

# *Chronicles of the Trail*



*Quarterly Journal of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro  
Trail Association*

---

*Vol. 6, No. 1*

*Winter 2010*

---



Christian Soldier with *Santo Niño Moro* – Bracho, Zacatecas



## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

25 January 2010

Dear Readers—

As promised, I want to inform the CARTA Board and membership about a variety of well established projects. Although I can only mention a few items of interest here, please see our “News & Notes” section for more updates.

With an eye toward developing El Camino Real spur and loop trails to the planned Rio Grande River Trail, New Mexico State University linguistics professor and new CARTA member **Daniel Villa** will conduct a series of oral history projects. The information will be used to enhance the visitor experience by adding a contemporary or “living” history component to cultural and heritage tourism. There is also a potential cultural/heritage corridor partnership in the works with **Laurie Frantz**, Director, NM Scenic Byways.

Three CARTA members will host a panel presentation at the New Mexico History Conference, Lea County, New Mexico, April 29 – May 2, 2010. **Robert J. Tórréz** will present “The Organization and Management of Caravans on El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro,” **Susan Calafate Boyle** on “The Contraband Case Against Francisco López Serrano, 1828 – 1832,” and **John Porter Bloom** on “Motoring Along El Camino Real in the 1920s.” We’re hoping for a strong CARTA turnout at these and similar future panels at regional and national conferences.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our *Chronicles* editor, **Catherine Kurland**, for her extraordinary passion, dedication, and professionalism. We are fortunate to have Catherine as our editor and ambassador of goodwill.

And now, some sad news... due to his increasingly difficult job demands as City of Las Cruces Museums Director, coupled with serious family health concerns, CARTA President **Will Ticknor** tendered his resignation at the 23 January 2010 Executive Committee meeting.

It is with understanding and regret that the Executive Committee accepted his resignation.

We are very grateful for the amount of work that Will was able to accomplish in such a short time, particularly helping with the development of in-house written policies. Candidates interested in applying for an appointment as interim President (to serve until the September elections) are asked to send their vita and a Letter of Interest to PO Box 15162, Las Cruces, NM 88004 or e-mail [jeanfulton@earthlink.net](mailto:jeanfulton@earthlink.net). We look forward to working with Will as an active member, and we wish him all the best.

The full Board has agreed to meet the weekend of 13 March 2010 (Mountainair, NM) to update and revise CARTA’s 2005 Strategic Plan. Member **Mike Knapp** is helping with the preparations to streamline the process and make our time together more efficient. A draft agenda will be sent out soon.

Allow me also to welcome our new members: **Jill Gatwood** (Albuquerque); **Joseph E. Lopez** (San Bernardino, CA); **Deborah and Jon Lawrence** (Santa Fe); **Albert Eddins** (Scottsdale, AZ); **Heather and Carey Crane** (Las Cruces); **Sandy Geiger and Megan Berver** (Las Cruces); **Daniel Villa** (Las Cruces); **Catherine Coggin** (Santa Fe); **Charles Cooper** (Raleigh, NC) and **Kathleen Cordova** (my dentist!) and her daughter, **Joan Cordova** (Costa Mesa, CA). Bienvenidos a CARTA!

Thanks to those who have already renewed, please remember to renew if you haven’t already, and please encourage your friends and family members to join! I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully yours,

*Jean*

# Chronicles of the Trail

Volume 6, Number 1

Winter 2010

## CONTENTS

<i>Letter from the Executive Director</i> Jean Fulton	<i>inside front cover</i>
<i>From the Editors</i>	2
<i>News &amp; Notes</i>	3
<i>Conquest, Re-Conquest, De-Conquest: Colonial and De-Colonial Imaginaries Along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro</i> Enrique R. Lamadrid Photographs by Miguel Gandert	7
<i>The Participation of crypto-Jews in the Settlement of the Far Northern Frontier of New Spain, 1589 – 1663</i> Stanley M. Hordes	16
<i>Don Santiago Kirker, Apache Scalper, Part I</i> Hal Jackson Line drawings by Francisco Uviña	22
<i>Federal Place: San Miguel Mission, Santa Fe</i>	30
<i>Book Review: El Rancho de las Golondrinas</i> by Carmella Padilla Reviewed by Louann Jordan	32
<i>Obituary: José Cisneros</i>	<i>inside back cover</i>

