

DISRUPTING WHITE REPRESENTATION/SPEAKING BACK TO SEVENTEENTH-,
EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY TRAVEL LITERATURE:
A DECOLONIAL HISTORY OF SANTA FE

By

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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

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Abstract

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This dissertation maps and disrupts EuroAmerican travel literature about Spanish mestizos from a decolonized position. For almost three centuries, EuroAmerican travel narratives claimed to tell the truth about the Spanish mestizos of Santa Fe. A textual analysis of 17th, 18th, and 19th century travel literature about Santa Fe, reveals a racial project that worked to normalize white supremacy. Clearly reflected in these travel accounts is the racialized colonial thinking of first Spanish and then EuroAmerican white culture. The narratives involving Spain and New Spain reveal imperial attitudes about Native Americans and Mestizos, while the EuroAmerican narratives are almost entirely embedded with the nineteenth century's

ideology of Manifest Destiny. This violent genre of literature, which contributed generations of damage to the name and social status of the Spanish mestizos it disparages, is useful only for reading against the grain.

Reading against the grain, this dissertation juxtaposes Chicano/Spanish-mestizo experience, community, and culture against the hegemonic stories of the dominant culture. It interrogates and disrupts the normalization of white supremacy. Using Spanish mestizo eyewitness accounts, this dissertation speaks back to, and counters the EuroAmerican master narrative. Revealed through the course of this examination, is the colonizer's pattern of invoking "civilization" as an alibi to invade and conquer. By disrupting such narratives, a Chicano point-of-view is extracted, presenting a very different story – and a history for the twenty-first century.

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for my parents Lourdez and Atilano
with love and gratitude

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Disrupting White Representation:
A Decolonial Assessment of Seventeenth-,
Eighteenth-, and Nineteenth-Century
Travel Literature About Santa Fe

I have endeavored to give you a faithful picture of New Mexico as it now is, with its vices and its virtues. I have written nothing in malice, because I have no such feeling to gratify; and my only desire is to present a correct knowledge of the country and the people. Some of the sketches show a dark picture in a moral point of view, but they are nevertheless true. Let us hope that a brighter day may soon dawn upon this distant and benighted portion of our happy land.

—W.W.H. Davis,

El Gringo: New Mexico and Her People

The most serious blow suffered by the colonized is being removed from history and from the community. Colonization usurps any free role in

either war or peace, every decision contributing to his destiny and that of the world, and all cultural and social responsibility.

—Albert Memmi,

The Colonizer and the Colonized

Before the arrival of the Americans, the customs of the population of New Mexico were very sane and sober.

—Rafael Chacón,

Legacy of Honor:

The Life of Rafael Chacón

A Nineteenth-Century New Mexican

At a recent family gathering, my brother reminded us of a story about our father confronting a racist neighbor. Our neighborhood in Santa Fe, I thought, was made up of mostly Chicano families. In retrospect, I realize that it felt that way, because of the community of Chicanos who lived on our street; but our street also had a good sprinkling of white families. As children, the neighborhood kids would gather at night and play hide-and-seek, kickball, spin-the-bottle, and other games of childhood.

We, my brothers and sister and I mostly got along with the white kids, but at times there was tension between us. And these tensions arose mostly because of the behavior of the white parents. Across the street from us lived the Kingsolvers. They had at least one son, Bruce, who was the same age as my older brother. One afternoon there was an argument and subsequent altercation between Bruce and my brother. After Bruce ran crying into his house, his dad (a man so unremarkable, I could not begin to describe from memory) came out to the street where my brother was and took the liberty of slapping him twice on the head.

Once my dad heard about this violence toward his son, he walked to Kingsolver's house to question him about his actions. My dad made it clear to Mr. Kingsolver that no one had the right to raise a hand against his son. It's important to know that although my dad was a pretty peaceful man and not the least bit confrontational, he could intimidate people because of his size; He was 6'2, dark and handsome. As kids we knew he was fair, and as long as we did our chores and our homework, life would be good and it usually was. There was order in our house and by extension the world outside, at least in our neighborhood. Mr. Kingsolver's actions against my brother upset that order, and my dad's response to that violence impressed and

reminded us that while there are differences there are lines one does not cross.

My dad's refusal to except the behavior of a white neighbor against his child and Margaret Montoya's article "Máscaras, Trenzas, y Greñas: Un/masking the Self While Un/braiding Latina Stories and Legal Discourse"¹ offer some important insights about growing up Chicana/o in a mixed space where whites think they have power to dictate the lives of others. The order and safety of our homes and the example of our parents empowered us and allowed us to speak back to the racist behavior of whites; it *taught* us to speak back.

Other Chicana/o scholars have written of similar experience, lessons from parents, which taught them to survive within and then to challenge racist environments. Margaret Montoya who also grew up in New Mexico has such stories and memories. Growing up in Las Vegas New Mexico and attending an integrated Catholic school, Montoya writes of becoming aware around the age of seven that she "lived in a society that had little room for those who were poor,

¹ Margaret Montoya, "Máscaras, Trenzas, y Greñas: Un/masking the Self While Un/braiding Latina Stories and Legal Discourse" in *Critical Race Feminism: A Reader* ed. Adrien Katherine Wing (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 57–64.

brown, or female," of which she was all three. She reports that although Las Vegas was predominantly Latino, "the culture of the school was overwhelmingly Anglo and middle-class."² Using her braided trenzas and her mother's admonishment "I don't want you to look greñudas [uncombed]" as a metaphor she weaves her story of feeling safe and protected at home and less safe in her public life at school. Like trenzas she needed to negotiate and weave a space between the two. She tells of the ridicule students suffered if they spoke with an accent. "The real message of greñudas" she writes, "was conveyed through the use of the Spanish word—it was unspoken and subtextual."³

Montoya explains that her mother was teaching her children that their world was divided, that they would be seen as different and would be judged negatively by those "Who-Don't Speak-Spanish." The neatness of her braided hair and the uniform she wore for school she explains, "were a cultural disguise. I moved between dualized worlds: private/public, Catholic/secular, poverty/privilege," and "Latina/Anglo." To defend against racism it was important to present an "acceptable face, speaking without a Spanish

² Montoya, "Máscaras, Trenzas, y Greñas," 59.

³ Montoya, "Máscaras, Trenzas, y Greñas," 59.

accent, hiding what we really felt—masking our inner selves.”⁴

Living in a “dualized world” is a familiar experience for Chicanas/os. The way one negotiates through it can vary, but like Montoya most need to create a mask. It is a common experience for people of color to create a mask, which serves as a kind of armor for strength and protection from scorn and contempt.

In a similar vein Margalynne J. Armstrong writes about a conversation she had with two African American law students. “Toward the end of the visit” Armstrong writes, “one of the women finally blurted out the message she had come to relay to me, a Black woman new to this law school. She said, “Girl, you’d better be good.”⁵ While Armstrong acknowledges some of the many levels of meaning that statement had for her, one that stands out is her discussion of what she calls the use of the “home voice” used by the student. Surprised by this use of the “home voice” in the context of the meeting of a law professor and two law students, Armstrong admits that, “it must have felt

⁴ Montoya, “Máscaras, Trenzas, y Greñas,” 59.

⁵ Margalynne J. Armstrong, “Meditations on Being Good,” in *Critical Race Feminism: A Reader* ed. Adrien Katherine Wing (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 107–09.

good to use a voice that she had learned to subordinate in her professional life." Home voices, like Montoya's trenzas and her mother's use of both Spanish and English in the same sentence are cultural markers that ally us with the speaker but also remind us of our perceived difference by the dominant culture. "Our home voices," Armstrong writes, "are wise and helping voices, nurturing voices, voices accorded much respect at home but valued little in the outside world." These home voices are comforting and empowering and, for me, a rare experience in graduate school.

Only in the last few years of my graduate school experience have I been fortunate enough to hear these "home voices." For the most part though, my experience in graduate school has lacked a diversity of voices. This is especially true of my graduate work in English. In retrospect, such isolation made sense since none of the professors in the department, or any students, for that matter, looked like me. Finding courses that spoke to my interests was impossible. The closest I came was a class in Native American literature. There were no offerings in anything Chicano. By the time I began work on a Ph.D. at Washington State University, I had had enough of white literature and so pursued an American Studies degree in the

hopes of finding a more relevant literature. I wanted to explore the history of my home state, New Mexico—to return to the tensions of my hometown, and like Montoya and Armstrong, to speak back.

The history I knew growing up in Santa Fe was limited because during my school days Chicano history was absent from the curriculum. I knew mainstream white history. I knew about the brave and heroic Spanish conquistadores. I knew about martyred priests and about the many Indigenous groups that lived in close proximity to Santa Fe. I knew because I was told that the population of Santa Fe was unique—three cultures “living together in peace and harmony.” And finally, I was frequently reminded of our Spanish heritage. This of course was the biggest fiction of all the creative history I was told. As an adult these fictions created questions such as “How could such a lie be perpetuated for so many years,” and “Why does the lie persist today?”

Although these questions seem simple enough, uncovering the layers of New Mexico history eventually lead me to my current research—mapping and disrupting EuroAmerican travel literature about Spanish mestizos through a decolonial view of events described.⁶ As a

decolonial subject I am empowered to counter these narratives. Most of these excerpts from journals, military reports, and newspaper articles fail to give voice to their subjects. In reading against the grain, I hope to provide that voice.

Reading the history of New Mexico, one thing is clear, for Native Americans and for Chicanos, it is a complicated tale. Uncovering the layers of intrigue, racism, and duplicity that is the story of New Mexico, is a fascinating albeit heartbreaking undertaking. Numerous indigenous groups along with mestizos who arrived with the Spanish colonizers, and EuroAmerican invaders make up the history of New Mexico. When the Spaniards arrived in 1698 to establish a settlement, the Indigenous groups they encountered had occupied the area for at least eight hundred years.⁷

⁶ In my use of terms, I follow the lead of Chicana/o scholars like Deena Gonzales who uses the term Spanish-Mexican. Gonzalez hyphenates the words to designate the language spoken and "beginning in 1821 New Mexicans were under "the Mexican flag." *Refusing the Favor* (xix). Building on Gonzalez's definition, I prefer Spanish mestizo because like Gonzalez it acknowledges the language, but mestizo includes and describes most of the people of New Mexico. Under Spanish rule the casta system was strictly applied and enforced. As for EuroAmerican, again I agree with Gonzalez's definition of the term. She writes, Euro-American is "a person of any European origin, except Spanish, including the Irish-, Prussian-, and English-born migrants to Santa Fe. A Euro-American might have belonged to several ethnic (but not racial) groups, whereas a Spanish-Mexican was of two "races," Native and Caucasian" (xix).

Juan de Oñate arrived on the upper Rio Grande with “a caravan of settlers, soldiers, servants, and Franciscan Missionaries.” He was, “charged with the tasks of erecting permanent settlements, searching for gold and silver, and converting the Indians.”⁸ Enrique Dussel reminds us that “Noblemen and soldiers as well as colonizers came to the New World with the understanding that they were responsible for the defense of the interest of the Crown and the *Patronato*.”⁹ The *patronato* gave the King complete control of the church in the Americas. By the time Spanish mestizos arrived in New Mexico little had changed. With Oñate came “all the cataclysmic changes wrought by the Spanish conquest.”¹⁰

⁷ See Peter Nabokov and Robert Easton. *Native American Architecture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

⁸ Robert J. Rosenbaum, *Mexicano Resistance in the Southwest* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1981), 20–21.

⁹ Enrique Dussel, *A History of the Church I Latin America: Colonialism to Liberation (1492–1979)* trans. Alan Neely (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981). The *Patronato* were the laws governing the Indies. The Supreme Council of the Indies was established in 1524.

¹⁰ Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500–1846* (California, Stanford University Press, 1991), 340.

For two hundred years, prior to EuroAmerican encroachment, indigenous groups and Spanish Mexicans were in turn at peace or in conflict with each other. There was a relationship of violent accommodation and survival. It is important to note that throughout that time Spanish mestizos never completely controlled the Indigenous population. In the nineteenth century EuroAmericans, completely ignorant of its history, would begin the slow but permanent colonization of New Mexico, a colonization that continues today.

Most often, we only see the past through the eyes of whomever is telling the story. In the case of New Mexico, the mainstream history that is told privileges first the EuroAmerican and then the myth of the Spanish colonizer.¹¹ Native Americans are presented in extremes: they are either violent savages or benign tourist/museum attractions. And Mexicans (mestizos) are depicted as an indolent and mongrel race. No one group owns the history of New Mexico; it is time to include stories and voices that are seldom heard.

¹¹ Until the work of Bolton, only that of the EuroAmerican was privileged. See A. Castañeda, "Presidarias Pobladoras: Spanish-Mexican Women in Frontier Monterey, Alta California, 1770-1821." (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1990).

In this dissertation Chicano/Spanish-mestizo experience will juxtapose the mestizo's experience against the created hegemonic stories of the dominant culture. Chicano historiographies, for example, remove Chicanos from the constructed, romanticized, "benign [white] history of the not-so-distant past where gracious Spanish grandees, beautiful señoritas, and gentle Catholic friars oversaw an abundant pastoral empire worked by contented mission Indians."¹² Instead, in these Chicano histories we see self-determined individuals with deep connections to place, family, and community. The story of the Chicano is indeed different from the one told by EuroAmericans.

In the mid-nineteenth century stories about the Spanish mestizos of Santa Fe were common in the EuroAmerican media of the day, which included newspaper accounts, personal correspondence, journals, and military reports and records. Professor Cory Ledoux, notes that "the travel narrative emerged as one of the most popular, if not the most popular, literary genre among nineteenth-century U.S. readers."¹³ Newspaper writers, merchant/traders,

¹² Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came*, xx.

¹³ Cory Ledoux, "The Experience of the Foreign in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Literature," *Connexions*, February 26, 2009, <http://cnx.org/content/m19517/1.11/>.

soldiers, women, and many others contributed their point-of-view to the travel writing about Santa Fe and its people.

In these travel accounts we see clearly reflected the racialized colonial thinking of nineteenth century white culture. From our perspective in the 21st century, especially at first glance, it appears that too much of the truth is missing, the truth about what life was like for Spanish-mestizos in 18th and 19th century New Mexico. Living in an extremely isolated northern outpost of Mexico and far from the center of power, Spanish mestizos had created for themselves an uneasy but workable alliance with the Utes, Apache, and Navajo, Native groups known for their raiding adeptness. In EuroAmerican narratives complex and protracted struggles for survival have been filtered out. Instead what we see is a flat and racialized white perspective of Spanish mestizo culture.

What is more embedded within the entire scope of these narratives is the nineteenth century ideology of Manifest Destiny that, "White Anglo-Saxons were preordained by virtue of their innate superiority to dominate inferior races so as to gain access to the land and resources."¹⁴

Consider, for example, the following assessment of Santa Fe by "William Gilpin, a volunteer in the Army of the West who would later become the first territorial governor of Colorado."¹⁵ In a report to the Senate on the eve of the U.S. Mexican war he wrote:

The *untransacted* destiny of the American people is to subdue the continent—to rush over this vast field to the Pacific Ocean . . . to set the principle of self government to work—to regenerate superannuated nations—to turn darkness into light—to stir up the sleep of a hundred centuries—to teach old nations a new civilization—to confirm the destiny of the human race—to carry the career of mankind to its culminating point—to cause stagnant people to be reborn¹⁶

¹⁴ Christopher M. Lyman. *The Vanishing Race and Other Illusions: Photographs of Indians by Edward S. Curtis* (Washington, D.C.: The Smithsonian Institution, 1982), 49.

¹⁵ Lyman, *The Vanishing Race*, 49.

¹⁶ William Gilpin, *The Mission of the North American People* (Philadelphia: Lippencott and Company, 1873), 132, quoted in Chris Wilson. *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional*

As we can see, travel literature, in general, and reports like Gilpin's, in particular, promoted the EuroAmerican opinion that Spanish Mexican's were in need of civilization. And clearly according to Gilpin war and violence would be part of the "civilizing" process.

In his definition of modernity, Dussel reminds us that "even the violence inflicted on the Other is said to serve the emancipation, utility, and well being of the barbarian who is civilized, developed, or modernized."¹⁷ In addition Dussel reports that "the myth of modernity declares the Other" is not only responsible for his/her own persecution, but that that persecution is "a necessary sacrifice and the inevitable price of modernization."¹⁸ This logic "absolves the modern subject of any guilt of the victimizing act."¹⁹

In Gilpin's writing we behold the idea of Manifest Destiny, the nineteenth century version of modernization.

Tradition (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 49.

¹⁷ Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, trans. Michael D. Barber (New York: Continuum, 1995), 64.

¹⁸ Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas*, 64.

¹⁹ Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas*, 64.

Moreover, as we see in Gilpin's text, the literature pointed to Manifest Destiny and EuroAmericans as the model for that civilization. By mid-century with westward expansion in full swing, whites rearticulated Spanish mestizo character from a self-determined community oriented people to an indolent and benighted population. Travel literature produced and consumed by EuroAmericans was one means through which this image was rearticulated and reinforced.

This violent genre of literature, which has contributed generations of damage to the name and social status of the Spanish mestizos it disparages, is useful only for reading against the grain. Without these journals, military reports, newspaper accounts and other personal narratives, we would know very little about the relationship between nineteenth century Santa Fe, Mexico, and the United States.²⁰ Thanks to Chicana/o and Indigenous historians like Deena Gonzalez, Genero Padilla, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Emma Perez, and others I am able to challenge these narratives and provide another point-of-view.

Using gender, race, class, nationalism, and ethnicity as ideological terms of analysis, this project will disrupt

²⁰ Mexico kept their own records, and these records have very slowly found their way to translation and publication.

white representations of Spanish mestizos in sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century travel literature about Santa Fe. As they exist now, these narratives provide only one side of the story. The narratives involving Spain and New Spain reflect imperial attitudes about Native Americans and Mestizos. EuroAmerican travel writers clearly failed to understand what they were seeing and writing about. In their blindness, they distorted the truth about a culture and its people. Today, we counter these narratives, and disrupt the written record with Spanish mestizo versions of the story.

In order to disrupt these narratives, I will employ Emma Perez's *Decolonial Imaginary*, the scholarship of Michael Omi and Howard Winant, and the scholarship of Critical Race theorists such as Richard Delgado and Mari Matsuda. These scholars provide critical tools for mapping, analyzing, and disrupting racial projects. Applying these tools to specific travel narratives will demonstrate how these colonial and racial projects succeeded in constructing Spanish mestizos as a benighted, uncivilized people; by implementing these critical tools of analysis we will also be able to disrupt, respond, and revise the story.

