rendered in the case five years later of Lazaro Sola, who stood trial for subversion as the "principal cause of the meetings and seditions" found at Jémez Pueblo. Sola received three years of hard labor in the public obraje at Encinillas.⁷⁷

Whether due to the governor's stated purpose of "containing" such affairs, to the difficulty of figuring out from the Tewa accounts who had really done what, or to his trepidation for harsher measures that might worsen Pueblo-vecino relations, in 1793 Concha pronounced sentence with a relatively light hand. The Spanish judicial proceeding served to diffuse tensions between the vecino and Pueblo communities, even as each group interpreted its success differently.

The trials of the Tewa appear similar to Spanish responses to rebellion elsewhere in New Spain during the same period.⁷⁸ In Oaxaca and the Mixteca Alta, the end of colonial rule saw numerous upheavals that were in some ways reminiscent of the Tewa affair on the Río Grande, including relatively lenient sentences by Oaxacan officials to encourage the affected Indian community to return to live "harmoniously," as before. Two circumstances stand out in the case of the Tewa meetings. Only very rarely did rebellion in Oaxaca and the central valley of Mexico show any of the inter-pueblo interest and communication that the Tewa demonstrated. Also, rebellion formed part of a general pattern in New Spain farther south, intensifying and changing character toward the end of the colonial period in relation to well-documented social and economic changes. In New Mexico, Pueblo resistance sprang rather suddenly upon Spanish officials at the end of the 1780s and, according to current historiography, was not supposed to be happening at all.

If one had any doubt that the actions of the Tewa had brought about this state of affairs, the case that Santo Domingo brought the previous year against Alcalde Mora's lieutenant demonstrates the use of more aggressive tactics when the situation warranted. The Pueblo swore out a detailed statement in front of the Franciscan missionary concerning abuses performed by Teniente Baca. Among other charges, Baca forced the Indians to work without pay or adequate provisions, impressed Indian oxen and their drivers to transport the alcalde's building materials, accompanied the Indians to look at their flocks, made them grind and carry flour for his shepherds, and physically abused them. When excessive abuse of the type likely to gain a hearing by the governor reached the boiling point in Santo Domingo, the entire pueblo came forward and presented its charges, clearly, precisely and vocally, using the missionary to set down their complaints. When, for reasons we do not know, the Tewa pueblos reached that point, they chose secret meetings as an alternative to a public complaint. In the face of the Spanish investigation, the Tewa used their secular officials in a calculated, complex manipulation of cultural, social, and linguistic differences to limit the damage done by the Spanish discovery.⁷⁹ The Tewa response to the Spanish investigation of their activities documents for the first time a complete strategy of resistance necessitated by the recent shift in Spanish-Pueblo power relations.

After the trial of the Tewa and the sentencing of Antonio Beitia and the

Pueblo officials, the governor ordered the release of the rest of the Indians from the prison in Santa Fe where they had awaited questioning. Governor Concha addressed the Indians as to "the mode in which they ought to live after they returned to their homes." Concha's phrase, "*como debían vivir*," immediately recalls the "*vivieran bien*" and its multitude of elaborations by the Tewa deponents. Unfortunately, Concha does not include the text of his speech in the record of the case, but one may gain an idea of his feelings through a comment made before pronouncing sentence: "From all of that which one ought to deduce and the probability of believing that those meetings listed have been and must graduate like news and endanger the good and tranquillity that this province which the king placed in my charge actually enjoys, emanating precisely from the abundance, comfort, and advantages that those Indians achieved, much superior in these to the Spanish that one finds in their environs." Suddenly one can see the Spanish view of the affair, as expressed by Governor Concha, in the light of its Pueblo parody, constructed during the trials from countless repetitions of various parts of the Spanish model, with each variation slightly out of sync with the others.

Whatever the details of the counsel taken at Santa Clara and San Ildefonso in May 1793, the Tewa people did not see their situation with quite the same rosy tint described by Concha. A new, prosperous, self-confident vecino society, emerging from the Spanish settlers replanted in New Mexico, fortified with peace, a burgeoning population, and new opportunities for trade with other regions of Mexico, had permanently altered the context of relations between the Spanish and the Pueblo Indians.

Fray Turado mentioned the Tewa trials in his denunciation of Governor Chacón's proposal to collect the tithe from the pueblos a few years later, as an example of the danger of new exactions:⁸⁰

A few years ago, during the year of [17]93, we saw that the governor imprisoned the principals of all of the Tewa Pueblos, and gathered from them a summary about why they wanted to revolt. If it was true or not, they did not achieve it, but what is true is that they had the feeling [to rise up] due to having suffered a number of vexations caused by the greed of those who ought to have helped and defended them in similar cases. Also, there occurred the [incident] in [17]92, [where] they wanted to promote the same as now [in 1793], but they feared the unfortunate consequences that they would have brought on themselves, and that all receive who go against the royal spirit of His Majesty.

The Tewa meetings represent one view of the Pueblo response to change in vecino society, as well as the vivid articulation of a maturing system of cultural defense. Pueblo officials in 1793 demonstrated the projection of Tewa cultural power into the forum of Spanish secular justice at just the point when vecino social and economic influence became dominant in colonial New Mexico.

Demographic growth and the late-eighteenth-century economic boom

underlay the creation of vecino culture in New Mexico. The genesis of a vibrant, innovative translation of material culture from outside the province paralleled and derived its commercial existence from the growth of vecino production and markets. In each case—textiles, santos, domestic furniture, even religious confraternities—the vecino creation reflected its own cultural stamp molded from rapid change during the last quarter of the century. A growing economy financed the patronage of religious art and architecture, just as it sustained the Franciscan establishment after their original charter proved fruitless. The market forces that fueled the repartimiento of the second commercial system and the vecino pressure on Pueblo Indian communal land also reversed a process of assimilation that the period of co-operation against nomadic enemies had seemingly left as an enduring legacy. Instead, against the aggressive vecino society that threatened to upset the economic balance maintained since the reconquest of the province, the Pueblos felt forced to construct an elaborate defense to protect their own cultural integrity.

George Kubler, in introducing an early exhibition of santos, wrote in explanation of the “astonishing transfers” of material culture throughout the Spanish world: “They violate every expectation based upon political and economic facts. The answer becomes apparent only when we realize that political territories exist because of economic interests, while artistic territories exist because of spiritual affinities and elusive harmonies whose presence has been overlooked. Political geography is often an absurd perpetuation of impossible combinations justified only by necessity and violence. Artistic geography, on the other hand, always commands admiration by an intimate spiritual agreement drawing together those widely separated regions which neither political nor economical needs can otherwise unite.”⁸¹ The power that transformed vecinos from frontier settlers in northern New Spain to provincial citizens of New Mexico sprang from the convergence of larger political and economic patterns and a particular social and cultural geography. Out of this brief congruence, vecinos forged a harmonic blend that changed the basic foundations of their culture.

From Settler to Citizen

*New Mexican Economic Development and
the Creation of Vecino Society, 1750–1820*

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