## CARTA

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: Will Ticknor, Las Cruces  
VICE-PRESIDENT: Larry Broxton, Las Cruces  
SECRETARY: Van Ann Moore, Belen  
TREASURER: Helen Geer, Santa Fe  
INTERNATIONAL LIAISON:  
Patricia "Tisa" Gabriel, Santa Fe

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### TERMS ENDING 2010

Tom Harper, Socorro  
Richard Loose, Organ  
Claire Odenheim, Las Cruces  
Joy Poole, Santa Fe

#### TERMS ENDING 2011

Roy "Ben" Brown, El Paso  
Jerry L. Gurulé, Albuquerque  
Catherine López Kurland, Santa Fe  
Harry Myers, Santa Fe

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** Jean Fulton, Mesilla

FRONT COVER: *Christian Soldier with Santo Niño Moro*  
Photograph, Miguel Gandert

BACK COVER: *Vistas del Camino  
Musicians – Ciudad Juárez*  
Photograph, Miguel Gandert

EDITORS: Catherine López Kurland & Jean Fulton

Membership in CARTA is open to all. Please see insert for membership categories and new reduced institutional fee. A membership form is also found on our website.

*Chronicles of the Trail* is a quarterly publication of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association. CARTA, P.O. Box 15162, Las Cruces, NM 88004-5162 Telephone (575) 528-8267 email: jeanfulton@earthlink.net

© 2010 by CARTA. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without permission is prohibited.

Price: \$5.00

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR CARTA MEMBERSHIP!**  
PLEASE send in your dues today  
to CARTA, P.O. Box 15162, Las Cruces, NM 88004-5162

[www.caminorealcarta.org](http://www.caminorealcarta.org)

## FROM THE EDITORS



We are elated with the rich bounty our contributors have generously submitted for this issue, our first of the year—and the decade. We are pleased to grace the cover of the Winter 2010 issue with Miguel Gandert's arresting photograph, and to publish his images illustrating Enrique Lamadrid's thought-provoking essay on the coded messages concealed in ritual celebrations. Historian Stanley Hordes unveils another concealed narrative, of crypto-Jews who chose to take the perilous journey to the most distant reaches of the northern Spanish borderlands—New Mexico. Moving forward to the 1800s, cultural geographer, fearless tour leader, and now public-television consultant Hal Jackson writes about the mercenary scalp hunter James Kirker, who is portrayed in a BBC documentary airing this spring. We are grateful to artist Francisco Uviña Contreras for creating delightful and historically accurate pen-and-ink drawings for Jackson's recount of James Kirker's adventures. We also owe thanks to Jim Gautier, Cornerstones Community Partnerships board president, who dropped everything to provide us with his photographs of San Miguel Chapel, recipient of a Save America's Treasures grant.

*Chronicles* has revived a feature from past issues, News & Notes, an umbrella for current happenings concerning CARTA, our members, and the Trail. In this issue, the News & Notes column includes a letter from the NMSU Library thanking CARTA for enabling them to purchase eighteen rolls of Serie Durango microfilm for their research collections. News & Notes also contains CARTA'S response to the proposed CRPPM for Spaceport America. This commercial enterprise poses the greatest potential threat to the integrity of the most pristine length of the 1,400-mile El Camino Real and to the Jornada del Muerto heritage tourism experience.

We are committed to serving you, our fellow CARTA members, in *Chronicles of the Trail*, a venue for conversation on a wide variety of topics related to the Camino. Join in! Share your thoughts with us—in a Letter to the Editor, a short commentary, a full-blown historic research paper, or a book review. In this issue Louann Jordan, member and former CARTA board member, reviews Carmella Padilla's new book, *El Rancho de las Golondrinas: Living History in New Mexico's La Ciénega Valley*.

*Chronicles* is a quarterly journal, available in old-fashioned print and high-tech online versions, a place for fresh insights into the past, new discoveries, and a forum for discussing how best to preserve and interpret the Trail today. *Chronicles* is a site for your views, literal—and visual. On the back cover is an image of musicians on a street in Juárez, a *vista del camino*, a slice of life, a moment captured, in a city on the Trail. We invite you to submit your own "Vistas del Camino" of anything, any place, anyone connected with El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. We eagerly await your photographs for future back covers of *Chronicles of the Trail*.\*

Catherine L. Hubbard Jean Fulton

### ON THE HORIZON

Some highlights in upcoming issues of *Chronicles of the Trail* are the unpublished diaries of Dr. Rowland Willard; Don Santiago Kirker, Part II; archaeologist Michael Marshall's ultimate guide to El Camino Real landscapes; George Torok's essay on Isleta Pueblo; Jo Tice Bloom's review of the newly edited journals of William R. Goulding; and Sabores del Camino: Chocolate.