As decolonized subjects Chicana/os must write history from what Emma Pérez calls an interstitial space. "One is not simply oppressed or victimized," she writes, "nor is one only oppressor or victimizer. Rather, one negotiates within the imaginary to a decolonizing otherness where all identities are at work in one way or another."²¹ And all identities interact. In other words, within this interstitial space we can question, interfere, and interact with what has been passed off as the truth about nineteenth century Spanish mestizos.

Since ideas about race play a major role in these narratives, I will employ Omi and Winant's definition of racial formation: "the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed."²² Included in the concept of racial theory is the approach Omi and Winant call "racial projects." Racial projects are "simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics" that seek to "reorganize and redistribute resources along

²¹ Emma Perez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (place: publisher, year), 7.

²² Michael Omi and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 55.

particular racial lines."²³ In other words, through various racial projects, government programs or other institutions, race is defined and explained. When European Americans created Indigenous peoples as a racialized other by forcing them off their own lands and ascribing this loss to Native American inferiority, they were engaged in a racial project. Thus, Native Americans were transformed through a Euro-American ideology that intentionally set out to destroy them.

Although travel writing was not a government instituted racial project it nevertheless functioned as a racial project. In the writing we witness the "interpretation, representation" and explanation of the "racial dynamics" of Spanish mestizos in Santa Fe. The popularity and the profusion of travel literature allowed the definition of the Spanish mestizo race to be rearticulated to reinforce—by comparison—a EuroAmerican model of white supremacy.

Critical race theory similarly contends that "race and races are products of social thought and relations Races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient." Critical race theorists maintain

²³ Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*, 56.

that what they term "differential racialization" calls "attention to the ways dominant society racializes different minority groups at different times," in response to the shifting societal needs.²⁴

Eighteenth century travel writers often wrote of the laziness of the Indigenous and the Spanish mestizos. Nineteenth century EuroAmerican travel narratives about New Mexico and Santa Fe compared Indigenous groups to Spanish mestizos, usually remarking on the "nobility" of Native Americans, compared to the cowardice of Mexican males. In these examples, the "shifting need" was first, a Spanish invasion of New Mexico, second, a U.S. invasion of Mexico. By defining Spanish mestizos as cowardly and uncivilized compared to Native Americans, an already hated group, EuroAmericans succeeded in presenting Spanish mestizos as more "uncivilized" than Native Americans. This differential racialization was accomplished through various forms of travel literature. Later, of course, after a protracted conflict with the U.S. army, Navajos were moved from the heart of their homeland at Canyon de Chelly to Bosque

²⁴ Richard Delgado, et al. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 8.

Redondo in eastern New Mexico. "The Long Walk" resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Navajo.

This situational race construction continues today. For example, every day we see images of blacks as rapper/thugs and Mexicans as illegal citizens out to steal jobs and healthcare from U.S. workers. Such images are produced daily in print and on the radio and TV. Like the nineteenth century comparisons of Native Americans and Spanish mestizos, this is ironic when we consider that not long ago blacks were defined as slaves happy to serve their white masters, and as Braceros, Mexicans were embraced by the U. S. government who, between 1942 and 1964, was more than happy to exploit their labor. The exploitation of Mexican labor by EuroAmericans has gone unchanged for five hundred years, the stereotypes used to justify this exploitation shift with the times.

In addition, critical race theory asserts that, "racism is endemic to American life." Critical Race theorists question how traditional values such as property interests, federalism, and privacy "serve as vessels of racial subordination."²⁵ Thus, in North America, systems of racial

²⁵ Mari J. Matsuda and Charles R. Lawrence, III. *Words That Wound: Critical Race Theory, Assaultive Speech, and the First Amendment*

subordination were instituted before America became a nation. Historian Thomas Gossett reports that, "as early as 1653, the English begun the system of reservations—assigning each warrior fifty acres of land and the privilege of hunting in unoccupied territory. As the white men moved west, they developed a pattern with regard to the land of the Indians which was repeated over and over again In time, the white men would covet their land and by one means or another seek to acquire it."²⁶ Land ownership was one of the first and enduring instruments of subordination for people of color. The European American need to invent and manipulate people of color originated long before the nineteenth century, yet it is the specific racial projects of the nineteenth century that continue to construct socio-economic inequalities today.

Racial projects instituted in the 19th century by the U. S. government are indicative of the white supremacist attitudes of the day. For example, the Indian Removal Act of 1830 called for the removal of Indians from their eastern homelands. This racial project culminated with the

New Perspectives on Law, Culture, and Society (Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), 3.

²⁶ Thomas F. Gossett. *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1965), 228.

"Trail of Tears," which resulted in the deaths of thousands of Cherokee who were forcibly removed from Georgia to "Indian Territory," present day Oklahoma. As discussed above, a similar tragedy befell Navajos in 1868. The Dawes Act, another racial project, allowed for the break-up of reservations, which resulted in the loss of tribal land to white settlers. The Chinese Exclusion Act, stopped further immigration of Chinese to the United States. The 19th century is replete with such racial projects. Driven by the rubric of Manifest Destiny European Americans felt entitled to take land from people they considered inferior and uncivilized.

Although travel writers often misrepresented Spanish mestizo culture, they nevertheless delivered their assessment as a panoptic view of the culture and the people. Spanish mestizos were depicted as a people that did little work, had little ambition, and spent a good deal of their time at fandangos dancing and gambling. These one-sided nineteenth century narratives were snapshots of a people and a culture EuroAmericans knew very little about. Nonetheless, these accounts, beginning as early as 1806, confidently imparted racist lies about Spanish mestizos to a very stimulated and captivated EuroAmerican audience. Ledoux reminds us that,

Detailed accounts of journeys to locales outside of the nation's boundaries fed the desire of readers for knowledge regarding the foreign and the exotic. Perceived differences in behavior, custom, and belief held a deep fascination for the nineteenth-century citizen, and, for many, the travel narrative provided the only vehicle for engaging that fascination.²⁷

Waiting for news from exotic and different places, EuroAmericans eagerly consumed everything that met these criteria and judged accordingly.

In order to effectively disrupt nineteenth century travel literature, we must understand how influential it was in normalizing white supremacy and furthering the cause of Manifest Destiny especially in relation to Spanish mestizos in Santa Fe. I will focus my chapters on various cultural aspects of Spanish mestizo life. How were these

²⁷ Ledoux, "The Experience of the Foreign in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Literature," *Connexions*, February 26, 2009, <http://cnx.org/content/m19517/1.11/>.

Spanish mestizo cultural traditions raced and how were they gendered?

Chapter two will begin with the discussion of architecture. Since Santa Fe's buildings and town configuration was the first thing new visitors saw, it was also one of the first things commented on in numerous travel narratives. Chapter three will focus on the culture of the Spanish mestizo fandango. While numerous travel writers included descriptions of fandangos in their narratives, these descriptions reveal a complete misreading of this nineteenth century community tradition. Chapter four will address the provocative topic of religion described in the literature. Catholic Santa Fe gave Protestant travel writers much to write about. Their disapproval of the religion is clearly evident in some of the narratives. These disparagements add to descriptions of a benighted population in desperate need of enlightenment. In chapter five, I shift my gaze toward a new Chicana/o historiography by reading against the grain. By disrupting these existing narratives, we extract a Chicano point-of-view; thus presenting another side of the story.

In order to complete this project it is important to seek the help of both primary and secondary sources. Thus I build on histories by foundational scholars such as Rodolfo

Acuña's *Occupied America: History of Chicanos*, a broad Chicano history that lays the foundation for excavations of regional histories; and Deena Gonzalez's *Refusing the Favor*, which focuses on 19th century Santa Fe and the Spanish Mexican women of the period. Gonzalez's discussion of the changes these women and Spanish mestizos in general experienced after the U.S. invasion in 1846 is particularly important. Gonzalez not only encourages us to read against the grain, she provides a wonderful example in her history of Santa Fe. In addition, Chris Wilson's *The Myth of Santa Fe* focuses on the architecture of Santa Fe and is a useful tool in the examination of race and architecture across Santa Fe's four hundred year history. In addition to Wilson, Peter Nabokov and Robert Easton's *Native American Architecture* provides valuable historical information about Indigenous Architecture.

Genaro M. Padilla's remarkable *My History, Not Yours: The Formation of Mexican American Autobiography*, challenges directly the notion of a passive Mexican population. Padilla's discussion of two New Mexican autobiographies one by nineteenth century resident Rafael Chacon, and the other by Cleofas Jaramillo who overlapped the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, provide a counter to several EuroAmerican narratives. Chacon and Jaramillo contribute

narratives of their lives in New Mexico. Chacon was a soldier who fought for the Mexican army and after the invasion in 1846 fought on the side of the United States. The Mexican soldiers we learn were mostly assigned to campaigns against the Indigenous population. Jaramillo tells of her privileged childhood in Northern Mexico. Her story adds a facet and a balance of sorts to one dimensional portraits of the Spanish mestizo community.

Martina Will De Chaparro's *Death and Dying in New Mexico* provided important information on the religious burial practices in New Mexico, particularly the baroque religious sensibility that prevailed in New Mexico throughout the nineteenth century. De Chaparro furnishes important information concerning the lives of Spanish mestiza women. France Swadesh's invaluable *Los Primeros Pobladores* supplied a balanced view of the first Spanish mestizo groups to settle northern New Mexico and the interaction between these mestizos and the Indigenous. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz's *Roots of Resistance: A History of Land Tenure in New Mexico* was a key counter-voice to Spanish ecclesiastical narratives that inaccurately described Native American rituals. Tomás Almaguer's *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* cohesively mapped the marginalization of people

of color in California. These histories remove the stereotype of docility and passivity and portray real people working for the betterment of their lives and their communities.

Other histories are valuable for their regional and cultural focus, including Albert Camarillo's *Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California, 1848-1930*; Richard Griswold del Castillo's *The Los Angeles Barrio, 1850-1890: A Social History*; and David Montejano's *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986*. Juan Gomez Quiñones's *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1949-1990*, on the other hand, is valuable for its rich political insights. These histories lay the solid foundations for the economic and cultural study of Chicano history that we continue to build upon today.

Newspapers of the period such as *La Verdad*, *El Nuevo Mexicano*, the *Santa Fe Weekly Gazette*, *El Payo*, *The Missouri Daily Republican* and others provided essential primary source material to investigate these issues. While newspapers like the *Missouri Daily Republican* supply a white supremacist worldview, the need to invade and conquer the lowly Mexicans, newspapers like *El Nuevo Mexicano* supply a very different view of life in New Mexico. The

printing press arrived in New Mexico around 1834 and by 1835 Padre Antonio José Martínez owned a press and was publishing *El Crepusculo de la Libertad* in Taos.²⁸ Spanish mestizos worked hard through their various publications to resist the EuroAmerican invasion.

As Chicana/os we continue to weave trenzas into our daughter's hair and stories of survival and order into their lives. We can agree with Gloria Anzaldúa when she says that Chicana/os are products of a "uniting and joining that not only has produced both a creature of darkness and a creature of light, but," she continues, "also a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meaning."²⁹ As decolonized Chicana/os, we have the power to question old stories and give them new meaning. As

²⁸ A. Gabriel Meléndez. *Spanish-Language Newspapers in New Mexico, 1834–1858*. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005), 17.

Melendez reminds us that one of the cultural programs for most newspapers was that the "Mexican-American editors worked toward the development of an autonomous literary tradition among *nativos*: A corpus of writings they self-styled as *una literatura nacional* (a national literature) a form of cultural regionalism." This *literatura nacional* "became a way to voice the reality of Mexican Americans within the framework of the U.S. body politic."

²⁹ Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1987), 81.

Chicana academics, we have the tools and the privilege to speak back.

CHAPTER TWO

Travel Literature, Architecture, and White Representation: Disrupting the Gaze

Ninguna empresa imperial, ni las de antes
ni las de ahora, descubre. La aventura de la
usurpacion y el despojo no descubre: encubre. No
revela: esconde. Para realizarse, necesita
coartadas ideologicas que conviertan la
arbitrariedad en derecho.

—Eduardo Galeano

“El Descubrimiento Que Todavía No Fue:
España y America”

At the beginning of his essay “El Descubrimiento Que
Todavía No Fue: España y America” Eduardo Galeano tells the
story of seven Indians in Haiti who were burned at the
stake for the crime of sacrilege. Four years after
Christopher Columbus set foot on the island his brother
Bartolomé introduced the punishment of execution by
burning. The sacrilege these Indians committed was to bury

religious depictions (estampitas) of the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ. They had buried them in their cornfield in the hopes that these "new gods" would help insure a successful harvest. The Indians, Galeano tells us, had no idea what offense they had committed to cause such grievous consequences.

Galeano explains that imperial powers ancient or contemporary do not discover new lands; the adventure of invasion and its concomitant despoliation fails to result in discovery; instead, it conceals and veils. In order to legitimize the theft and human rights abuses the invader requires an ideological alibi.¹ In the historical example above, the Spanish invaders failed to see the culture, the history, or the people they consigned to slavery and death. Not only did Bartolomé Colón and his fellow invaders fail to see how well the Indians understood and were willing to believe in the power of these "new gods," in their blindness the Spaniards executed the native Taínos for their willingness to hope in the new Catholic idols. The

¹ Eduardo Galeano, "El Descubrimiento Que Todavía No Fue: España y América," in *El Descubrimiento De América Que Todavía No Fue y nuevos ensayos* (Venezuela: Alfadil Ediciones, 1991), 206.

history of conquest and colonization is rife with stories of violence and alibis such as the one Galeano tells.

The Spaniards' ideological alibi made in the name of the church and the government set in motion the racial project that sanctioned the killing of the Taínos in Haiti. The *Requerimiento* was the racial project and the alibi that allowed the Spaniards to steal Native land, enslave the people, and kill them outright if they failed to agree to its terms. Racial projects are implemented in order to "reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines." Racial projects also serve to define and delineate the dominance of the colonizer over the colonized, as witnessed with the *Requerimiento* in Galeano's story.²

A formal demand by the King and the Church, the *Requerimiento* required Indians to adopt the Christian faith. It mattered little to the Spaniards that the Indians did not understand Spanish. What did matter was that "there had to be immediate compliance. If the Indians refused to acknowledge the authority of the king and the pope, the

² Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 56.

soldiers would kill them." The *Requerimiento* further advised the Indians that if they lost their lives, because of failure to comply, it was their own fault. Those Indians who survived were made to leave their homes to become "labourers in the mines, field hands and beasts of burden."³ The *Requerimiento* was one of many racial projects we find in the history of conquest.

As we witnessed in Galeano's story, racial projects were instituted in the Americas at the moment of European contact. The reservation system and the need to Christianize Native Americans were early racial projects designed to displace indigenous groups and force Christianity on them. The Spanish and the English colonizer made conversion an important racial project. Before the "reconquest" in 1692, "Spain had maintained, [New Mexico] which lacked readily exploitable wealth, primarily as a missionary colony to convert the Pueblo Indians to Christianity."⁴ In the nineteenth century, racial

³ Thomas Berger, *A Long and Terrible Shadow: White Values, Native Rights in the Americas 1492–1992*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 3.

dictatorship and racial projects continued against Native Americans, and were also instituted against Mexicans, Asians, and African Americans.

In this chapter, I will examine how the nineteenth century racial project of travel literature reported, with bias, lies about the architectural landscape of Santa Fe, in order to promote nineteenth century EuroAmerican expansionist policies. Like the Spaniards in Galeano's story, nineteenth-century travel narratives reveal the blindness of the EuroAmerican writer. I will disrupt these writings by offering a decolonial response to eighteenth and nineteenth century travel writing addressing Santa Fe and its architecture. The decolonial imaginary, according to Emma Perez, "is that time lag between the colonial and the postcolonial, that interstitial space where differential politics and social dilemmas are negotiated."⁵ It is from this in-between space that conflicting realities

⁴ Diego de Vargas, *Remote Beyond Compare: Letters of don Diego de Vargas to His Family from New Spain and New Mexico, 1675–1706*. Ed. John L. Kessell. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989), 53. De Vargas returned after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.

⁵ Emma Perez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 6.

can be contested, and where the truth can be revealed. Because of travel literature's formidable function as a normalizing force for white supremacy, it must be called into question and challenged; using decolonial tools, its structure must be, and can be disrupted.

Long popular in the United States, travel writing about Mexico and experiences on the Santa Fe Trail were widely read and served as resource guides for those in the "States" planning to travel West. Historian Raymund Paredes reminds us that, "starting in the 1830s, information about Mexico and its people became available to Americans in unprecedented quantities."⁶ Travel to Mexico was of interest to EuroAmericans especially after 1821, when the Trail was legally opened to them. The literature encouraged them to travel west. Note the following description's somewhat romantic view of travel on the Santa Fe Trail:

No monotony, no life on a sea becalmed, is the tour to Santa Fe, but a moving diorama of stirring and unexpected incidents, that quicken

⁶ Americo Paredes, "The Mexican Image in American Travel Literature, 1831-1869," *The New Mexico Historical Review* LII:1 (1977): 5.

the pulse like an electric thrill, promote a brisk and healthful circulation, develop courage, endurance, presence of mind, generosity and patience, of which the new possessor never before dreamed—in a sentence, it brings out the whole man, physical, mental and moral⁷

In addition to the romantic aspects of travel, the writer extols the positive virtues of travel on the Trail, emphasizing the manly adventure involved.

In the nineteenth century, according to Gail Bederman, “ideologies of manliness were similar to—and frequently linked with—ideologies of civilization.”⁸ Bederman’s study asserts that gender is a historical, ideological process.

⁷ Benjamin F. Taylor, *Short Ravelings from a Long Yarn, or Camp March Sketches of the Santa Fe Trail. / [Microform] / From the notes of Richard L. Wilson.* (Chicago: Geer & Wilson, 1847), 9, quoted in Stephen G. Hyslop, *Bound for Santa Fe: The Road to New Mexico and the American Conquest, 1806–1848* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 87.

⁸ Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 27.

Manhood in neither an "intrinsic essence or a collection of traits, attributes, or sex roles." Instead, manhood "is a continual dynamic process." A process where "men claim certain kinds of authority, based upon their particular type of bodies." "At any time in history," explains Bederman, "many contradictory ideas about manhood are available to explain what men are, how they ought to behave, and what sorts of powers and authorities they may claim, as men."⁹ In the nineteenth-century manliness was considered equivalent to civilization.

The notion that "manliness equaled civilization" added another facet to the biased writing about Spanish mestizos. Mexican males were often characterized as cowardly. In an 1833 journal entry Mary Austin Holley wrote, "a more brutal and, at the same time, more cowardly set of men does not exist than the Mexican soldiery." Of the Mexicans Holley continues, "They are held in great contempt by American settlers, who assert that five Indians will chase twenty Mexicans, but five anglo-americans will chase twenty Indians."¹⁰ Paredes notes that Texas Anglos like Holley saw

⁹ Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 7 n28.