### CHRONICLES ONLINE

You can read *Chronicles of the Trail*, with Spanish translations of selected material, on our website: [www.caminorealcarta.org](http://www.caminorealcarta.org).

\*Please send photographs (color will be converted to greyscale), 300 dpi or higher, to [jeanfulton@earthlink.net](mailto:jeanfulton@earthlink.net).

---

### NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS WORKSHOP

CARTA is chairing the planning committee for a National Historic Trails Workshop scheduled for 12-14 May 2010 (San Antonio, TX) hosted by El Camino Real de los Tejas titled, "Cultural and Heritage Tourism: National Historic Trails as Destinations." Please stay tuned as the workshop field trips and community service activities are developed. Our members are encouraged to attend!

## NEWS & NOTES

### Up and Down El Camino Real

#### **Mexico's National "Ruta 2010" Initiative**

Mexico is preparing for an extraordinary celebration commemorating the 200th anniversary of its Independence from Spain and the 100th anniversary of its Revolution. The Ministry of Communication and Transportation is in the process of signing auto routes to significant cultural sites. The Tourism Ministry and INAH are also involved with Mexico's nationwide effort. There is an official Bicentennial website ([www.bicentenario.gob.mx](http://www.bicentenario.gob.mx)), and numerous related blogs and sites on Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and YouTube. CARTA is looking for a volunteer to research Mexico's national calendar to keep our members apprised of upcoming *Ruta 2010* events and activities.

#### **Studying Cultural Landscapes (Hermosillo and Panuco, Mexico)**

Special thanks to International Liaison **Patricia "Tisa" Gabriel** and Board member **Joy Poole** for working together to ensure that CARTA was represented at last month's cultural landscape colloquium in Hermosillo, Mexico. The presentations focused on how societies view the same landscape through very different cultural lenses. This is the first step in a broader element envisioned by BLM, NPS, and **Hal Jackson** to develop a bi-national academic and professional team to develop a cultural landscape study at Juan de Oñate's boyhood *hacienda* in Panuco, Mexico.

#### **Engineers Without Borders (Mendoceño, Mexico)**

The New Mexico State University "Engineers Without Borders" 2010 project is currently focused along

El Camino Real at Mendoceño, approximately ten miles south of Satevo. This town's existing central potable water system is grossly undersized. Funding and resources permitting, the students will install new piping, valves, and a simple control system that they are in the process of designing. The next assessment trip is scheduled for the third week of March, during the students' spring break. Please contact Jean Fulton (volunteer EWB camp cook and common laborer) at [jeanfulton@earthlink.net](mailto:jeanfulton@earthlink.net), or call (575) 528-8267 if you are interested in donating time, money, or energy to this endeavor!

#### **Spur and Loop Trails (Doña Ana County, NM)**

Unforeseen complications have delayed the formation of the nonprofit Groundwork Doña Ana (GWDA), which was to be CARTA's principle partner in the long-term effort to create spur and loop trails from El Camino Real communities to the proposed Rio Grande River Trail. An unofficial task force comprised of GWDA Steering Committee members and other interested community leaders is carrying the effort forward. The current vision combines an oral history component with archival and archaeological research, and dovetails with a vibrant *Highway 28 Initiative* embraced by photographer and community advocate Diana Molina. More on this development of El Camino Real and Highway 28 as a broad "cultural and heritage corridor" in upcoming *Chronicles!*

#### **Paul Deason Research (Vado, NM, to Fort Selden, NM)**

New CARTA member and graduate anthropology student **Paul Deason** is researching the Herbert

W. Yeo collections at the Branigan Public Library and the Rio Grande Historical Collection (RGHC MS 0094). Ultimately, Paul and an archaeological crew will update Yeo's original field observations at sites along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in Doña Ana County. Paul is also working with the staffs at RGHC and the Branigan Cultural Center to conserve a highway map hand-annotated by Yeo himself. Paul's work will contribute to the heritage corridor plans, including the development of interpretive spur and loop trails.