"their struggle to remove Mexican dominance" as on the one hand "a blow for American expansionism," and on the other hand as "a kind of holy war between saints and sinners."¹¹

Missing from Holley's description, however, is the fact that Texans were in the process of stealing land from Texas Mexicans and displacing the population.¹² Descriptions like Holley's were necessary to accomplish and justify the land theft in Texas and Mexico. Such descriptions fueled expansionist fever and contributed to the alibi needed to warrant the U.S. invasion.

Euro-Americans formed their preconceptions of the indigenous and mestizo people of Santa Fe long before they arrived in the region; upon their arrival, in a space they refused to see, they perpetuated these misconceptions in

¹⁰ Mary Austin Holley, *Letters of an Early American Traveller: Mary Austin Holley, Her Life and Her Works* (Baltimore: Armstrong & Plaskitt, 1833), [microform], quoted in Americo Paredes, "The Mexican Image in American Travel Literature, 1831-1848," *New Mexico Historical Review*, 1977, 5.

¹¹ Paredes, "The Mexican Image," 5.

¹² David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986*. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 27. Montejano writes that, "during the brief tenure of the Texas Republic, Texas Mexicans suffered from forced marches, general dispossession, and random violence."

their writings. Thus this written record became part of a rhetoric of racism, where Euro-Americans consumed travel literature before traveling to Santa Fe, arrived in Santa Fe, and then further contributed to that literature by perpetuating stereotypes, and seeing what they had already predisposed themselves to see.

By the time the U.S. invaded New Mexico, stories about and descriptions of Spanish mestizos were part of the EuroAmerican consciousness. Genero Padilla reminds us that, "As has often been the case with U. S. foreign policy, a good story would be required to shore up the petty reality of the event."¹³ The "story" in travel narratives about Spanish-Mexicans hid the petty reality of the engendering of White Supremacy, which contributed to a racist vision of Spanish mestizos and furnished the U. S. alibi needed to provoke a war with Mexico.

In these narratives EuroAmericans often read why and how "Mexicans were fitting objects of conquest and humiliation."¹⁴ Visiting Santa Fe in 1821 when the Trail was

¹³ Genero M. Padilla, *My History, Not Yours*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1993), 55.

¹⁴ Paredes, "The Mexican Image," 12.

legally opened to EuroAmericans, Thomas James wrote the following about the people of Santa Fe: "I have had enough of Mexican society to be thoroughly disgusted with it. I had not supposed it possible," he continues "For any society to be as profligate and vicious as I found all ranks of that in Santa Fe. The Indians," he adds, "are much superior to their Spanish masters in all qualities of a useful and meritorious population."¹⁵ For Thomas, "the Indians" are by far more "civilized" than the Santa Fe Spanish mestizos. This is an important comparison because it furthers the EuroAmerican notion that Mexicans were in need of civilization. Let us not forget that within a couple of decades, Native Americans in New Mexico would fall from grace and suffer their own displacement at the hands of EuroAmericans. Thus the comparison was not meant out of respect for indigenous people, but instead to denigrate both.¹⁶ Assessments like Thomas's about Santa Fe

¹⁵ Thomas James, *Three Years among the Indians and Mexicans*. ed. Walter B. Douglas. (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society, 1916), 134, quoted in Hyslop, *Bound For Santa Fe*, 232.

¹⁶ The nineteenth century racial project of Indian Removal reached the Navajo Nation in 1863 and 1864 when the federal government

and Spanish mestizos were prevalent throughout the early years of the nineteenth century. It is not surprising then, that EuroAmericans clearly had negative expectations of the culture and the people of Santa Fe when they first arrived as visitors.

Newly arrived visitors often had much to say about the architecture of Santa Fe. Like the great baroque churches in Mexico and Latin America that reflected the mixing of cultures and religions, Santa Fe's architecture reflected its history and its culture. In these adobe structures we see a mixture of cultures, a devotion to Catholicism, and a respect for its northern Mexico isolation at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo mountains.

By the middle of the nineteenth-century, EuroAmericans had read many descriptions of the "mud" houses in Santa Fe and of the people who inhabited them. For example, Merchant/Trader Josiah Gregg recounted and published his entrance into Santa Fe:

Oh, we are approaching the suburbs! thought I, on
perceiving the cornfields, and what I supposed to

removed the Navajo from their traditional homeland in Canyon de Chelly. It is known as the "Long Walk."

be brick-kilns scattered in every direction. These and other observations of the same nature becoming audible, a friend at my elbow said, 'It is true those are heaps of unburnt bricks, nevertheless they are *houses*—this is the city of Santa Fé.¹⁷

In the image below, we get a glimpse of what Santa Fe traders in the 1860s might have seen coming into town. It is unlikely that the plaza had changed significantly since the end of the 1840s. In the image of the Palace of the Governor's below (fig. 1.), the back portion of the courtyard is a good example of what an adobe structure looked like in the nineteenth century.

¹⁷ Josiah Gregg, *Commerce on the Prairies*. 1844. Reprint edition, ed. By Max L. Moorhead. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), 77.

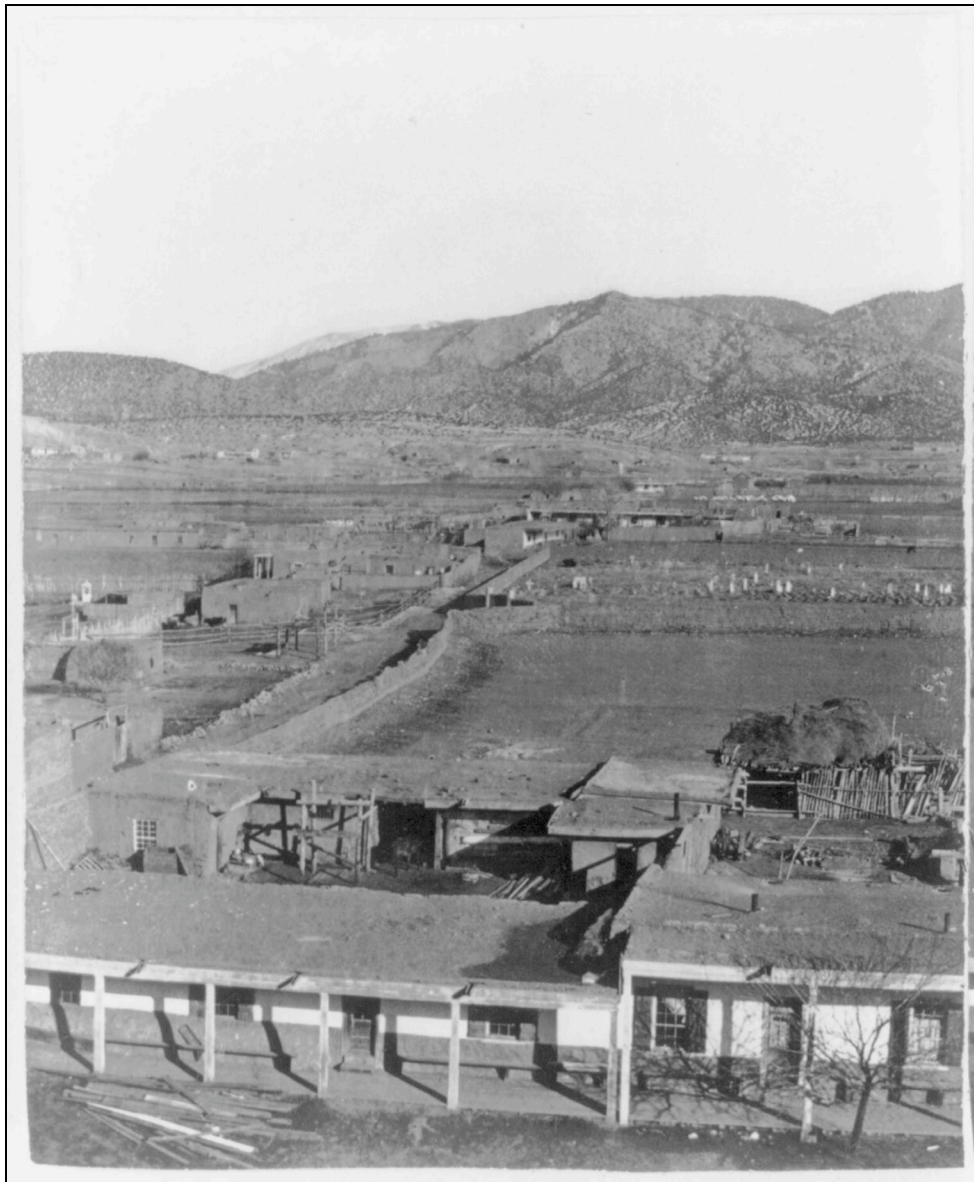


Fig. 1. Santa Fe, N.M., east view, 1885. Photograph by Henry Brown. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-42711.

For Gregg and other uninformed EuroAmericans “unburnt bricks” were, literally, just that, but to Spanish mestizos their houses were adobe structures suited to Santa Fe’s high desert climate. Their homes kept them warm in the winter and cool in the summer. The adobe “held the warmth of the day through chilly nights and provided shady coolness through the midday sun.”¹⁸ The truth is that the use of adobe was plainly the best building material for the area. Yet, uninformed descriptions like Gregg’s were common. After weeks on the Trail, it is safe to say, that EuroAmericans surely appreciated the shelter those “mud houses” provided.

As noted in chapter one, Travel Literature was a racial project that served to call attention to the differences between EuroAmericans and Spanish-Mexicans. The narratives set-up the brown/white binary that further emphasized their differences and held Spanish-Mexicans apart from white society.¹⁹ Travel literature became a

¹⁸ Richard Harris, *National Trust Guide Santa Fe: America’s Guide for Architecture and History Travelers* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1997), 8.

valuable tool advocating Manifest Destiny and White Supremacy in the U.S. in the nineteenth-century.²⁰ Like travel literature, "Manifest Destiny" was not an official government policy, but was considered an inherent right, and it became the U. S. alibi to take the west. To that

¹⁹ Richard Delgado et al., *Words That Wound: Critical Race Theory, Assaultive Speech, and the First Amendment*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), 6. Critical Race Theorists like Richard Delgado and Mari Matsuda remind us that critical race theory's differential racialization "draws attention to the ways dominant society racializes different minority groups at different times, in response to shifting needs such as the labor market," it "also draws attention to the competence of historically grounded studies." In fact, in North America systems of racial subordination were instituted before the America became a nation.

²⁰ J. L. O'Sullivan, "Annexation" in *The Democratic Review* vol. XVII. No. 85., 7. Credited with coining the phrase Manifest Destiny in 1845 he wrote:

Texas has been absorbed into the Union in the inevitable fulfillment of the general law which is rolling our population westward; the connexion [*sic*] of

which with that ratio of growth in population . . . is too evident to leave us in doubt of the manifest design of providence in regard to the occupation of this continent. It was disintegrated from Mexico in the natural course of events, by a process perfectly legitimate on its own part, blameless on ours; and in which all the censures due to wrong, perfidy and folly, rest on Mexico alone.

end, architecture was one of the first aspects of Spanish Mexican culture to be ridiculed in the travel literature. The focus of this derision was its alleged lack of beauty instead of its utility or its cultural and historical groundings.

Ignorant of the architectural history of Santa Fe, EuroAmericans were blind to the culture and the community that centered-around these adobe structures. Instead, they referred to Santa Fe as a town built of dirt. Recording his first glimpse of Santa Fe, Matt Field of the *New Orleans Picayune* wrote, "Our view of the mud built city was from the mountain side. . . . The low story buildings" reminded "us irresistibly of an assemblage of mole hills."²¹ Field failed to note for his readers the historical and utilitarian context of adobe structures, which had served New Mexico well since the sixteenth-century.

There were some challenges to the EuroAmerican alibi—even in their own ranks. In his book, *Early Architecture in New Mexico*, architectural scholar Bainbridge Bunting writes that by 1846 adobe churches were

²¹ Matt Field, *Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail: Collected by Clyde and Mae Reed Porter*, edited by John E. Sunder. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 202.

evidence that "architectural solutions introduced into the area at the outset of Spanish dominion continued to be used for more than 200 years, as long as Spanish culture dominated the region."²² On their aesthetic beauty he adds in part: "Although these churches lack decoration, they possess a striking massiveness that imparts a fine sculptural quality (fig. 2)."²³ Yet writing such as Bunting's were uncommon.

²² Bainbridge Bunting, *Early Architecture in New Mexico*. (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1976) 59. It is important to point out Bunting's statement that "architectural solutions . . . continued to be used . . . as long as Spanish culture dominated the region." One the EuroAmericans controlled the area architecture of a different kind cropped up around Santa Fe. Chris Wilson reveals that the first Italianate business front appeared in Santa Fe around 1880. "This façade type, which had been popular in the east since the 1850s," notes Wilson, "would radically alter the appearance of the plaza." Qtd in Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997) 68.

²³ Bunting, *Early Architecture*, 58.



Fig. 2. The Church of San Miguel, the oldest church in Santa Fe, N.M., 1873. Photograph by T. H. O'Sullivan. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-27697.

Hardly benign, EuroAmerican's attempt to discredit and diminish Santa Fe and New Mexican architecture was tied integrally to other kinds of biases. According to architectural historian Chris Wilson, "Americans equated adobe buildings, which to their eyes seemed to be in a perpetual state of decay, with loose women, gambling, cowardice, a lack of proper hygiene, and immoral clergy—all symptoms, in their minds, of the decline of Christian civilization in New Mexico."²⁴ Travel writers used these differences to remind their readers that Spanish-Mexicans did not fit the homogeneous model of EuroAmerican culture. EuroAmericans, historian George Fredrickson writes, "reserved the option to apply tests of cultural and racial compatibility to those who sought admission to their own ranks. Tragically," he continues, "for the blacks (and Indians)[and Spanish-Mexicans] already on the ground, all nonwhites were, from the beginning of nationhood, commonly regarded as 'aliens' of the unassimilable kind," despite rhetoric to the contrary.²⁵

²⁴ Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe*, 53

²⁵ George M. Frederickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American & South African History*. (Oxford: Oxford University

Since numerous first-impression descriptions like Josiah Gregg's, exist in the travel writing of the period, it bears repeating that while these writings convey, on the surface, the intended message of EuroAmerican superiority, they ultimately show the cultural ignorance of a population that presented itself as superior in all things. Consider the following from trader/merchant James Josiah Webb:

Press, 1981), 145. Nineteenth century racial projects espoused assimilation as a means to equality. Thus, whites believed that Native Americans not only should change, but in order to gain the rights and privileges of European Americans, Native Americans must change. In short, although the racial project or social creation of Native Americans suggests that if they lost all vestiges of their Indian-selves they would be accepted into European American society, the truth was that Indians would never be acceptable to nineteenth century white society. Consider the Cherokee experience during the Indian Removal Act of 1830, when according to Gossett, "the Cherokees—a tribe of about seventeen thousand—met the requirement that they live upon and farm their land." Fulfilling this requirement in accordance with federal government policy made Cherokees exempt from removal policies. In addition to farming the Cherokees had a written constitution, an alphabet for their language, an edited newspaper, and they maintained schools. As admirably assimilated as they must have appeared to whites, and to themselves, it was simply not enough to prevent "them from losing their land." Thomas F. Gossett, *Race, The History of an Idea in America*. (New York, Schocken Books, 1965), 232.

The people were nearly all in extreme poverty, and there were absolutely none who could be classed as wealthy except by comparison The houses were nearly all old and dilapidated, the streets narrow and filthy, and people, when in best attire, not half dressed. And even those who could occasionally afford a new and expensive dress, would make it up in such a way that it would appear extravagantly ridiculous.²⁶

Webb describes a grim place—poverty, filth, dilapidated houses, and a population whose best attire was nothing short of “ridiculous.” His description unquestionably sets-up the hierarchy of EuroAmerican superiority with Spanish-mestizos at the bottom. The unspoken message Webb delivers is that “by comparison,” EuroAmericans were far more “civilized” and thus superior to Spanish mestizos.

It is true that many Spanish mestizos of the period did face severe poverty. Webb, however, fails to note that Santa Fe’s extreme isolation from Chihuahua and Mexico City

²⁶ James Josiah Webb. *Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade 1844–1847*. Ed by Ralph P. Bieber. (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1995), 91–92.

in the nineteenth century guaranteed their situation of fiscal neglect. Spanish mestizos were tough and forbearing, and for them hard work, community, and the Catholic Church insured their survival. "Before the arrival of the Americans," writes Rafael Chacón, "the customs of the populace of New Mexico were very sane and sober. The people lived simply and very contentedly, with no ambitions that pushed them into vice."²⁷ Of the arrival of the Americans Cleofas Jaramillo wrote:

After existing, surrounded by struggle of life and death, quelling the savage Indians [*sic*], for almost three centuries under Spanish rule, with one stroke the new colony was brought under the rule of a foreign government, under a new, unknown constitution, which helplessly the Spanish population must accept.²⁸

²⁷ Rafael Chacón, *Legacy of Honor: The Life of Rafael Chacón A Nineteenth-Century New Mexican*, ed. Jacqueline Dorgan Meketa (New Mexico: Yucca Tree Press, 2000), 74.

²⁸ Jaramillo, *Romance*, 6–7.

Although many an observer wrote about the great enlightenment EuroAmericans would bring to New Mexico, for Chacón, Jaramillo, and others who witnessed them, the changes brought by the EuroAmericans were not welcomed or appreciated. Each side in this culture clash saw the other as foreign and distinctly different.

In the following passage, Chacón describes a typical year of work for Spanish-Mexicans:

They did the sowing in the spring, and the corn was generally planted on the fifteenth of May, the feast of San Isidro Labrador. Immediately after the planting, several men would prepare themselves to go to the Salt Lakes for salt which they would sell for grain; others would go to hunt the buffalo in order to provide meat when the irrigation and weeding periods arrived. These trips were made by the poor men with animals, about the middle of the most convenient time. During the reaping of the crops, which generally took place between August and October, it was a

joy to see neighbors helping one another in the gathering of crops.²⁹

While Spanish-Mexicans were mindful to follow the work of the seasons, EuroAmericans failed to appreciate the efficiency in the way Spanish-Mexicans followed the survival pattern of their life-ways, not to mention the relentless cycle of attack and counter-attack between Indigenous communities and Spanish mestizos. Instead, EuroAmericans continually characterized Spanish-Mexicans as indolent and backward.

Although Webb is recalling his experience in Santa Fe forty years later, such descriptions began as early as 1806 with the Southwest expedition of Zebulon Pike. Apprehended by Mexican soldiers, Pike was arrested for being in Mexico illegally. He was marched to Santa Fe, and subsequently reported that Santa Fe's "appearance from a distance struck my mind with the same effect as a fleet of the flat-bottomed boats which are seen in the spring and fall seasons descending the Ohio River. The magnificence of the

²⁹ Chacón, *Legacy of Honor*, 74-5.

church steeples" he continued, " form a striking contrast to the miserable appearance of the houses."³⁰

Pike clearly unaware of the dynamics of adobe architecture failed to understand that, "adobe construction was load-bearing with low structural strength, adobe walls tended to be massive."³¹ These massive adobe walls supported the flat roofs. According to writer Richard Harris, "These roofs consisted of logs which supported wooden poles, and which in turn supported wooden lathing or layers of twigs covered with packed adobe earth."³² These adobe structures had evolved over time to fit the climate and the changes in the community. Their design and construction was empirically based and not haphazardly put together, which is the implication we hear from Pike and others. It is true, as Pike noted, that comparatively, churches were better maintained than individual homes. This is most

³⁰ Zebulon M. Pike *The Southwestern Expedition of Zebulon Pike*. Edited by Milo Milton Quaife. (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1925. Rpt 1970), 136–37.

³¹ Preservation of historic adobe buildings [electronic resource]. (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, 1978).

³² Harris, *National Trust Guide*, 8.

likely because Spanish mestizos were more likely to spend time and available resources on maintaining their churches first, leaving their homes to look far less striking, especially to the untrained eye. (fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Group of Men with Team of Burros, Outside the Oldest Adobe House in Santa Fe, n. d. Courtesy of Smithsonian Institution Research Information System (SIRIS).

As we have already seen, Santa Fe's Spanish mestizo architectural history spanned, by the 1840s, two hundred years, beginning just following Spanish contact. Of course, the architectural history of Native Americans in New Mexico begins long before that.³³ In the 1840s, Santa Fe architecture combined and was ultimately a hybrid of Spanish mestizo and Indigenous Pueblo forms of architecture. In 1539 when father Marcos de Niza sent his slave Estevan ahead to the Zuni village of Hawikuh, he was in the process of appraising the wealth of the region for the Spanish Crown.³⁴ De Niza never stepped into the village

³³ According to Bainbridge Bunting, "Man has been constructing permanent shelters in New Mexico for more than 1,500 years . . . an account of [man's] building activity carries one back to primitive pithouses which appear as early as A.D. 350. Construction of multiunit dwellings above ground began about A.D.700." *Early New Mexico Architecture*, 1.

³⁴ Fray Marcos de Niza's slave was the famous Estevan, who had been shipwrecked with Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca and two others: Dorantes, Castillo. These men walked from Galveston Island in Texas to the Sonoran desert in northern Mexico. Although Cabeza de Vaca's captivity narrative has been translated many times, the best version is the one by Cyclone Covey titled *Adventures In the Interior of America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983).

of Hawikuh, because his dispatched slave, Estevan, was killed soon after his arrival at Hawikuh. "What Marcus glimpsed from a mesa away," report Peter Nabokov and Robert Easton, "was an example of a distinctively Southwestern Indian architectural creation: a cluster of contiguous rooms constructed up to several stories which the Spanish classified as a "Pueblo."³⁵ Although the "pueblo" designation was credited to de Niza, and his near visit to the Hawikuh village in the seventeenth century, what he called the Pueblos included a collective of Native Americans who belong "to a number of different language groups," and who have "continued to farm and occupy these housing complexes," for more than a thousand years.³⁶ (figs. 4 and 5).³⁷

³⁵ Nabokov Peter and Robert Easton. *Native American*, 348. Although the term "pueblo" to designate a type of architecture is commonly used today, "pueblo" was originally a designation by the Spanish for "the People." <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pueblo>

³⁶ Nabokov, *Native American Architecture*, 348.

³⁷ The titles of these images of Hawikuh were incorrectly named by the photographer. The are photographs are of the ruins of the village of Hawikuh and not of the church.



Fig. 4. View of Old Adobe Church in Ruins, One of the Seven Cities of Cibola, 1886. Photograph by Cosmos Mindelleff. Courtesy of Smithsonian Institute Research Information System (SIRIS).



Fig. 5. Man Near Ruins of Church, 1899. Photograph by Adam Clark Vroman. Courtesy of Smithsonian Institute Research Information Systems (SIRI).

At first, the Spaniards regarded the "architectural size and apparent permanence as reflections of cultural development."³⁸ The Spaniards saw these structures as evidence of civilization. They admired the "communal stone and adobe towns with their clusters of multistoried and specialized rooms," and in them, they recognized "a familiar civic impulse."³⁹ Slightly more than a year after De Niza's visit, however, "the humble, mud-plastered town of Hawikuh was demoted, in Francisco Coronado's eyewitness report, to 'a little crowded village, looking as if it had been cramped together.'"⁴⁰ In Coronado's travel narrative, which took the form of a report submitted to the Spanish Crown, he constructed the alibi Spain would need to justify the racial project of financing a colonizing expedition to New Mexico for Juan de Oñate, near the end of the sixteenth-century.

The truth is that "Pueblo villages stood two to five stories tall, had fifty to five hundred rooms each, and

³⁸ Nabokov, *Native American Architecture*, 348.

³⁹ Nabokov, *Native American Architecture*, 348.

⁴⁰ Nabokov, *Native American Architecture*, 350

were arranged around community plazas and ceremonial kivas."⁴¹ To Pueblo architecture the Spanish introduced "such elements as ground-level doors, standardized adobe bricks, corner fireplaces beehive ovens (hornos), and metal tools that could cut larger roofing timber for wider rooms."⁴² The Pueblos shared with the Spanish familiar architectural elements: "earthen walls and flat roofs." This architectural hybridism reflected the history and culture of Santa Fe and the surrounding areas. Violent conquest and survival dictated the need to share and incorporate ideas in order to make the most of extreme situations. (fig. 6).

⁴¹ Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe*, 22.

⁴² Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe*, 36.



Fig. 6. Acoma, Encantapa from Pueblo of Acoma, N. M. ca. 1899.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division,
LC-USZ62-46922.

Coronado expressed "disbelief that the Zuni occupants could produce even these structures. 'I do not think they have the judgment and intelligence needed to be able to build those houses in the way in which they are built.'"⁴³ Coronado's malevolent attitude toward the Indians reflected most conquistadors' belief that "the Pueblo Indians were an inferior breed close to savages: 'a people without capacity,' 'stupid,' and 'of poor intelligence.'"⁴⁴ Coronado abandoned New Mexico in 1542, after failing to find gold. His departure brought to a close "the first period of Spanish interest in the area."⁴⁵ The sixteenth-century Spanish belief in the inferiority of Native Americans prefigured EuroAmerican descriptions of Spanish-Mexicans in the nineteenth century.

In 1610 when Pedro de Peralta established Santa Fe we see a deliberate effort made at town planning by the Spanish. Peralta's predecessor Juan de Oñate had failed to

⁴³ Nabokov, *Native American Architecture*, 351

⁴⁴ Gutierrez, *When Jesus Came*, 44.

⁴⁵ Gutierrez, *When Jesus Came*, 45.

follow the "town planning ordinances of the Laws of the Indies." These laws

provided specific, practical instructions for maintaining friendly relations with natives selecting a town site, laying out a grid of streets with a central plaza, locating a church and government buildings on the plaza and distributing town lots and farming lands to the colonists. In effect for over 250 years, from 1573 to 1821, the Laws shaped virtually every city in the Spanish domain.⁴⁶

Santa Fe's town plan failed to conform exactly to the town-planning ordinance. It conformed instead to accommodate the reality of living in northern Mexico, and being under constant threat of attack from Utes, Navahos, and Apaches.

⁴⁶ Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe*, 24-5. In addition Wilson writes that these "laws codified seventy years of Spanish town planning experience in the Americas and drew from a variety of European sources; Roman and Renaissance planning theory from Vitruvius to Alberti, monastic complexes and military encampments, and the siege towns built during the reconquest of Spain from the Moors."

This meant that in times of peace between Spanish-Mexicans and Native Americans, settlements might crop-up close to the river and farther from the town plaza. The Spanish-Mexicans preferred living closer to their crops. However, when disagreements between groups surfaced and became violent, attacks and counter-attacks proved to be too much for the settlers by the river. They were forced to abandon their crops and any livestock and move closer to town where they were safer from attacks. It is important to note that according to Historian Deena Gonzalez, the residents of Santa Fe,

were not passive victims of ambulatory Natives who raided gardens and plundered animal flocks. Spanish-Mexicans also initiated raids, not necessarily to retrieve stolen goods, but to capture Native women and children, whom they treated like commodities and subsequently enslaved in the wealthier households.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Deena Gonzalez, *Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe 1820-1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 62. Also see, Frank McNitt, *Navajo Wars* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972), 67.

The history of Santa Fe is nothing if not a history of violence, accommodation, collaboration, and survival. To the indigenous peoples of Santa Fe Spanish mestizos were colonizers. To the EuroAmericans they were colonized.

Nineteenth-century travel writers either knowingly or out of ignorance excluded much of the history and culture of Santa Fe both the Spanish-Mexican history and the indigenous histories that preceded it. Instead, travel writers amplified the differences between EuroAmericans and Spanish mestizos and cast Spanish mestizos in a decidedly negative light. These writers were no doubt influenced by speeches like the one given in 1837 by United States Senator from South Carolina John C. Calhoun praising the merits of slavery based on difference:

Where two races of different origin, and distinguished by color, and other physical differences, as well as intellectual are brought together . . . the relation now existing in the slaveholding state between the two is, instead of an evil, a good—a positive good.⁴⁸

Blinded by arrogant notions of providential superiority many travel writers deliberately failed to incorporate historical facts that complete descriptions of the community and its history of violence and collaborative accommodation.

Nineteenth century readers learned nothing of the ways in which architecture played a critical role in the cultural accommodation between Spanish-Mexicans and Native Americans. EuroAmericans learned nothing of the impact collaboration had between the Spanish mestizos and Native Americans and enabled them to develop an architectural hybrid. The one dimensional "mud" house descriptions were the primary information readers were given of New Mexico architecture. Unfortunately, even those who saw it did not know what they were seeing. These writers succeeded in perpetuating their ignorance and the ignorance of their readers of the architectural history of Santa Fe.

The architecture of any community usually reflects the culture and the people that live there. Santa Fe's adobe buildings were part of a place where peacefulness could be tenuous. Mindful of the dangers that existed in

⁴⁸ John C. Calhoun quoted in Fredrickson, *White Supremacy*, 154.

their everyday lives Spanish-Mexicans constructed their homes to provide as much protection as possible against invaders.

Bunting reports that very few differences existed between a hacienda and a smaller dwelling. The rooms of smaller dwellings were generally constructed in a straight line end to end or in a U- or an L-shape. "In this manner several houses could enclose a large central area of square or oblong shape. As in a hacienda," Bunting continues, "rooms opened toward the central area but the peripheral wall without openings created a defensible enceinte."⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Bunting, *Early Architecture*, 63.



Fig. 7. Placita Looking West. Photograph by M. James Stack, 1934. Historic Building Survey. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. HABS NM, 25-SanFe, 2-4.

As for the windows, instead of glass windows, since glass was not available, Spanish-Mexicans used selenite, “a crystallized gypsum that is translucent” and was plentiful in the area. It was “mined in sheets up to 10 x 18 inches in size.” These sheets were “‘cemented’ into the masonry with adobe plaster.”⁵⁰ While these windows may have seemed “crude” to the EuroAmerican traveler, in truth the use of selenite was an innovative way to use available materials to create windows. (fig. 8).



Fig. 8. View of [Acoma] Pueblo From Church Roof, Beehive Ovens and Mesa Also Shown 1899. Photograph by Adam Clark Vroman. Courtesy of Smithsonian Institute Research Information System (Siris).

⁵⁰ Bunting, *Early Architecture*, 67.

It is also true that not all narratives of Santa Fe were negative. War correspondent Richard Smith Elliot praised the use of adobe. In his journal on April 28, 1847 he wrote,

The Taos campaign proved that the adobes, or unburnt bricks, used in this country are excellent materials for fortification walls—as impenetrable as masonry of stone, and proof against the shattering effects of cannon shot.⁵¹

Such amenities were important to Elliot, since, at the time of his writing, the War with Mexico had yet to be decided.

Historian Ralph Emerson Twitchell's narrative, on the other hand begins positively, but ends with a negative qualification:

The roofs of the houses were all flat and were made of layers of adobe, mud and ashes supported by large vigas, or rafters, placed about two feet apart in a horizonatal position

⁵¹ Richard Smith Elliot, *The Mexican War Correspondence of Richard Smith Elliot*, Mark L. Gardner and Marc Simmons eds. (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1997.

. . . . These roofs, when well made, turned the rain remarkably well and rendered the structures almost fireproof. The outside walls rose several feet above the level of the roof, and . . . in time of attack, served as a sort of breast-work, behind which the combatants took station and defended the premises.⁵²

But in his description of the portals' vigas and decoratively carved corbels, Twitchell concludes that the corbels, "gave conclusive evidence of appreciation of art, not entirely primitive in conception or execution."⁵³

Twitchell writes this very comprehensive description of the efficiency of adobe architecture at the time of U.S. occupation, and then he reminds the reader that Spanish-Mexicans were, regardless of these impressive constructions, nevertheless one step removed from primitive/uncivilized. Thus Twitchell's 1925 history

⁵² Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *Old Santa Fe: The Story of New Mexico's ancient Capital*. (Chicago: Rio Grande Press, 1925, rpt 1963), 159-60.

⁵³ Twitchell, *Old Santa Fe*, 160.

continued the alibi that War with Mexico was justified and necessary for the edification and civilization of the Spanish-Mexicans.



Fig. 9. San Miguel Church, Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, N.M., 1933. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photograph Division. HABS NM, 25-SANFE, 1-.

While the population of Santa Fe was rich in diversity and culture, the EuroAmerican newcomer refused to see distinctions between Mexican and Indian groups. To EuroAmericans they were all immutably uncivilized. Yet it was the arrival of Euro-American travelers, in conjunction with their refusal to see the history and people of Santa Fe that left to us the white supremacist literature that historians now associate as the reality of the nineteenth-century Southwest.

So, like the colonizer's blindness to the history and character of the Taínos in Haiti, the history and architecture of Spanish-Mexicans was unseen by EuroAmerican travel writers. These nineteenth century colonizers preferred to write fiction about the "backward" people of New Mexico. These narratives tell more about their own retrograde behavior. It is ironic but not surprising that at the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth EuroAmericans not only accepted adobe architecture but embrace it wholeheartedly, so much so that today Santa Fe is sometimes called an adobe Disneyland.

CHAPTER THREE

White Supremacy and Mexican Resistance:
A Decolonial Examination of the Gendered Politics
of Representation in Nineteenth Century Travel Literature
about Santa Fe [New] Mexico:

Santa Fe was the center of a complex, multiethnic frontier, and little of its [now 400-year] history is simple. The Pueblo Indians of New Mexico had, for centuries, called Santa Fe—which was situated at the base of the Spanish-named Sangre de Cristo Mountains—the Dancing Ground of the Sun. Had the sun ever danced, it surely would have danced there. When the Spanish began crossing the valley in the 1540s, during Francisco Vásquez de Coronado's expedition, they remarked that the area's crisp air and changing shadows elicited special feelings. Coming upon the site from the higher ground on the north, and looking downward, they were awed by the magnificent beauty of the "bowl," balanced easily by the surrounding

hills and mountains. Moving away but still on the plateau and glimpsing back, they saw peaks jutting thirteen thousand feet into the clear air. The mountains framed the eastern side. Descending to level ground, the explorers observed the ruins of an ancient Indian town, still visible beneath sagebrush and piñon trees. The unusually still, clean air at six thousand feet above sea level often left the newcomers gasping. Almost seventy years later, they built Santa Fe on this site. Two hundred years after that, Euro-Americans began traversing the Dancing Ground.

—Deena Gonzalez

*Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women
of Santa Fe, 1820–1880*

Historian Deena Gonzalez's elegant description of Santa Fe's surrounding landscape sets the stage for our entry into Santa Fe by caravan in the mid-nineteenth century. In the 1840s Santa Fe was still one of Mexico's northernmost provinces. Despite its distance from Mexico City, however, Santa Fe was hardly a provincial ghost town.

On the contrary, Santa Fe held a pivotal cosmopolitan position on the Santa Fe Trail. Although the travel literature suggests that there were only EuroAmerican merchants, in fact, there were several Spanish-Mexican merchants as well.¹ Caravans brought trade goods from places as diverse as Chihuahua in central Mexico and Missouri in the United States.

Coming into Santa Fe for the first time, the EuroAmerican traveler might be part of a commercial caravan. Caravans entered Santa Fe with much hoopla and commotion. "The most important preparation for the drivers," according to merchant/trader, James Josiah Webb, "was to put on new and broad crackers, so as to be able to announce their arrival by the cracking of their whips." This "would nearly equal the reports made by the firing of so many pistols."² They steered their long caravan through

¹ For more information on the Spanish-Mexican merchant/traders see Susan Calafate Boyle, *Los Capitalistas: Hispano Merchants and the Santa Fe Trade*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000).

² James Josiah Webb, *Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade 1844–1847*. Edited by Ralph P. Bieber. (Nebraska: Bison Books, 1995), 80.

the town square, completing their journey at the Customs House.

The town square, or plaza, was anchored on the north by the Palace of the Governors and other government buildings and on the south by the Military Chapel, *La Castrense*. Merchant shops and some residences comprised the east and west sides of the Plaza. In addition to welcoming caravans the plaza was the setting for church processions and even public executions. The plaza's layout dated back to the *Ordenanzas de Descubrimiento*, which was the edict "promulgated in 1573 by Phillip II of Spain," which outlined the plans for a new city.³ Here, in this two-hundred year-old municipality, first time EuroAmerican visitors formed their initial impressions of the place and its residents. These impressions and assumptions were overwhelmingly negative and white supremacist in nature.

As a form of resistance against that disdainful gaze, Spanish-Mexicans chose to include the EuroAmericans in

³ The Ordinances of Discovery were "detailed laws concerning the founding of settlements in the Spanish new world that were still in use in New Mexico as late as the early nineteenth century" from *Santa Fe Historic Plaza Study I with Translations from Spanish Colonial Documents*. Edited by Linda Tiggs. (Santa Fe: City Planning Department, 1990), 55.

community activities. By 1846 Spanish Mexicans had been exposed to their fair share of EuroAmerican trappers, traders, military men, and journalists. Although hateful in nature EuroAmerican narratives, reports, and journals are valuable to the historical record, they are, of course, an incomplete record. These naïve, colorful accounts of Spanish-Mexican culture provide the decolonial subject an interstitial space from where Chicana/os can create a counter-narrative that tells a Spanish mestizo side of the story. Such counter-narratives are vital to our understanding of history, because they disrupt linear history and enlarge the historical record to reflect more closely the history of the period.