#### **Signing El Camino Real in the Historic Mesquite District (Las Cruces, NM)**

Cultural geographer **Hal Jackson**, and archaeologists **Ed Staski**, Mike Marshall, David Legare, Karl Laumbach, **Pat Beckett** and others have confirmed that Mesquite Street is situated along at least one of the original El Camino Real routes as it braided its way through Mesilla and Las Cruces. CARTA is working with **Las Esperanzas, Inc.** a nonprofit historic neighborhood association, to identify El Camino Real using signs designed by NPS Landscape Architect Steve Burns. Although the state revenues freeze has thrown the funding of the signage project into question, CARTA is working with Las Esperanzas President David Chavez to find alternate funding.

#### **Grant Awarded to the Rio Grande Historical Collection (Las Cruces, NM)**

CARTA offered to assist Rick Hendricks and Kristina Martinez (New Mexico State University Library and the Rio Grande

Historical Collection) in their quest to secure funding for purchasing the remaining microfilm reels to complete the **Durango Collection**. Thanks mainly to **Claire Odenheim's** foresight and writing skills, I am delighted to report that the NM State Library awarded a grant. We will notify the press once the reels are purchased. Please see following page for a copy of the letter thanking CARTA.

### **Documenting the Jornada del Muerto (Upham, NM)**

The proposals received to date to film the Jornada del Muerto have been too expensive. The intent is to capture the pristine nature of the Trail and document its surroundings before the area is impacted by the Spaceport and other contemporary encroachments. Filmmaker Jason VanCamp has been asked to put together a proposal narrative and budget that will engage young film students from *A Children's Theatre* (Las Cruces). **Richard Loose** has offered to assist with aerial filming.

### **Member Benefit: Armendaris Ranch Tours (Engle, NM)**

Members **Jim Andress** and **Tom Harper** are working with Ted Turner's Armendaris Ranch manager, Tom Waddell, to schedule "insider's tours" of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro trail segments on Mr. Turner's private property north of Engle, NM. Dates and itineraries will be announced as soon as plans are finalized.

### **National History Day (Albuquerque, NM)**

Four teachers initially responded to CARTA's appeal to focus on El Camino Real research during their academic participation in National History Day. One instructor in particular has taken the challenge to heart. Marie Q. Julienne, Social

Studies Instructor at the Native American Community Academy (Albuquerque) has inspired her ninth-graders to pursue a variety of topics related to the Trail in keeping with this year's "Innovation in History" theme. **Claire Odenheim** and I may need additional tutors as the February and April National History Day deadlines approach. For information on National History Day, please go to: [www.nhd.org](http://www.nhd.org).

### **La Ciénega (Santa Fe, NM)**

CARTA is working closely with Madeline "Maddy" Pope, Director of National Outreach, Federal Affairs, The Trust for Public Land, on several important fronts. Most recently, CARTA sent letters to Senators Bingaman and Udall thanking them for co-sponsoring Senate Bill 2747 to provide full and dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LCWF). We have also actively supported the effort to use LWCF to acquire the La Cienega/Canyon Ranch project. Nearly \$3 million has tentatively been identified to acquire "La Cienega Area of Critical Environmental Concern/El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail."

### **Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area (Española, NM)**

CARTA members **Harry Myers** and **Louann Jordan** have graciously offered to represent us in a new coalition designed to promote the National Park Service's Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area. The Santa Fe and Española areas of the designated El Camino Real national historic trail fall within the boundaries of the heritage area. The coalition is partnering with the Española Valley Chamber of Commerce to print large-format maps showcasing tourist destinations. One side of the map will feature the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area,

and cultural and historical locations of interest to visitors. Sidebar text will point out the relationships between culture and landscape to help visitors gain insight into the continuity of the past into the present. Contact: Glenna Dean, Associate Director, Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, Inc. or click on "News" at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

### **El Camino Real International Heritage Center (Socorro, NM)**

At our incoming Board meeting last September, Tom Harper agreed to serve as CARTA's liaison to El Camino Real International Heritage Center (ECRIHC). We look forward to working with Tom to identify mutually beneficial opportunities.



**Q.** What is this???

**A.** A long-shadowed view of Carl Moore, Tom Harper and Jean Fulton from the unmanned flight vehicle designed and programmed to photograph segments of El Camino Real. The aerial shot was snapped during a weekend test flight in preparation for a study of the Trail within Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge south of Socorro, NM, sponsored by CARTA and the National Park Service.



University Library  
MSC 3475  
New Mexico State University  
P. O. Box 30006  
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8006

December 18, 2009

CARTA  
PO Box 15162  
Las Cruces, NM 88004

Dear Jean, Claire and the entire CARTA organization,

Thank you for your support in our mission to build outstanding research collections which highlight the rich history of New Mexico and our region. Your gift of \$350 will allow us to purchase the 18 rolls of film in the Serie Durango microfilm series, which will make our Mexican Microfilm Collection more complete and available for scholars and researchers alike. Thank you for your hard work to make this gift possible!

Sincerely,

Kristina Martinez  
NMSU Library  
Development Officer

Steve Hussman  
NMSU Library  
Department Head  
Archives & Special Collections

Rick Hendricks  
NMSU Library  
Processing Archivist  
Archives & Special Collections

With approval from President Will Ticknor and Vice-President Larry Broxton, Jean Fulton submitted the following responses regarding the Spaceport Authority's draft mitigation plan, after attending an all-day meeting in Santa Fe to review the plan with Spaceport representatives, private consultants, and other consulting parties, including the National Trust, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Historic Preservation Division, the Advisory Council on Historic Places, and others.



EL CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO  
TRAIL ASSOCIATION  
P. O. Box 15162, Las Cruces NM 88004 USA

16 December 2009

Stacey Zee, Environmental Specialist  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Washington, DC

RE: Response to *Cultural Resources Protection, Preservation, and Mitigation Plan for Spaceport America (November 2009)*

Dear Stacey Zee—

Thanks for all of your hard work to date. As requested, CARTA would like to submit the following issues for consideration and inclusion in the final CRPPMP for Spaceport America:

- CARTA would still like to see the language strengthened in terms of proposed mitigation measures. Instead of stipulating that NMSA "may" host No-Launch days for the purpose of enhancing the cultural and heritage tourism experience, for example, we would rather see the more definitive "will" host. There are other instances where the language should be strengthened to reflect NMSA's willingness to accomplish the mitigation measures.
- The descriptive terms "creative," "compensatory" and "necessary" regarding actual mitigation measures need to be clearly defined to avoid confusion.
- Mitigation measures conducted to date do not necessarily reflect those requested by the consulting parties. This is problematic because it appears to signal a lack of communication between NMSA and the consulting parties.
- Limited funding means that the mitigation measures must be prioritized, budgeted, and scheduled by New Mexico Spaceport America with final approval from the consulting parties.
- CARTA would still like to see the enforcement of written Launch Operator or Tenant "Covenants" with a draft contract available for consulting parties review. FAA operator licensing would be contingent upon a signed Tenant Covenant.
- The final mitigation plan should acknowledge that El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and associated sites were nominated to the 11 Most Endangered Places list maintained by the National Trust for Historic Places; that NMSA offered to assist with the effort to designate El Camino Real as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and that segments of the Trail have been or will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Please confirm that the Spaceport will adhere to the NM Night Sky Protection Act, including the avoidance of night launches and unnecessary nighttime illumination.
- Please ensure that the previous detailed mitigation requests submitted by the consulting parties are inserted into the final document.

CARTA looks forward to working closely with NMSA as tour itineraries and interpretive programs are developed. To that end, we have designated one of our members, Rob Spence, as our official Spaceport liaison.

As a private tour operator himself, he has a vested interest in nurturing a synergetic relationship between CARTA and Spaceport America. We ask that Rob be apprised of touring and interpretive opportunities. We will tap additional CARTA volunteers as necessary as plans progress.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft plan.