In this chapter I will discuss the EuroAmerican white supremacist representation of the Spanish mestizos of Santa Fe, and through a decolonial examination I will disrupt the written record. As noted in chapter two, Emma Perez's *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* instructs us to challenge history's "catagoric spaces." "We continue" Perez writes, "to conceptualize history without challenging how such discursive sites have been assigned and by whom." In this case the discursive site of travel literature assigned superiority to EuroAmericans,

contributing to their white supremacist agenda, while at the same time travel literature defined Spanish metizos of Santa Fe as inferior and backward. "One fundamental result to such traditional approaches to history," Perez charges, "is that these spatio-temporal models enforce a type of colonialist historiography." The history of Chicanas/os in New Mexico has long been situated within this spatio-temporal model, which places them in a minority status and privileges the colonizer. Perez's decolonial imaginary allows us to "reconceptualize [these] histories." By disrupting linear histories, we create what she calls interstitial gaps. These gaps allow us to see and hear the "unheard, the unthought, the unspoken. These interstitial gaps interrupt the linear model of time, and it is in such locations that oppositional, subaltern histories can be found."⁴ A decolonial approach provides the space from which to examine and create a counter-narrative that disrupts nineteenth century travel literature about Santa Fe.

Because they knew very little about Santa Fe, EuroAmericans often were unable to see its cultural history. And so in looking to nineteenth century travel

⁴ Emma Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 4–5.

literature, it is important to locate the spatio-temporal gaps in the descriptions of the various aspects of Santa Fe and its people. As we witnessed in chapter two, the architecture of Santa Fe was one of the first cultural aspects maligned in the literature. Reporting in 1853 on the "manners and customs" of New Mexico W. W. H. Davis wrote, "The modern town of Santa Fe, like its great namesake and prototype, Timbuctoo, is built of mud, and the inhabitants, with great truth, can call their houses 'earthly tabernacles.'"⁵ In 1853, Davis was the United States attorney for the territory, and felt compelled to write an assessment of "New Mexico and Her People." Deena Gonzales keenly affirms that "superficial social commentary of transients who later became territorial residents" like Davis's, "became embedded in the national psyche, became part of the nationalist and race idioms of a country in a period of conquest."⁶

Hardly benign, EuroAmerican's ignorance of the culture of northern Mexico clearly blinded and limited them in

⁵ W. W. H. Davis, *El Gringo: New Mexico and Her People* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 163–64.

⁶ Gonzalez, *Refusing the Favor*, 48

their ability to appreciate Santa Fe's, by then, two hundred year history. The historical moment in which we witness this first meeting between Davis and Santa Fe is important because Davis's disparaging remarks repeat and further the biases of his fellow EuroAmericans. In *Never One Nation: Freaks, Savages, and Whiteness in U.S. Popular Culture 1850–1877* Linda Frost argues that the "recurring theme in 19th century America's popular writing is the rhetorical manipulation of racialized, blackened others that defines Americanness by contrast, in shadow."⁷ In other words, white outsiders defined the Spanish-Mexicans of Santa Fe by the contrast between their "primitive brownness" and that of the white "civilized" narrator.

Neither gender was spared the unforgiving gaze of the culturally ignorant, but literarily powerful, EuroAmerican travel writer. In these accounts, Mexicans are gender racially constructed as poor, carefree, and ignorant. Men are cowards and lazy, and women are ugly or promiscuous. These extreme one-dimensional identity constructions include "gender and race as inseparable

⁷ Linda Frost, *Never One Nation: Freaks, Savages, and Whiteness in U.S. Popular Culture 1850–1877* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005) xi.

players.”⁸ Genderracial construction is especially prevalent in nineteenth century travel literature because the descriptive nature of the genre, allows writers to “report” what they see.

If Mexicans are described as violent or if Mexicans are described as ignorant such descriptions usually serve to further the agenda of the writer, which could be anything from invading Mexico in order to provide a “civilizing presence” for the woeful Mexicans, to selling New Mexico for statehood based on the notion that the state is populated by Spaniards (Europeans).⁹ These callous and

⁸ Anne Borden, “Heroic ‘Hussies’ and ‘Brilliant Queers’”: Genderracial Resistance in the Works of Langston Hughes” *African American Review* 28 (1994): 344. Emphasis mine.

⁹ The notion some New Mexicans believe of a pure Spanish heritage is explained best by Rodolfo Acuña in the following extended passage:

Many New Mexicans have historically found security in believing that they assimilated into Anglo-American culture and that they effectively participate in the democratic process. This historical distortion has been articulated so often that many New Mexicans believe it. . . . Many New Mexicans called themselves *hispanos*, or Spanish-Americans, as distinguished from other Mexicans. They rationalized that they were the descendants of the original settlers, who were

strategic depictions of the population and culture demonstrate the critical role of practiced ignorance in the construction of nineteenth-century white supremacy. Taking our cue from Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, we too can imagine our own Spanish mestizo community in Santa Fe circa 1845, an interstitial space, if you will; from this vantage point we can respond to the inaccuracies about Spanish mestizos in Santa Fe.¹⁰

Because there is a profusion of nineteenth century travel literature about Santa Fe, travel writers present numerous and varied aspects of Spanish mestizo culture. In addition to W.H.H. Davis, George Wilkins Kendall wrote about the Texas Santa Fe expedition, Josiah Gregg wrote about commerce in Santa Fe, George W. Brewerton added his experiences with Kit Carson on the Santa Fe trail, while

Spanish *conquistadores*. . . .Through this process, they distanced themselves from intense racism toward Mexicans, allowing them to better their economic and, in some cases, their social status. George Sanchez, Arthur L. Campa, Carey McWilliams, and others have exploded this 'fantasy heritage.'"

See Acuña, *Occupied America*, 55.

¹⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Spread of Nationalism*. (New York: Verso, 1983), 7.

several others including military men like William Hemsley Emory and women like Susan Maggoffin kept journals of their experiences in Mexico.¹¹ Quite often these EuroAmerican travelogues included descriptions of fandangos.

Moorish in origin, the Fandango arrived in the seventeenth century from Spain. It was "danced by a single couple to the accompaniment of castanets, guitar, and songs sung by the dancers."¹² The dance most likely arrived in Mexico during the 17th and 18th centuries. True to EuroAmerican white supremacist tendencies, however, by the nineteenth century travel writers had already corrupted the term to denote a collective event, a *baile* or dance. In his *Leading Facts of New Mexico History*, the historian Ralph Emerson Twitchell recognizes this mistake. The word "'fandango' as used by Dr. Gregg," he reports, "is essentially a misnomer. . . One might as well call an

¹¹ W. H. Emory, *Lieutenant Emory Reports: A Reprint of Lieutenant W.H. Emory's Notes of a Military Reconnaissance* Ross Calvin ed., (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1951). Susan Shelby Magoffin, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico: The Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin, 1846-184*, Stella M. Drumm ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1982).

¹² The Free Dictionary by Farlex, "fandango"
"<http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/fandango>"

American ball a 'two-step.'" The 'fandango,' Twitchell, clarifies for his 1911 audience (much too late for the mid-nineteenth century reader), "was a species of dance. The old Santa Fe traders, trappers, and backwoodsmen were responsible for this mistake in terms." Twitchell then offers a phonetic pronunciation hint, the "proper term for this form of public amusement was 'baile' pronounced-by-lay."¹³ By misusing the Spanish word "fandango" to refer to a public dance, EuroAmericans further exoticized Spanish Mestizos, emphasizing their difference and placing them even farther outside EuroAmerican models of social conduct. By conflating the fandangos into a single behavioral event, travel writers again failed to see the rich cultural heritage of New Mexicans.

Fandangos served the community in a number of ways. Fandangos pointed to the cohesiveness of the community. Whether because of religious celebrations, harvest festivals, or the welcoming of dignitaries, the dances provided an outlet and a reaffirmation of the communities' stability. The living situation in New Mexico was often fraught with uncertainty and violence. Fandangos were a

¹³ Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *The Leading Facts Of New Mexican History*. (Cedar Rapids: The Torch Press, 1911-1912), 160.

celebration of Spanish-Mexicans' continued survival. Yet EuroAmerican travel writers often completely misread what they were seeing and reported accordingly. Consider the following excerpt from James Josiah Webb's *Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade 1844-1847*:

A Mexican fandango in those days was a curiosity. The *sala* or dancing hall, [was] from twenty to thirty feet long, and fifteen to eighteen feet wide, with sometimes benches on the side (but frequently without seats of any kind) and packed full, only leaving sufficient space through the center for couples to waltz through, up and down. When the dance began, the men would place themselves in line on one side, and when the line was complete, the women would begin to rise in regular order without manifesting any choice of partners; and when the numbers were equal, the music would strike up and the dance would proceed.¹⁴

¹⁴ Webb, *Adventures*, 95-6.

Webb begins his description by labeling the dance a "curiosity," a word that, especially for nineteenth century readers, evokes P.T. Barnum's own "curiosities," freak shows and sideshows. Through the 1840s Barnum successfully ran Barnum's American Museum in New York City. There, visitors could see, among other things General Tom Thumb and the Fejee Mermaid. Barnum's "freaks" fed the curiosity of the travel writer who looked for them in New Mexico.

Rather than a "curiosity," however, Webb's own description actually provides a glimpse of a very ordered social proceeding. This moment in time, like a photographic still, allows us to see the group and the ordered etiquette of the dancers. Clearly there is a prescribed sequence of steps to the dance. The participants get into position without speaking and know just what will happen next. Apparently because of the limited space accommodations in the dance were made accordingly. In fact, according to Cleofas M. Jaramillo's *Romance of a Little Village Girl*, "The *bastonero* called out the dances and picked out from the crowd of men standing by the door the ones who were to take part in each dance, by this means avoiding crowding."¹⁵

Clearly unfamiliar with both the dance and the music, Webb resorts to calling the dance a "curiosity" instead of admitting his ignorance of this aspect of Mexican culture.

As Galeano asserts colonizers create an alibi in order to take power.¹⁶ The descriptions of Fandangos as (side-show) curiosities were another way EuroAmericans furthered their alibi for expansion westward. In their quest to expand to Mexico, EuroAmericans were blind to the community they inserted themselves into, yet they were quick to report and judge. Why does Webb fail to include the bastonero in his description? Surely, especially because of limited floor space, there must have been a bastonero directing traffic on the dance floor at these "fandangos." In some cases the bastonero even filled the need for a bouncer at these dances.¹⁷ As master of ceremonies the

¹⁵ Cleofas M. Jaramillo *Romance of a Little Village Girl* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 2000), 25.

¹⁶ Eduardo Galeano, *El Descubrimiento De America Que Todavía No Fue y nuevos ensayos* (Venezuela: Alfadil Ediciones, 1991), 119–128.

¹⁷ Rubén Cobos, *A Dictionary of New Mexico & Southern Colorado Spanish* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2003), 26. In addition to being a master of ceremonies at a dance or fiesta, Cobos defines bastonero as a "bouncer at a Saturday night dance."

Bastonero played an important role in the etiquette of the bailes. "During the dance," according to Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, "those who had prestige with the bastonero," were able to request a "piece to their liking and soon the musicos were striking a polka or a waltz and putting as much fervor into it as the dancers on the floor."¹⁸ The bastonero clearly would have been a prominent figure at the fandangos. Yet, Webb chose to exclude this important individual who facilitated the orderliness of the dancers. Instead, Webb presented the scene as a "curiosity" which called attention to the differences in cultures and reminded the reader that these "fandangos" were akin to a sideshow. Rather than a curiosity, however, because of eyewitness accounts from Spanish mestizos we are able to decolonially disrupt the white narrative with a more complete picture of the bailes. These bailes as enjoyed by Spanish-Mexicans were well attended, well ordered functions that were reflective of the society that produced them.

The numerous travel narratives about Mexican "fandangos" suggest that white travel writers were obsessed

¹⁸ Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, *We Fed Them Cactus* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1954), 34.

with them. Most writers generally agreed that fandangos were dances held in Mexican communities for the enjoyment and diversion of the population. They sometimes were held nightly, and, depending on who is describing them, they were either for the elite only or for everyone.

Travel writer and merchant Josiah Gregg reports that the fandangos were "very frequent, for nothing is more general throughout the country, and with all classes, than dancing. From the gravest to the buffoon—from the richest nabob to the beggar—from the governor to the rancharo—from the soberest matron to the flippant belle—from the grandest señora to the *cocinera*—all partake of this exhilarating amusement."¹⁹ Without using the term, Gregg like Webb, invokes the image of P.T. Barnum's sideshows. Barnum's freak show was part of the "implicit endeavor to identify the definitive properties of 'Americanness'" because as Benedict Anderson asserts, "nations are imagined as coherent communities by clearly establishing who cannot claim membership to them. In the nineteenth century United States of America, this imagining depended on a highly racialized discourse, one that assigned a savage otherness

¹⁹ Josiah Gregg, *The Commerce of the Prairies*. Edited by Milo Milton Quaife. (Nebraska: Bison Books, 1967), 160.

to the nation's nonmembers"²⁰ As nonmembers in the EuroAmerican nation, Spanish-Mexicans were easily depicted as primitive, stereotypical others. Thus, these written accounts usually note the *frequency* of the fandango, implying, that like sideshows, fandangos were available for "viewing" most any time.

In truth, the *bailes* served a larger social purpose. It was more than the superficial appearance of a sideshow as reported by Euroamericans. Bailes were inclusive community affairs; everyone was invited and welcome. In many communities, bailes were celebrated to signal the culmination of the harvest season. As the production of crops was a community affair, so too was the community celebration once the crops were harvested. The following quote describes this community/village cooperation during the growing season:

It was a fine sight to see Don José set out with all his family, with the exception of the women who must stay home and cook the meal. By amicable agreement all work in the fields was

²⁰ Frost, *Never One Nation*, x.

done cooperatively. The motto of the family could well have been 'one for all and all for one.' The women in the group carried earthen ollas full of cooked food for the noonday meal; these ollas were nicely balanced on their heads. The men carried the necessary tools. Arriving at the fields to be worked that day, Don José would marshal his forces and assign to each one his or her particular task; so many rows to be sowed or so many to be weeded.²¹

With the crops in for the winter then, many New Mexicans were free to take time for religious celebrations and festivals. Spanish-Mexicans extended invitations to many newly arrived EuroAmericans as a gesture of hospitality and goodwill.²² Because all levels of society

²¹ Loren W. Brown with Charles L. Briggs and Marta Weigle, *Hispano Folklife of New Mexico: The Loren W. Brown Federal Writers' Project Manuscripts* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1978), quoted in Larry Frank and Skip Keith Miller, *A Land So Remote: Vol. 3 Wooden Artifacts of Frontier New Mexico 1700s-1900s* (Santa Fe: Red Crane Books, 2001), 26. See also, Rosaura Sánchez, *Telling Identities: The Californio testimonios* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

were represented at the bailes, it served to reinforce community order and the social roles of Mexican society at large. Given the number of narratives about fandagos, EuroAmericans eagerly accepted these invitations and subsequently ridiculed and reported them inaccurately in their travel narratives.

Along with many other things, even the famous Spanish-Mexican hospitality was misunderstood and mischaracterized. The invitation to the dance was an attempt to incorporate and welcome EuroAmericans into Spanish Mexican society, but this attempt failed because EuroAmericans consistently refused to see themselves as part of the community they were invading. We witness this failure in the following passage from James Josiah Webb's, *Adventures on the Santa Fe Trail, 1844-1847*:

I have witnessed some most ludicrous scenes at these fandagos. It was not anything uncommon or surprising to see the most elaborately dressed and aristocratic woman at the ball dancing with a peon dressed only in

²² Cleofas Jaramillo, *Romance of a Little Village Girl: A Memoir*. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1983, 26.

his shirt and trousers open from the hip down, with very wide and full drawers underneath, and frequently barefoot, but usually with moccasins. And such disparity of ages! On one occasion I saw at a ball . . . an old man of eighty or over dancing with a child not over eight or ten.²³ (96)

Webb viewed the community etiquette at the baile as outside of the natural order of things. Mexicans embraced it. Class mixing in such a public setting allowed EuroAmericans to reject the behavior, distance themselves from Spanish Mexicans, and recreate the story of the dance as a weakness of the culture and the people. Charles Montgomery writes that "traits, such as the Hispano's renowned hospitality, might soften disparaging [EuroAmerican] glances, the general perception of the hispano character, condensed into the sign of the 'Mexican,' nicely buttressed

²³ Webb, *Adventures*, 96.

the Anglo's confidence in his or her moral and intellectual virtues."²⁴

Mexican hospitality was clearly misunderstood. Consider the following provocative quote from M.M. Marmaduke a trader who traveled through Santa Fe in the 1820s and 1830s:

Thieving, lieing [*sic*], whoring—gambling &c. in a word every vice reigns among this people to the greatest extent that this poor miserable situation will possibly permit—In justice however I cannot forbear to remark that there does exist among them one solitary virtue—and that is hospitality to Strangers—for when I consider the very unequalled scarcity that does exist at all times in their Country of human diet, I am compelled to declare that I do not believe there are any people who would more willing divide their morsel with the stranger, than these people would do—and that too,

²⁴ Charles Montgomery, *The Spanish Redemption: Heritage, Power, and Loss on New Mexico's Upper Rio Grande* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 61.

without any demand or expectation of
Compensation for it, but if you offer to return
them the value or ten times as much it will at
all times and by nearly or quite all persons be
received.²⁵

To say the least Marmaduke's assessment of Spanish mestizos is a contradiction. It begs the question, how can such "thieving and lying" people be so generous with their last, or close to last morsel of food? Like the fandangos many narratives devoted some attention to Spanish mestizo hospitality—this most admired trait—but ultimately present it as a sign of weakness. Although, Marmaduke qualifies his negative opener by writing "in fairness," he nevertheless infantilizes his generous hosts, and also qualifies his compliment by reporting that they will take any compensation if offered.

Like those of Marmaduke, Webb and Gregg, dozens of other descriptions of Spanish-Mexicans and fandangos

²⁵M. M. Marmaduke "Meredith Miles Marmaduke's Journal of a Tour to New Mexico, 1824–1825." Ed by Harry C. Myers. *Wagon Tracks* 12 (November 1997): 8–16. quoted in Hyslop, *Bound for Santa Fe*, 240.

infantilized participants. The notion of "Americanness," Frost reports, "depends on a cultural motif of human coloration that projects an image of a blackened other that is either evil or infantile and forever in the shadow, or at the throat of the white civilizer."²⁶ Because of their racialized blindness travel writers failed to see the social value of the dances in bonding together community members and in reproducing the social order of the time.

If we look closely we can disrupt Webb's narrative of the Spanish Mexicans at a fandango. First of all, Webb seems overly concerned with the way people dress for these dances. To him there is no rhyme or reason for the way Spanish-Mexicans dress and conduct themselves: He tells us that, "the most elaborately dressed and aristocratic woman at the ball 'dances' with a peon dressed only in his shirt and trousers open from the hip down." For Spanish mestizos, such conduct and the mingling of people from different socio-economic classes was completely normal given the context of the fandango as a community/village special occasion. The "peon dressed only in his shirt" and open trousers has probably labored all summer and fall for the

²⁶ Frost, *Never One Nation*, x.

"aristocratic" family of the landowner. As a participant and privileged insider, Cleofas Jaramillo describes a scene from a dance:

Early in the evening the hall was packed. Gray-haired *abuelitas* cuddling the *nietos* lined the back row around the hall. The young women who took part in the dances sat in front. All classes mingled in these public dances, from the silk-gowned *patrona* to the Calico-dressed Indian maid. The elite left the dance early, before the men became too gay with drink.²⁷

These dances, whether Feast Day celebrations or in-town affairs, were similar in appearance. Instead of looking like a sideshow, harvest dances were orderly and inclusive. For their part, despite the foreign gaze of disapproval, Spanish mestizos enjoyed their *Baile* celebrations, which included all extended family members, workers, and community members regardless of age or social

²⁷ Cleofas M. Jaramillo, *Shadows of the Past (Sombras del Pasado)* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1972), 87. In this chapter Jaramillo is discussing saints and holy day celebrations.

status. Whether from Spanish mestizo texts or from reading EuroAmerican texts against the grain, an organic sense of community is visible in the descriptions of these dances. Community hierarchy, cooperation, order, and hospitality these are the descriptors missing from the literature, but clearly present in the picture Gregg, Webb, and Jaramillo herself present. By this historical moment, at two hundred years old, Santa Fe and her Spanish mestizo and Native American inhabitants, because of their long history of conflict and accommodation, had evolved into a community of people who shared, regardless of class status, a space for celebration.

We have seen previously how race is used to define "civilization" according to color. Consider Omi and Winant's notion of racial dictatorship. "Racial dictatorship," they explain, "organized the 'color line' rendering it the fundamental division in U.S. society."²⁸ For example, in the nineteenth century U.S. citizens witnessed slavery and saw the relocation of Native Americans to reservations. When a group is segregated away

²⁸ Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 66.

from white society, the group's difference becomes more pronounced and internalized. We witness this above in Webb's description of the Spanish-Mexican fandango. Differences are exaggerated, held up for scrutiny and placed outside EuroAmerican's model of acceptable social behavior.

One of the more telling examples of EuroAmerican's need to show themselves superior to their Spanish mestizo hosts at the baile/fandango is found in an account by Matt Field. In it he retells his experience at a fandango he was invited to attend. "The dances, as well as all the manners and customs in Santa Fé," reports Field, "are of a demi barbarian character."²⁹ In the narrative that precedes this pronouncement, we witness Field and his friends having a laugh at the expense of their hosts, Governor Armijo and his wife, whom Field describes here:

"The governor's lady would have weighed less than three hundred pounds, and her delicate and sylph-like figure would find a fit simile in a tobacco hogshead. She sailed through the waltz like an

²⁹ Field, *Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail*, 238.

elephant dancing 'Nancy Dawson'³⁰ in the ring of a menagerie, while her American partner (who could speak what he liked in English with perfect freedom, as the natives of the place scarcely ever acquire a word of our language) amused himself and his friends with ludicrous compliments to his fair assistant in the dance.³¹

We must examine the power and the buffoonery of white supremacy writ large in this scene from a fandango. To begin with, Field's narrative tone deliberately suggests that he and his friend's behavior was just an innocent prank. In addition, his tone suggests that the Spanish mestizos at the dance were incapable of understanding the "prank." In his arrogance, he believes that he and his friends are the only witnesses to it, especially since he assumes the governor's wife, or any other Spanish mestizo

³⁰ According to Sunder's footnote "'Nancy Dawson' was an eighteenth-century English melody inspired by a delightful dancer who appeared at both Sadler's Wells and Convent Garden in the time of George II (1727-60). The tune is familiar to us as "Here we go round the mulberry bush."

³¹ Field, *Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail*, 238.

in the room, is unable to speak or understand English. Field and his friends' show a complete lack of respect for the Governor, his wife, and all the people at the dance. Field's hubris allows him to believe that everyone in the room is oblivious to the hilarity he is enjoying with his friends. Although Field fails to mention how many people were in attendance, we can assume from previous fandango descriptions that the room was crowded.

We know from the details of other fandango narratives that the dance spaces were small and usually crowded. Given this information, it seems clear that Field's friend's dance with the Governor's wife would not only have been noticed, it would have been deliberately watched. In addition, if what Field assumes is true that his friend could "speak what he liked in English" because "the natives of the place scarcely ever acquire a word of our language," then the opposite would also be true. How much Spanish did Field and his friends understand? What was being said about them by the Spanish messtizos who were probably watching in horror at a laughing, gesturing, white man dancing with the Governor's wife. Field's narrative describes the Governor's wife sailing "through the waltz like an elephant dancing 'Nancy Dawson,'" and certainly for nineteenth century

readers this description would have produced laughter and would remind them of their place in "civilized society." Yet, this reference to an elephant dancing once again suggests a scene from a circus. In addition to dancing elephants, circuses usually have a few clowns. In this scene, at least for the Spanish mestizos the clowns are the clearly delineated Field and his friends.

Looking at the scene from our interstitial space in the twenty-first century, we can imagine how Field and his Friend's behavior was received. They present themselves as ignorant, arrogant, and without manners. Worse, as invited guests, they may have been specially treated, which would only amplify their misconduct. The Spanish mestizos and perhaps some of the EuroAmericans clearly saw what Field and his friends were doing and probably were ashamed for them. In their blind white supremacist arrogance, they became the sideshow.

Their behavior served to reinforce the negative opinion most Spanish-Mexicans had of EuroAmericans. Historian Charles Montgomery writes that Hispanos referred to "Anglo newcomers as *los diablos americanos* and *cara de pan crudo*, and *bolillos*." Spanish-Mexicans described EuroAmericans as "impatient, stubborn, and avaricious. Many

natives undoubtedly felt that their own culture, centered on family and church, was far superior to the apparent cupidity and atomization of Anglo society."³² Field's own ignorance of the Governor and his wife allows him to recreate them as cartoon characters. At the same time, his self-important arrogance reveals more about his own character than it does about the Governor or his wife.

While Spanish Mexicans wanted EuroAmericans to feel welcome, the invitation to the dance, the attempt to include and incorporate the EuroAmericans, can also be seen as resistance to the white supremacist gaze. In *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*, Reginald Horsemann reports that

The American dismissal of the Mexicans as an inferior, largely Indian race did not pass unnoticed in Mexico. Mexican ministers in the United States warned their government that the Americans considered the Mexicans an inferior people. The Mexicans realized both that their neighbors to the north were likely to invade

³² Montgomery, *The Spanish Redemption*, 61.

their northern provinces, and that they would claim that this was justified because they could make better use of the lands. Mexicans who served as diplomatic representatives in the United States were shocked at the rabid anti-Mexican attitude and at the manner in which Mexicans were lumped together with Indians and blacks as an inferior race.³³

For their part, Mexican diplomats were well aware and worried about the powerful white supremacist / westward expansion agenda at work in the United States. Just prior to the failed Santa Fe expedition in 1841³⁴, the Mexico City newspaper *El Mosquito* wrote, that "Its leaders would protest their 'noble intentions' just as the Americans always did when setting out to rob their neighbors. The adventurous thieves had already produced their 'noble effects' in Texas and now they were expanding into neighboring provinces. Mexico had made a dreadful mistake

³³ Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*, (Boston: Harvard, 1981), 213.

³⁴ The Texas Santa Fe Expedition was a failed attempt by Texans to lay claim to part of New Mexico's northern provinces. The expedition ended when the Texans were captured a short distance from Santa Fe by Mexican soldiers.

in permitting the ungrateful Anglo-Saxons, 'who devoured Mexico's entrails like parasites,' to colonize within her borders."³⁵

The Mexican government clearly understood the alibi that was being created by the United States in order to justify their expansion. As we have witnessed, by attacking various aspects of their culture, travel literature succeeded in depicting Spanish mestizos as uncivilized. As decolonized observers, we can call out the travel writer and expose the alibi for what it is. Hardly uncivilized, Spanish mestizos, had worked hard for their place in a remote part of Mexico. Considering the history prior to EuroAmerican invasion, Spanish mestizos had succeeded. Unfortunately, the presence of land grabbing EuroAmericans would set Spanish mestizos and Native Americans back, economically, socially, and through land loss.

³⁵ Gene M. Brack, *Mexico Views Manifest Destiny, 1821-1846: An Essay on the Origins of the Mexican War*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 104

CHAPTER FOUR

Civilization Lost:

Competing Narratives of Conquest

Almost continuous thefts [are] carried out by the heathen Indians and Christian thieves. These incidents, together with the laziness of the citizenry are a consequence of the great scarcity and poverty in which they live.

—Fray José Mariano Rosete
Minister and Parish Priest,
Santa Cruz de la Cañada¹

The inhabitants appear to be friendly—and some of them are very wealthy, whilst by far the greater part of them are the most wretched, poor miserable Creatures that I have ever seen—Yet they appear to me to be quite happy & contented in their miserable Priest-ridden situation.

—Meredith Miles Marmaduke

"Journal of a Tour to New Mexico, 1824–1825."²

¹Rick Hendricks, *New Mexico in 1801: The Priests Report*, (Albuquerque: Rio Grande Books, 2008), 79.

Parishioners from the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi will set out after noon today in procession around the Plaza, with statues of St. Francis and La Conquistadora, Our Lady of Peace, held aloft.

Inez Russell
The Santa Fe New Mexican
October 3, 2009

As we have seen in previous chapters, community life and responsibility were integral to the survival of Spanish-Mexicans in remote Santa Fe. We have also seen how EuroAmerican colonizers created alibis to legitimize the violence used by imperial powers to invade and take possession of foreign lands. The need to "civilize" has been the alibi most widely used to sanction the invasion of other nations.³

² "Meredith Miles Marmaduke's Journal of a Tour to New Mexico, 1824-1825," ed. Harry C. Myers. *Wagon Tracks* 12 (November 1997), 238-40, quoted in Hyslop, *Bound for Santa Fe*, 238.

³Eduardo Galleano, "El Descubrimiento Que Todavía No Fue: España y América," in *El Descubrimiento De América Que Todavía No Fue y nuevos ensayos* (Venezuela: Alfadil Ediciones, 1991), 206; Galleano, *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent* trans. Cedric Belfrage (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1973).

Colonizers often pointed to the religion of the Native group as another reason to conquer and "civilize" them. Bringing the Indigenous to Christianity helped make them acceptable to the greater—so called—"civilized world." Civilizing agents generally set up the differences between the two groups—colonizer and colonized. The colonized are defined by what they are not. In addition to religion, for example, differences in language, dress, social mores, and community hierarchy are a few cultural markers that set the colonized apart from their colonizers. The more unlike or "different" the native group was to the colonizer, the more uncivilized that group became. Albert Memmi specifies the "often-cited trait of laziness," as one such cultural marker. "The mythical portrait of the colonized therefore includes an unbelievable laziness," Memmi writes, "and that of the colonizer, a virtuous taste for action."⁴ The image of these colonizer/colonized myths conjures a very potent difference between the two.

⁴ Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965), 79.

Colonizers can employ many types of civilizing alibis to further the agenda of conquest. In fact, history has proven that "usurpers in any region are compelled to create new traditions to justify their position and that of their descendents."⁵ For example, when in the eighteenth century Spanish Franciscans began their spiritual conquest of New Mexico, they expected and demanded that all Native peoples denounce their tribal religious customs. This expectation was a way to "civilize the heathen Indian." In this way Catholicism became the "new tradition" for some Native Americans.

In the case of the EuroAmerican invasion in the nineteenth century, the population was not required or expected to lose their religion. Instead, it was more advantageous, for the invading Protestants, to mock and disparage the Catholics of New Mexico. Through two very different strategies both the Spanish-mestizos and the EuroAmericans used religion to justify their position as colonizers.

⁵Linda Heidenreich, *This Land Was Mexican Once: Histories of Resistance from Northern California*. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), 126.

The history of invasion and conquest in New Mexico follows the pattern of alibi, violence, and conquest. The first wave brought the Spaniards, although the 1680 Pueblo Revolt freed the Indigenous in New Mexico of Spanish colonizers for thirteen years, and the second wave—two hundred years later—brought the EuroAmericans.⁶ In these instances an abundance of travel literature—journals, reports, diaries—were a critical part of the process. These narratives promoted and promote the agenda of the colonizer, and cement in the minds of their distant countrymen the dichotomy of good prevailing over evil, the civilized over the uncivilized. In seventeenth and eighteenth century reports to the Viceroy,

⁶ Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *Roots of Resistance: A History of Land Tenure in New Mexico*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2007), 12, 44. Dunbar reports that it took at least twenty years of organization to produce a “unified offensive on the part of all but a few southern pueblos and included the Hopis and Zunis to the west as well as Apache, Navajo, and Ute allies.” She adds that, “many low-caste people—mulattos, mestizos, and Indian servants—joined the revolt.” The Spanish mestizos returned in 1693 with a so-called bloodless re-conquest. Resistance continued through 1696.

descriptions of Native Americans echo nineteenth century invectives about Spanish-Mexicans.

This chapter, through a decolonial gaze, will compare and contrast the travel narratives of the Spaniards and the EuroAmericans especially their discussion of religion to provide a counter-narrative that allows for a broader examination of the historical record. By disrupting the linear history we create a decolonial space from which we can contribute things “unseen and unheard.”⁷ By focusing on religion, we will witness how the alibi of civilization legitimized both the conquest of Native Americans by the Spanish and two hundred years later in 1846, the invasion of New Mexico by the EuroAmericans. It is important to note that religion is one of many, and not the only cultural identifier used to define and erase a group’s identity.

By the nineteenth century, religion for Spanish mestizos New Mexico held the community together and served a common good. It was integral to every day life in New Mexico. Yet the hybrid Catholicism of the nineteenth

⁷ Perez, *The Decolonial Imaginary*, xx

century comprised of indigenous and Spanish beliefs had its roots in colonial violence. This is confirmed in the Spanish and EuroAmerican travel literature where we read from the Spaniards that it was necessary to bring all Natives to Christianity. In 1595, King Philip II issued a license to Juan de Oñate for "the conquest and colonization of the Kingdom of New Mexico," In it he wrote, "'Your main purpose shall be the service of God Our Lord, the spreading of His holy Catholic faith, and the reduction and pacification of the natives of the said provinces.'"⁸ And two hundred years later, from the EuroAmericans we read that New Mexico Catholics were extremely superstitious. In his work, *El Gringo*, W.W.H. Davis writes that "they have an abiding faith in saints and images" and because of the number of saints and images, Davis continues, "their worship appears no more than a blind adoration of these insensible objects."⁹ For the Spaniards Catholicism was a

⁸ Ramon Gutiérrez, "The Franciscan Century, 1581–1680" in *Spanish Borderlands Sourcebooks: The Spanish Missions of New Mexico II, After 1680*. Eds John L. Kessell and Rick Hendricks (New York: Garland Publishing, 1991), 437.

⁹ W.W.H. Davis, *El Gringo: New Mexico and Her People*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 225.

critical tool in the colonizing agenda, and for the EuroAmericans, writing of the "insensible" adoration of saints reminded the Protestant reader of their differences. Yet, although Catholicism came to New Mexico with Oñate, it had been in the "New World" longer than that.

In order to understand the importance of religion among Spanish-Mexicans in New Mexico we must briefly revisit Spain and the conquest of Mexico. In 1519, Charles I of Spain had ascended to the position of Holy Roman Emperor as Charles V, and Spain's *leyenda negra* was, in part, a result of Charles' religious zeal.¹⁰ According to Carlos Fuentes in *The Buried Mirror*, "throughout his career [Charles] was determined to join his earthly power to the spiritual power of Christendom. He wanted to be the political head of Christianity, in the same way that the pope was its religious head."¹¹ Charles's goal is important here because whether or not they were conscious of it the conquistadors were heavily influenced by their own

¹⁰ It is important to note here, that other European countries like England and France used the "Black Legend" as fodder to justify and deflect their own violent colonial process.

¹¹ Carlos Fuentes, *The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992), 153.

Christian and imperialist doctrines. The conquistadors believed that whatever they did to the Indigenous peoples of the New World was right and just so long as they acted in the name of God and King. They were keenly aware of the *Requerimiento*, "which promises peace in cases where the Indians agree to submit, and war if they refuse."¹² Meanwhile their church simultaneously persecuted Jews, Moors, and heretics, all in the name of Christianity. In fact New Mexico would not escape the Inquisition. In 1622, Friar Alonso de Benavides was "appointed local commissary or agent of the Inquisition in New Mexico."¹³

As Stephen Greenblatt argues in *Marvelous Possessions*, the sources of the European "sense of superiority are sometimes difficult to specify, though the Christians' conviction that they possessed an absolute and exclusive religious truth must have played a major part in virtually all of their cultural encounters."¹⁴ In addition to

¹² Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America*. Trans. Richard Howard. (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 197.

¹³ Frances V. Scholes, *The First Decade of the Inquisition in New Mexico*. rpt (New Mexico: The New Mexico Historical Review, 1935), 198.

recovering riches, converting souls to Christianity was a major imperative for the conquistadors. As we have seen, this "conviction" was carried to New Mexico with Oñate beginning in sixteenth-century.

In the battle for Mexico, Cortes and his army destroyed what they had admired—the city of Tenochtitlán.¹⁵ Prior to that battle, on his way to Tenochtitlán from Vera Cruz, Cortes also destroyed most of the Aztec temples he encountered. In one such encounter, Bernal Díaz reports that, when asked by the Caciques at Cigapacinga and Cempoala why Cortes wanted to destroy their Gods, Cortes replied that he "had already told them "to stop their sacrifices to these evil images and that we were going to get rid of them in order to save" the people "from their false beliefs."¹⁶ Although the Spaniards destroyed Mexico

¹⁴ Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 9.