Sincerely,

Jean Fulton, Executive Director  
El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association (CARTA)



*Vanguard of the Turcos – Bracho, Zacatecas, Mexico*

## CONQUEST, RE-CONQUEST, DE-CONQUEST: COLONIAL AND DE-COLONIAL IMAGINARIES ALONG EL CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO

By Enrique R. Lamadrid  
Photographs by Miguel Gandert

### CULTURAL MEMORY ON DISPLAY

For four centuries along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, the native and mestizo peoples of northern Mexico and New Mexico have dramatized their political and cultural struggles in festival and ritual display. Conquest and re-conquest, resistance and capitulation are recurring themes in the intangible cultural heritage of the vast region. Victory and morality plays, ritual dance, and even contemporary fiesta parades utilize mimetic portrayals of cultural selves and others including Christians, Muslims and Jews, Aztecs and Comanches, Spaniards and Anglos. Alterity, hybridity,

and identity are negotiated on the plaza and in the cultural imagination. To read cultural narratives and metaphors more deeply, we must follow them beyond the documents of history and literature and into choreography, costume, ritual, and song. Collective memory is profound in a contested region at the edges of empire, where conquerors are conquered in turn, and where discourses of power morph into discourses of survival. Indo-Hispano cultural knowledge has much to contribute to a global conversation about the limits of empire in our own times.

## RITUAL INVENTORIES

From a decade of fieldwork on the fiestas, devotions, and pilgrimages of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, five types of celebrations have emerged. In this essay the first two, *Morismas* and *Matachines*, will be discussed in the context of two of the saints from section five, San Juan and Santiago.

1. *Morismas* – the dramatic pageants of *Moros y Cristianos*, the Christians and the Moors, that have been enacted in greater Mexico, from the 1519 invasion of Cortés through the expedition of Oñate of 1598, through present times in New Mexico and Zacatecas, a continuously emergent tradition. Originally a drama of conquest meant to impress the natives, morismas are now an expression of cultural resistance and militancy.
2. *Matachines* – the greater Mexican tradition of ritual dance that dramatizes the interactions of Christianity and native religion, with spirit dancers, grotesque ancestral guardians, and *la Malinche*, the little girl who represents



*Emasculation of the Torito – Alcalde, New Mexico*

the first Christian convert. The distinctive northern style is presided over by the *Monarca*, associated with Moctezuma, and features the pursuit, castration, and death of a bull. The *Chichimeca* or southern style features reed-laced skirts, and the interaction of the ancestral *viejos* with the Malinche.

3. *Pastorelas* – a cycle of traditional and contemporary shepherd's plays, in which the journey to Bethlehem in search of epiphany becomes the metaphor for the tribulations of all humanity, allied with angels and besieged with devils. Here the Jewish "cultural other" and its implied Indian counterpart resist, then embrace the prophet child destined to become the new messiah.
4. *Comanches* – in honor of the Comanche wars of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, this ceremonial complex includes ritual mimetic dance in all the eastern and western Indian Pueblos and many Nuevo Mexicano communities, nativity plays, and an equestrian military drama with the same structure and plot as *Moros y Cristianos* plays. Although concentrated in the north, components of Comanche costume and cultural roles still persist in the south.
5. *Devociones* – the constellation of saints of the Camino Real reflects its cultural and religious history. Marian devotions include the Guadalupe, reminder of the journey from *castizo* to mestizo consciousness, and Dolores, our Lady of Sorrows. Devotions to the Christ include the Señor de Mapimí—a victim of and protector against Indian attack, Señor de Equipulas crucified on the tree of life, and the contemplative Jesús Nazareno in the midst of his passion. On the northern frontier, the suffering Christ becomes a reminder of the hardships and heroics of subsistence in the desert, a metaphor for transcendence and survival. Notable also is the emergence of a broad-based devotion to the Santo Niño de Atocha, the miraculous child who embodies emancipation and liberation from Spain. Evangelization and conquest are mediated by San Juan and Santiago. San Francisco and San Antonio are the guardians of the Franciscan missionary provinces of the north. And San Lorenzo is protector and redeemer in the Indian wars and huge rebellion of 1680 that engulfed not only New Mexico, but also the entire northern frontier. A large complex of devotional practices include the ubiquitous Holy Week and Christmas, saints day festivals,

and the processions and pilgrimages which bind together a geographical area the size of Europe.

#### STRATEGIES OF CONQUEST: *SANGRE Y FUEGO* VS. A THEATER OF PERSUASION

Festival and ritual are persistent, but never static. Changes reveal much about people adapting to new human and physical landscapes. With time and forbearance, even invaders can eventually become indigenous to a place. Evolving devotions to San Juan and Santiago are a case in point.