¹⁵ Bernal Díaz, *The Conquest of New Spain*, trans. J. M. Cohen (New York: Penguin Books, 1963), 216. In his description on their entrance to the "city of Mexico," Bernal Díaz writes:

With such wonderful sights to gaze on we did not know what to say, or if this was real that we saw before our eyes. On the land side there were great cities, and on the lake many more.

for Spain, gold, and Christianity, the Mexica never entirely gave up their religion. While through colonial violence, the races mixed, so did colonial and indigenous religions.

This violent collision of cultures infused the new mestizo race with a passion for their religion—a new and hybrid religion in their unremitting struggle for survival. Because of “the harsh realities of colonialism: plunder, enslavement, genocide” European hope for a “Christian Utopia in the New World” failed.¹⁷ In its place along with the mestizo “the baroque of the New World” was created, Carlos Fuentes writes:

In America, the baroque also gave the conquered people a place, a place that not even Columbus or Copernicus could truly grant them, a place where they could mask and protect their faith.¹⁸

As a colonized people, Baroque style gave mestizos the

¹⁶ Díaz, *The Conquest of New Spain*, 122.

¹⁷ Carlos Fuentes, *The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992), 195.

¹⁸ Fuentes, *The Broken Mirror*, 196–97.

freedom to celebrate, syncretistically, their Indigenous and European selves in art and religion. Fuentes cites an example of such mixing in the following story of the self-taught Indigenous architect, José Kondori:

By 1728, this self-taught Indian architect was constructing the magnificent churches of Potosí, surely the greatest illustrations of the meaning of the baroque in Latin America. Among the angels and the vines of the facade of San Lorenzo, an Indian princess appears, and the symbols of the defeated Incan culture are given a new lease on life. The Indian half-moon disturbs the traditional serenity of the Corinthian vine. American jungle leaves and Mediterranean clover intertwine. The sirens of Ulysses play the Peruvian guitar. And the flora, the fauna, the music and even the sun of the ancient Indian world are forcefully asserted. There shall be no European culture in the new World unless all of these, our native symbols, are admitted on an equal footing.¹⁹

In 1731, around the same time as Kondori, we see the first example of baroque estípite style introduced in Mexico City with Jerónimo de Balba's "Altar of the Kings."²⁰ Later in the eighteenth century, arriving in Santa Fe, this baroque style appears on the stone alter screen in La Castranse, the military chapel in Santa Fe. According to *Traditional arts of Spanish New Mexico*, the "altar screen was probably carved by Capt. Bernardo Miera y Pacheco" and was most likely "the first dated work by a santero living in New Mexico It is the earliest known example of the baroque estípite in New Mexico."²¹

¹⁹ Fuentes, *The Buried Mirror*, 196.

²⁰ Robin Farwell Gavin, *Traditional Arts of Spanish New Mexico: the Hispanic Heritage Wing at the Museum of International Folk Art*, (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1994), 6. The estipite is a "kind of column . . . typical of the churrigueresque baroque style of Spain and Spanish America used in the 18th century." wikipedia
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Estipite>.

²¹ Gavin, *Tradition Arts*, 6.



Fig. 10. Closeup of Reredo commissioned in 1760 by Governor Francisco Antonio Marin del Valle from the military chapel known as La Castrense. Photograph by Karmela Gonzales. Courtesy of the photographer, 2009.



Fig. 11. Cristo Rey Catholic Church Altar showing stone reredo originally placed in la Casstranse military chapel in the 18th century. Photograph by Karmela Gonzales. Courtesy of the photographer, 2009.

"Above all," Fuentes writes, the baroque "gave us, the new population of the Americas, the mestizos, a manner in which to express our self-doubt, our ambiguity."²² This self-doubt and ambiguity like our mixed race heritage manifested itself in a duality of behavior according to circumstance. On the one hand, the baroque style engendered an assertive celebration of mestizaje, especially in religious art and architecture. It was mestizaje that gave the Mexicanos the toughness and resilience to survive in that always neglected outpost of northern Mexico. In the face of deprivation and misfortune, and in the face of corruption by Church and State officials they were able to build a life. For example, the formation of the Penitente Brotherhood was another celebration of mestizaje. While "mutual aid and religious service were central to their organization and to the communities they served," their dramatized Passion plays and other performed rituals "would bring them notoriety and, eventually condemnation from the bishop."²³ Even after Spain "banned flagellation and public penitential processions in 1777," such observances garnered

²² Fuentes, *The Buried Mirror*,

²³ Will de Chaparro, *Death and Dying*, 7.

"new life in northern New Mexico through the Penitentes. . . . In short," Will De Chaparro reports, "elements of the baroque Spanish religiosity that had arrived with the earliest Spanish settlers endured in New Mexico."²⁴ The celebration of mestizaje manifested itself in art and religion in New Mexico.

On the other hand, we witness the Spanish invasion and its concomitant violence, cultural destruction, and sexual violence against women repeated in New Mexico. Spanish-Mexicans held fast to their religious beliefs, and like their Spanish counter-parts, as colonizers Spanish-mestizos used their religion to justify the devastation they brought to the native groups of New Mexico. Aimé Césaire reminds us that, "in general the old tyrants get on very well with the new ones, and that there has been established between them to the detriment of the people a circuit of mutual service and complicity."²⁵ In New Mexico the tyrants included the Franciscans, the settler-colonizers, and the provincial government administration.

²⁴ Will De Chaparro, *Death and Dying*, 7–8.

²⁵ Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 22.

While it is true that Spanish mestizos became colonizers, some important distinctions are necessary. Despite certain incentives from the Crown, many Spanish mestizos remained poor with limited power. In 1692 while Devargas worked to gather the necessary soldiers, colonists, and provisions to make the journey to re-conquer Santa Fe, in a letter to the Viceroy he asked for

an additional fifty presidial soldiers to reinforce his meager garrison on the reconnaissance as far as Santa Fe. He urged that former New Mexico colonists now relocated in New Biscay be forced, or given incentives, to join him in recolonizing their former homeland.²⁶

Devargas also made it known that incentives to "mounted citizens who accompanied him on the reentry," would include "arms, munitions, food (including chocolate), light duty, and a share in any distribution of captives."²⁷ What is important in these appeals and promises is that first, some

²⁶ Kessell, *Remote Beyond Compare*, 55.

²⁷ Kessell, *Remote Beyond Compare*, 55.

colonists were probably "forced" to return to New Mexico, and second, "mounted citizens" would be eligible to share in the spoils of war, especially the prize of captives. Whether Spanish or Spanish mestizo, a hierarchy had been clearly established between "mounted citizens" and those who would return by force.

Another provision offered by the crown to colonists of non-aristocratic lineage was the opportunity to elevate one's status in society. In his *Exposition*, Pedro Baptista Pino reiterates the terms provided colonists beginning with Oñate's colonizing expedition to New Mexico in 1598. He writes,

To all persons who undertake the aforementioned settlement, once they have settled the land and met their contractual obligations, in honor of their persons and their descendants, and from them, as the first settlers that they be a praiseworthy memory, we confer upon them nobility of *solar conocidos* [known estates] for themselves and their legitimate heirs. So that in any town that they settle in all other parts of the Indies they are recognized as nobility

and persons of noble lineage and [members] of the landed gentry. That they be recognized, honored and esteemed, and that they enjoy all honors and distinctions. That they may do all things that all noble men and knights of the kingdoms of Castile, according to the privileges, laws and customs of Spain that they are allowed to do and should do, etc, etc.²⁸

Because of these policies, provisions, and promises, in order to elevate their social and economic status Spanish mestizos were encouraged, as the landed gentry, to join the wealthier Spaniards in colonizing New Mexico.

Despite these incentives, many of these settler colonizers remained impoverished with little elevation in economic status. Although *vecinos* as *encomenderos* "had rights to Indian tribute, another group known as *moradores* "did not enjoy such rights." *Moradores*, Gutierrez reports,

²⁸ Pedro Baptista Pino, *The Exposition On the Province of New Mexico, 1812*. (Santa Fe: El Rancho de las Golondrinas; Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 42.

probably lived a hand-to-mouth existence.²⁹ "From the point of view of the established colonial elite, which no outsider could enter" writes Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, "it seems that lower caste status remained a stigma to the nouveau riche and that racism prevailed in the colony."³⁰ Clearly then, regardless of their status as "Spaniards," many of them continued to experience life as impoverished mestizos.

In the eighteenth century, the people of New Mexico as described by Fray José de Vera comprised "three classes of people . . . superior, middle, and infamous."³¹ The "superior" group were the vecinos, "who were legally Spanish (españoles)—that is, settlers identified as pure Spanish, although in most cases they were not."³² The

²⁹ Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came*, 102.

³⁰ Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance: A History of Land Tenure in New Mexico*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 57.

³¹ Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe (Microfilm edition of 81 reels) Loose Documents 1813, 53:789, quoted in Ramón Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500–1846*. (California: Stanford University Press, 1991), 148.

"middle group" included all the "castas, who were people of mixed ancestry but whose identity and legal status nearly equaled those of the vecinos."³³ In 18th century New Mexico casta designations included a number of mixed-race combinations. For example, the castas groups included mestizos, coyotes, mulattos, and zambos. The so-called "infamous" group included the indigenous genizaros and Pueblos. "Genizaros, regardless of tribal ancestry, were equated with the Pueblos," and "the nomadic Indians were identified as Gentiles."³⁴

Despite a seeming chokehold on the religious actions of the lower, casta population, this group nevertheless continued to resist their colonizers. For example, in the eighteenth century, according to Dunbar-Ortiz, "Pueblos developed a dualistic structure of Spanish institutional forms and continued to practice their own ceremonies secretly."³⁵ In addition to the Penitentes, there were other

³² Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance*, 56.

³³ Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance*, 56.

³⁴ Frances Swadish, *Los Primeros Pobladores: Hispanic Americans of the Ute Frontier* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1974), 46.

brotherhoods, which practiced a hybrid religion and often exercised a strong influence in local communities. One of the earliest established confraternities, Marta Wiegler reports was the Confraternity of Carmel; it was licensed in 1710. Six such confraternities were reported in existence in a 1776 ecclesiastical report.³⁶ "Assuming community and spiritual leadership roles in many rural areas of northern New Mexico," writes Martina Will de Chaparro, "the Penitentes offered an avenue for pious expression at the very historical moment when formal leadership waned."³⁷

This waning of leadership involved the constant squabbling between the provincial and ecclesiastical governments. According to Dunbar-Ortiz, "a power play, competition over Pueblo labor and time, developed." Thus, "splitting, the colonists into antagonistic factions."³⁸ Within New Spain, this interminable fighting was

³⁵ Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance*, 14.

³⁶ Marta Weigler, *Brothers of Light Brothers of Blood: The Penitentes of the Southwest* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1976), 35.

³⁷ Martina Will De Chaparro, *Death and Dying in New Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 7.

³⁸ Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance*, 11.

“unprecedented for its intensity and its persistency.”³⁹ The numerous issues in debate included, ecclesiastical privilege, immunity, and jurisdictions.

In addition, arguments continued over the legitimacy of ecclesiastical censures; there were disputes concerning orthodoxy; and there were issues concerning the control over and exploitation of Indigenous labor. Other issues concerning Native peoples included the sovereignty of the missions and the control of the religious and social lives of the natives; and lastly the enslavement of unconverted tribes’”⁴⁰ Neither side was willing to concede any power; each personally offended by the other. The clergy withheld church sacraments, reconciliation, baptism, marriage, and the provincial government withheld military support and incited Native groups to rebel against the clergy.

One such example involves Don Bernardo López de Mendizábal, governor of the Province of New Mexico in 1660. Mendizábal was accused by Fray Nicolás de Chávez of

³⁹ Charles Wilson Hackett, ed. *Historical Documents relating to New Mexico, Nueva Vizcaya and approaches thereto, to 1773*, collected by Adolph F.A. Bandelier and Fanny R. Bandelier. (Washington D.C: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1923–1937), 4.

⁴⁰ Hackett, *Historical Documents*, 4.

allowing the "Christian Indians to perform their ancient and modern dances" including the dance of the "catzinas." This dance, especially, angered and provoked the Friars. They had forbidden the dance in part because of its sexual component; to them it was the dance of the devil.⁴¹

Mendizábal not only gave permission to dance, he had "commanded that all the pueblos should come to perform this dance in the villa by his order."⁴² This kind of blatant insult to the Friars' authority was routine, with the Friar's retaliating in their own way.

The Friars and the provincial government succeeded in creating an atmosphere of disorder and mayhem. For Spanish Mexicans and Native Americans on the ground these events meant a near constant disruption of their lives. Instead of

⁴¹ Hackett, *Historical Documents*, 152–53. The misreading of the Kachina dance by the Friars translated into a description by Fray Nicolas de Chávez as "when the Pueblos staged the katsina dances they frolicked in sexual intercourse—'fathers with daughters, brothers with sisters, and mothers with sons.'" (Gutierrez, *When Jesus Came*, 73.) Perhaps this is what the Friar thought he saw, but what was taking place in front of him was much more complicated than sexual lust.

⁴² Hackett, *Historical Documents*, 159.

being a unifying force, religion divided communities and as we have witnessed, religion became an important tool for keeping the population under control.

Religion complicated the lives of the Native Americans and Spanish mestizo settler colonizers. Native groups were forced to take their religion underground to their kivas. Spanish mestizos were often held in contempt by the Frairs whose visits to hear confessions and celebrate Mass were infrequent because of the few priests and the distances between communities. "As late as 1850" according to Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, "there were only ten priest administering the vast territory."⁴³ Many communities relied on the Penitente Brotherhood to provide religious guidance.

Section Break

These historical realities collided in every way with EuroAmerican presence in the region, especially after Mexican independence from Spain in 1821. As we

⁴³ Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, *We Fed Them Cactus* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1954), 55.

have seen the Spaniards were especially repulsed by many of the customs and life ways of the Native groups they encountered. The pueblo ritual of the Kachina dance especially unsettled them. In the priests' reports concerning this ritual, the tone was disturbed and serious. There was no hint of sarcasm or mockery. The padres seemed genuinely frightened by what they saw. So, arrogantly they tried their best to ban it, but Native peoples never really stopped performing their dance.

Similarly, when EuroAmericans traveled to New Mexico, many of their narratives (like the Spaniards before them) reflect an ignorance of the culture they were visiting. Because of their cultural blindness, their narratives are filled with condescension and scorn. While there are many examples of this derision, one of the most telling ones takes place in San Miguel in 1841 and is written by George Wilkins Kendall. Prior to the U. S. invasion of Santa Fe in 1846, and shortly after Texas declared its independence from Mexico in 1836, another military campaign with a commercial component was undertaken in 1841. The

Texans had their eye on the trade of the Santa Fe Trail.

The Santa Fe Expedition was a campaign to invade New Mexico and claim it for Texas. Texans believed New Mexico, could be easily taken (like Texas had been), partly because of its isolated geographical location from Mexico City. Ultimately the Santa Fe Expedition failed because of EuroAmerican arrogance, which resulted in poor planning and the unexpected capture near Santa Fe of the Expedition soldiers. Kendall was not a Texan and not part of the military component of the expedition; He was accompanying the group as a writer/adventurer and was incarcerated along with the Texas soldiers.

While in jail Kendall witnesses a procession that took place on the village square. In his arrogance, Kendall believed the arrival of the Texans had precipitated the need for the procession. "The rumors rife among the people" writes Kendall, was that Texans "were advancing in countless numbers, threatening the country with fire, devastation and the sword."⁴⁴ For

this reason the patron saint of the town San Miguel "was dragged from his niche in the little church, mounted upon a large platform, and carried about in procession."⁴⁵ Kendall writes:

I will endeavour to give my readers a programme of this singular procession. First came an old, baldheaded priest, a coarse, dirty blanket tied about him with a piece of rope, an open prayer-book in his hand, a rude wooden cross hanging from his neck, and a pair of spectacles⁴⁶

Kendall opens his mockery of this sacred ritual by signaling his readers to be prepared for some "singular" amusement. To begin with, it is important to examine Kendall's arrogant notion that the presence of the Texans instigated the procession. We know from

⁴⁴ George Wilkins Kendall, *The Santa Fé Expedition* vol. III, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 337.

⁴⁵ Kendall, *The Santa Fé Expedition*, 337.

⁴⁶ Kendall, *The Santa Fé Expedition*, 337.

his journal that the Texans in his group, (others were captured and arrived later), had by the 9th of October been in San Miguel for ten days. That would have put them arriving in San Miguel on or around the 29th of September or the 1st of October. Writing from memory as Kendall was he could have easily been off by a few days. Since he fails to tell his readers' the exact date of the procession, it is very likely it took place on the 29th of September, especially since, for the Catholics in San Miguel, this was the Feast Day of St. Michael. Contrary to Kendall's inflated self-important notion that the Texans had the power to trigger such a solemn event, in reality his incarceration just happened to fall on or around the feast day of St. Michael. Feast day celebrations were an important part of life for Spanish mestizos in New Mexico. The procession was solemn and respectful. Later there would be a high mass followed by a dance. These sacred rituals provided a sense of community unity. Spanish mestizos welcomed outsider participation and expected them to show proper respect for the occasion.

Next, provides the requisite carnivalesque description of the participants. If we believe Kendall, the participants are disorganized and walking haphazardly toward some comical end. In the lead is the stereotypical bespectacled bald priest, followed by the unskilled musicians who then are flanked by "half a score of ragged, dirty-faced urchins."⁴⁷ Hardly subtle adjectives like "coarse," "crude," and "ragged," announce the dirtiness of Spanish-Mexican culture and religion. Here in this circus atmosphere, EuroAmerican readers are reminded of what they are not-Mexican and Catholic.

Kendall continues with a description of the St. Michael and Virgen statues as they are carried on a platform; of St. Michael he writes, "Nothing could be more grotesque and laughable than this head of St. Michael." And the Virgen, Kendall adds is "dressed in pink satin and spangles, as stiff and inanimate as wood and wax could make her."⁴⁸ His readers, at this point are reminded of the similarities between

⁴⁷ Kendall, *The Santa Fé Expedition*, 337.

⁴⁸ Kendall, *The Santa Fé Expedition*, 337.

grotesques and wax figures in New Mexico and those on display in P.T. Barnum's American Museum. "Freaks" served the purpose of reinforcing "racialist attitudes and ethnocentric distinctions upheld in the dominant culture."⁴⁹ The perceived incapacity of such individuals validated the expansionist motives of the day. The clear message that the "freakish" people of New Mexico were weak and in need of civilization was clear.

Near the end of Kendall's account of the procession, he writes about the blessing of the town square. In the culture and the religion, blessings are a serious component of the ceremony. In his blindness, Kendall prefers to ignore the sincere devotion of the participants. "At different points of the plaza," Kendall writes, "the procession would halt, the bearers of the car would set down their burden, and all would kneel and cross themselves while the old priest read a sentence from the open book before him."⁵⁰ We must

⁴⁹Linda Frost, *Never One Nation: Freaks, Savages, and Whiteness in U.S. Popular Culture 1850–1877* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 8.

remember here, from our decolonized position, that although Kendall seems to have the position of power through his words, he is in fact a prisoner of the Mexican government. The fact that he and the Texans were discovered by the Mexicans and incarcerated is an important point. Although many of the Texans from the Expedition including Kendall survived their incarceration, a few were executed. It would be difficult to believe that Kendall's attitude in that moment was sarcastic and demeaning to his jailers. It was many years after the fact that gave Kendall such courage.

At the conclusion of the blessings, Kendall gives us one more glimpse of his ignorance. He writes:

. . . whenever this counterfeit presentment of the saint was brought fairly in sight, we lost our gravity entirely, and were compelled to turn aside to conceal our laughter.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Kendall, *The Santa Fé Expedition*, 339.

⁵¹ Kendall, *The Santa Fé Expedition*, 339.

Despite claims to sensitivity and respect, Kendall's actions tell a different story.

In order to counter Kendall's limited view of New Mexican culture and religion, let us take a look from the Spanish mestizo point of view. Rafael Chacón describes community and church customs that mostly took place in the winter after the harvest. Chacón writes:

In each town they celebrated the fiesta of their patron saint. They named men as mayordomos and they collected money from the residents in order to pay for the Mass and the singers and to entertain the people. There always were from two to three hundred people at each function, and all were well served. At the fiesta's dance, they distributed a kind of baked *empanada* with pumpkin or melon inside the dough, very tasty, and it was a pleasure to see everyone enjoying that gift. During the entertainment, no one had quarrels or fights

all had respect for their betters and consideration for their equals.⁵²

Kendall presents a crowd of filthy, disorderly, child-like individuals carrying on a platform two wax dolls and following anxiously behind their priest. Chacón, on the other hand presents a completely different picture. According to Chacón these were fiesta celebrations in honor of the town's patron saint. This was a very important cultural ritual that united the community and reminded them that they had made it through another year.

Mayordomos, according to Chacón, were elected. A Mayordomo could be an elected overseer of an irrigation ditch, or he might over see the maintenance of the village church. In this case, the mayordomos were the master of ceremonies for the fiesta. Well organized, they collected money from the town's people to pay for a Mass and entertainment that would include food, games, and musicians. Clearly, despite being a

⁵² Rafael Chacón, *Legacy of Honor: The Life of Rafael Chacón A nineteenth-Century New Mexican*, ed. Jacqueline Dorgan Meketa (New Mexico: Yucca Tree Press, 2000), 76.

journalist, Kendall failed to ask about certain details of the town celebration. Instead, he believes the procession was precipitated by the Texans' arrival. Misinformed he passes it on to his readers.

Chacón next writes that the possible number of people in attendance was two hundred to three hundred. This number conforms if not to Kendall's description, then to others like W. H. H. Davis's description of a fiesta procession, "the throng which poured out of the city was dense, and as checkered in appearance as ever made pilgrimage to the shrine of a saint."⁵³ Much like the Spanish Friars' fear of the Kachina dances, the processional ceremony and the fact that so many attended such religious celebrations seemed to perturb the travel writers who chose to write about them.

One last point in Chacón's description includes the hierarchy of the "Spaniards" and the Spanish mestizos—"respect for their betters, and consideration for their equals." True to his elite Spanish mestizo position Chacón must make the distinction clear. He also implies here that while there were tensions in

⁵³ Davis, *El Gringo*, 259.

the community, religious ceremony sometimes served to reinforce the social order.

Nuanced descriptions such as Chacón's contain information of the power position between colonized and colonizer. Religious ceremony helped to smooth some division within the society while cementing and reflecting the social order. Without his narrative, we would be unable to counter narratives like Kendall's. Chacón provides the space from which to counter the mainstream narrative from a Spanish-Mexican point of view. Numerous subaltern histories like Chacon's and Jaramillo's exist, but they must be excavated from Spanish, Mexican, and New Mexican archives.

In 1825, sixteen years before Kendall's experience as part of the failed Santa Fe Expedition, EuroAmericans were enticed by the prospect of wealth by establishing trade with Mexico; there was a call in Missouri for the marking-out of a road to New Mexico; a road already marked and used in 1821 by William Becknell. In making his bill more palatable to those senators who failed to see the economic benefits of such a road, Senator Thomas Hart Benton

"pointed out the missionary possibilities of the road."⁵⁴

The bill read in part:

The consolidation of their [the Mexican] republican institutions, the improvement of their moral and social conditions, the restoration of their lost arts, and the development of their national resources, are among the grand results which philanthropy anticipates from such a commerce."⁵⁵

The alibi of civilization through "missionary possibilities" is introduced; Mexicans will be restored as "civilized" subjects with the help of their philanthropic benefactors—the Americans. Although the language of the Benton bill was written more than two hundred years after the Spanish Friars reported their own need to restore Native Americans to civility by introducing Christianity, the language and the message behind it are the same.

⁵⁴ Sibley, *The Road to Santa Fe*, 5–6.

⁵⁵ Sibley, *The Road to Santa Fe*, 5–6.

"Whenever the colonizer states, in his language, that the colonized is a weakling," Albert Memmi writes, "he suggests thereby that this deficiency requires protection." And from this, Memmi concludes, "comes the concept of a protectorate. In the name of "charitable" acts, land and resources can be expropriated.

The history of religion in New Mexico is as complicated as the history of colonization. The colonizer, Spanish mestizo or EuroAmerican challenged the religious beliefs of the colonized. Despite the attack from Spanish conquistadors on Native American religious practices, these rituals survived. So too, despite the Protestant invasion, did Catholicism survive. Through various artistic outlets, architecture, religious art, and the passion plays of the Penitente Brotherhood we witness not only survival, but, a conscious and intentional resistance to the colonizer.

In 2009, Bishop Lamy's famous Saint Francis Cathedral now known as the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi will celebrate 400 years of worship/Catholicism in Santa Fe. It should be noted

that the celebration was kicked off with a procession on the plaza with "St. Francis and La Conquistadora, Our Lady of Peace, held aloft," and a few hundred citizens in attendance.⁵⁶ It should also be noted that the designation from La Conquistadora (our lady of the conquest) to Our Lady of Peace was a change made in acknowledgement that the conquest of Native Americans by Spaniards was established ultimately not as a conquest but as an uneasy peace between the groups.

⁵⁶ Inez Russell, "Parish Celebrates 400 years of worship" *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, Oct 3, 2009.

CHAPTER FIVE

Against the Grain/Toward a New Historiography

This dissertation contributes to the growing number of Chicana/o histories that argue, “that history can challenge hegemonic discourses—that history, like cultural difference, can disrupt dominant discourses and power structures.”¹ By examining travel literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth century’s we see the world through the writing of the traveler. At the same time, we disrupt that limited, albeit dominant, worldview. As a decolonial subject I am empowered to speak back to existing EuroAmerican narratives about Santa Fe and Spanish mestizos.²

New Mexico and Santa Fe’s rich history gives us much to uncover. New Mexico’s history of colonization reveals many competing narratives. As a colonized subject growing up in Santa Fe, I heard only the mainstream history, the

¹ Linda Heidenreich, *This Land was Mexican Once: Histories of Resistance from Northern California*. (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2007), 171.

² Emma Perez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Theories of Representation and Difference). (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1999).

white history, the stories advanced by Spanish mestizo and EuroAmerican colonizer. It is this history this dissertation challenges. Frantz Fanon reminds us that the

colonist makes history and he knows it. And because he refers constantly to the history of his metropolis, he plainly indicates that he is the extension of this metropolis. The history he writes is therefore not the history of the country he is despoiling, but the history of his own nation's looting, raping, and starving to death.³

The history we learn in New Mexico is first, of the brave and honorable conquistadores and second of the brave and daring EuroAmericans. Not surprisingly, there are patterns within these white histories. As discussed in chapter four the pattern of conquest includes an alibi, violence, and conquest.⁴ In the conquest of New Mexico, one

³ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 15.

such similarity involves the actual invasion/takeover/concession of power.

Within the particular drama of white conquest, we witness the creation of the bloodless conquest. The first one in New Mexico is reported in 1693 when Don Diego de Vargas came to Santa Fe to resettle New Mexico. The story juxtaposes the violence of the 1680 Pueblo Revolt, with the "peaceful reconquista" of 1693, which contrasts the violent Pueblos to the peaceful Spaniards. In other words, the violent "uncivilized" Indigenous Pueblos are brought to peace by the "civilized" Spaniards. Of course, in the history of New Mexico, no such peaceful reconquista ever happened.

The Indigenous Pueblos resisted de Vargas but they were out numbered and lacked the technology to succeed in their attempt to repel the invading Spaniards. Historian John Kessell reports that in December of 1693 "the Pueblo Indian occupants refused to vacate the former capital, and lengthy negotiations brought only exposure, malnutrition, and death to a number of the colonists camped outside the walls," don Diego, Kessell continues, "resorted to war

⁴ Eduardo Galeano, "El Descubrimiento Que Todavía No Fue: España y América," in *El Descubrimiento De América Que Todavía No Fue y nuevos ensayos*. (Venezuela: Alfadil Ediciones, 1991).

without quarter." De Vargas knew divisions existed between the Pueblos, and with help from "a contingent of fighting men from Pecos, the Spaniards stormed and won the stronghold in a bloody, two-day battle. As a lesson to all the Indians," Kessell concludes, "Vargas ordered seventy of the defenders executed and four hundred men, women, and children who surrendered distributed among the colonists for ten years of servitude."⁵ Hardly peaceful this invented "peaceful" reconquest story is not only repeated in mainstream histories of Santa Fe, it is celebrated every September during the "Fiesta de Santa Fe." It is past time for Chicana/os to reclaim their history and make it part of the mainstream narrative—the narratives our children are taught.

The EuroAmerican version of a bloodless conquest takes place in 1846. As the story goes Colonel Kearny of the Army of the West arrived in Las Vegas, which is located about sixty miles east of Santa Fe, Kearny ceremoniously ascended to the rooftop of one of the houses on the plaza. In Las Vegas, Kearny announced:

⁵ *Remote Beyond Compare: Letters of don Diego de Vargas to His Family from New Pain and New Mexico, 1675–1706.* ed. John Kessell. (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1989), 62.

Mr. Alcalde, and people of New Mexico: I have come amongst you by the orders of my government, to take possession of your country, and extend over it the laws of the United States. We consider it, and have done so for some time, a part of the territory of the United States. We come amongst you as friends—not enemies; as protectors—not as conquerors. We come among you for your benefit—not for your injury.⁶

True to such speeches by colonizers, it is patronizing, paternalistic, and it conveys a false sensitivity to the colonized. "We are here to help not to hurt." It is "for your benefit." In other words, "if dreadful and unfortunate things happen to you, it will be your own fault." Kearny also promised religious freedom and protection from the Navajos and Apaches. Then he required the Alcalde to take an oath of allegiance in front of the gathered Mexican citizens.

⁶ Emory, W. H. *Lieutenant Emory Reports: Notes of a Military Reconnoissance*. (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1951), 49–50.

By the time the Army of the West reached Santa Fe, governor Manuel Armijo was well on his way to Chihuahua, leaving his second in command to deal with Kearny and the Army of the West. Upon their arrival in Santa Fe, the same conquest spectacle was reenacted and this time included the raising of the American flag. "During the repast," Lieutenant W.H. Emory writes, "and as the sun was setting, the United States flag was hoisted over the palace, and a salute of thirteen guns fired from the artillery planted on the eminence overlook the town."⁷ Emory's romantic description of the raising in victory the U.S. flag juxtaposed with the sun setting on "old Mexico" and the promise of morning is hardly lost on his readers.

Not so romantic is Emory's description of a passive citizenry, willing and even happy to go along with the Americans. This myth of ready acceptance and compliance is perpetuated repeatedly in all manner of EuroAmerican histories and chronicles. For example in a 1970 reprint of *The Kearny Code*, the editor Nolie Mumey begins with the following introduction:

⁷ Emory, *Reports*, 56.

Brigadier S. W. Kearney commandant of the First Dragoons of the United States Army, with a force of 1658 men made a dramatic and bloodless conquest of New Mexico on August 18, 1846, and put the city of Santa Fe and the Department of New Mexico under military control of the United States.⁸

Mumey's introduction is exactly the kind of hegemonic discourse that must be challenged. Because of the perpetuation of this bloodless conquest myth, "New Mexicans are not seen as the victims and the enemies of the Anglo-Americans, but rather," Rodolfo Acuña asserts, "as their willing friends."⁹ Missing or buried deep in the historical record, of course, are the incidents of resistance by Spanish mestizos. Rather than a passive citizenry, many Spanish mestizos were ready to fight against the EuroAmerican invasion. Rarely cited in this "bloodless"

⁸ *Leyes de Territorio de Nuevo Mejico/Laws of the Territory of New Mexico: Santa Fe, Octvber 7, 1846*. Facsimile ed. (Denver: Ruth P. Mummey, 1970).

⁹ Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*. (New York: Harper Collins, 1988), 56.

conquest story is the displeasure felt by Spanish mestizos at the arrival of the Army of the West. Consider the acting New Mexico governor's words spoken to Kearny after his requisite invasion/conquest pronouncement:

Do not find it strange if there has been no manifestation or joy and enthusiasm in seeing this city occupied by your military forces. To us the power of the Mexican Republic is dead. No matter what her condition, She was our mother.¹⁰

Was this a quiet warning to the invading army that resistance would occur? Acuña reports that, "influential New Mexicans conspired to drive their oppressors out of the province."¹¹ Governor Bent who had helped the EuroAmericans and was apprised of the plot began to "'feel uneasy over the sullen reaction of the 'mongrels' to Anglo-American

¹⁰ Tobias Duran, "'We Came As Friends:' Violent Social Conflict in New Mexico, 1810–1910" Ph.D. diss., University of New Mexico, 1985, quoted in Laura E. Gómez, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 22.

¹¹ Acuña, *Occupied America*, 59.

rule.'"¹² It was in January of 1847 when the resisters struck, killing Governor Bent and five other Americans. Acuña notes that, "there were also widespread acts of resistance in Arroyo Hondo and other villages."¹³ According to Laura Gómez, later that January day eight EuroAmericans were killed at Arroyo Hondo near Taos and two others were killed at Rio Colorado.¹⁴ Surely this much anger and resentment toward EuroAmericans must have been visible to other EuroAmericans. Some travel writers like G. F. Ruxton, noticed and wrote about the effect EuroAmerican occupation had on the Spanish mestizos. Ruxton reports that,

I found over all New Mexico that the most bitter feeling and the most bitter hostility existed against the Americans who, certainly in Santa Fe and elsewhere have not been very anxious to conciliate the people, but by their bullying and

¹² Alvin R. Sensuri, "New Mexico in the Aftermath of Anglo-American conquest" (Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1973), 131, quoted in Acuña, *Occupied America*, 59.

¹³ Acuña, *Occupied America*, 59.

¹⁴ Gomez, *Manifest Destinies*, 28.

overbearing demeanor toward them, have in great measure been the cause of this hatred.¹⁵

In another example, a Lieutenant Dyer reported unrest a year after the invasion. "It began to be apparent," Dyer reported, "that the people were generally dissatisfied with the change."¹⁶ Despite reports like Ruxton's and Dyer's the story of Spanish mestizo passivity and acceptance prevails. Ruxton's and Dyer's contribution to the record are buried, while reports about the outrageous manner in which Governor Bent was killed take prominence and make headlines and history.¹⁷ In retaliation for Bent's murder Colonel Price

¹⁵ G. F. Ruxton, *Wildlife in the Rocky Mountains* (New York: 1916), 75, quoted in *The Occupation of New Mexico 1821-1852*. By Sister Mary Loyala. *New Mexico Historical Society* Vol. VIII. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1939), 67.

¹⁶ Alexander B. Dyer, "Mexican War Journal, 1846-1848" Museum of New Mexico, History Library, Santa Fe 97, quoted in Gonzalez. *Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe 1820-1880*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 75.

¹⁷ According to most EuroAmerican versions of the story, Bent was violently killed and scalped. See Twitchell, *Old Santa Fe: The Story of New Mexico's Ancient Capital*. (Santa Fe: The Rio Grande Press, 1963), 287-88. Twitchell writes of the "treacherous men who had professed" friendship to Bent. Twitchell completely ignores Bent's own treachery, having lived in New Mexico since 1829 and marrying into a prominent New

"left Santa Fe with 353 men and four twelve pound cannons (supplemented soon thereafter with two more howitzers)."¹⁸ Upon arriving in Taos, they found that the resisters were barricaded in the San Geronimo Catholic Church, Price was unable to successfully storm the church. Instead, he placed the big, six-pound howitzer within 250 feet west of the church and another 60 feet away. Price ordered his men to fire on the church and stopped them only when there was a sizable opening on the side of the church. Gomez reports that "two-hundred Mexicans and pueblo Indians died that day" along with fifty-one who were killed trying to flee to the mountains.¹⁹ Albeit buried in the archives, it is a matter of record that many Indigenous and Spanish mestizos died resisting the "bloodless" invasion of New Mexico. These counter narratives are just beginning to emerge in Chicana/o Histories.

The fact that there were many sites of resistance throughout New Mexico is a seldom-heard story. These are the competing narratives we Chicana/os have to disrupt.

Mexico family, Bent nevertheless helped advance the EuroAmerican invasion against the Spanish mestizos.

¹⁸ Gomez, *Manifest Destinies*, 29.

¹⁹ Gomez, *Manifest Destinies*, 30.

When we discuss the invasion of New Mexico by EuroAmericans the first thing that should come to mind is the resistance of Native Americans and Spanish mestizos.

Chicano stories began long before EuroAmericans entered New Mexico. Because the colonizer, as Fanon asserts, writes the history of his metropolis and not that of his victims, we must read such histories against the grain. The history of Santa Fe is not unique, but the competing stories about Santa Fe offered by EuroAmerican travel writers are an example of the kinds of histories that should be examined from a decolonial point of view.

Such linear histories contribute to the endurance of the major narrative written by the dominant culture. In this brief historical moment in Santa Fe history, I have examined EuroAmerican travel narratives that claim to tell the truth about Spanish mestizos. Through the course of this examination, we have seen how the colonizer invokes "civilization" as the alibi to invade and conquer. We have also seen how subaltern voices and texts can disrupt such arrogant EuroAmerican claims.

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