*Conversion of El Sultán – Santa Cruz, New Mexico*

In the late summer of 1598, the exhausted and grateful families of the Oñate expedition were treated to the foods and fellowship of traditional Tewa hospitality at the pueblo of Ohkay Owingeh near the confluence of the Río Chama and Río del Norte. When don Juan named the pueblo San Juan de los Caballeros, historians have always assumed it was in gratitude for the generosity of the Indians. The naming of New Mexico's first capital is actually part and parcel of a larger devotion to the saint who baptized Jesus and became the first minister and martyr of his cousin's new religion. Oñate and his knights were members of a *cofradía* or confraternity called Caballeros de San Juan, the Knights of Saint John that they brought north from Zacatecas. When a makeshift church was finished, they celebrated with an equestrian play written by Captain Farfán de los Godos in the style of the equestrian games of *Moros y Cristianos*. The script did not survive, but a description of the production is in *La historia*

*verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva México*, an epic poem in the Renaissance style published by Gaspar de Villagrà in 1610. The poet noted that in front of an audience of amazed Indians, the horses galloped and firearms were discharged. Beyond flash and fury, shock and awe, the main lesson gleaned by viewers was that, impressive as they were, the cannons and harquebuses caused no harm. Ironically, only weeks later in the rebellion and tragic siege of Acoma Pueblo in January of 1599, scores of warriors fell to gun and cannon fire, as they charged the Christian soldiers unafraid.

Four centuries later in the twentieth-century performance of *Moros y Cristianos* in Alcalde and Chimayó, New Mexico, nobody is harmed either, even after a pitched battle with "50,000 soldiers" represented by twenty mounted actors. The Christian King Alfonso refuses to pay ransom for the cross that the Moors have stolen and wins it back, along with the soul of the Sultán after the battle. In this wishful scene, he has had many names across the centuries, including Boabdil, Ozman, Suleiman, Selim, and more lately Saddaam and Osama. The Sultán embraces the cross and pleads for mercy:

Cristiano, ya tu valor  
me tiene a tus pies postrado,  
te pido por vuestra cruz  
y por tu Dios venerado,  
que me des la libertad  
que yo estoy desengañado,  
que solo tu Dios es grande  
Mahoma todo engaño.

Christian, your valor  
has me prostrate at your feet,  
I ask you by your cross  
and for the God you venerate  
that you give me my liberty,  
for I have seen the light  
for only your God is great  
Mohammed all deception.

He repents, renounces Mohammed, and is welcomed as a new convert to Christianity. The "official transcript" in the minds of the settlers is all about the

propagation of the faith. The “hidden transcript” in the minds of the Indian audience is more practical: embrace the cross and your lives will be spared.

Four centuries later in the twentieth century performances of *La Morisma de Bracho*, twelve hundred miles down the Camino Real in Zacatecas, another quite different performance of Moros y Cristianos is celebrated. The Cofradía de San Juan Bautista in Zacatecas, which numbers over fifteen thousand members, stages a *sangre y fuego*, blood and fire production, the metaphor for military campaigns that gave no quarter. The performance of *La Morisma* takes three days, involves eight thousand costumed participants, and culminates on August 28<sup>th</sup>, the feast day of *La Degollación de San Juan*, the martyrdom and decapitation of John. The voluminous

script begins with Charlemagne, Roland, and the Twelve Peers of France, and ends eight centuries later with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the Battle of Lepanto. Much blood flows, clouds of gunpowder smoke hang over the battlefield littered with “corpses” after each engagement. In the final scene, within the last fifteen minutes, Sultán Argel de Ozmán is defeated in battle by Armando de

Guzmán, repents, converts to Christianity, is baptized, and then beheaded. In a triumphal procession, his head is paraded around the battlefield impaled on a lance. The iconographic counterpart in the fiesta is the severed head of John the Baptist displayed in niches of local churches.

Why are the two morismas so different? In Zacatecas the emphasis and the official transcript is on suffering, victory, and martyrdom. There seems to be no “hidden transcript” because there

are no Indian viewers. The population of Zacatecas is almost entirely mestizo, since the local Indians were eliminated in the Chichimeca wars of the sixteenth century. In New Mexico, where there were and are Indians present, a different aspect of San Juan is observed with his patronal feast on June 24<sup>th</sup>, where the Baptist saint presides as the Lord of the summer solstice, a solar feast common to all religions. In recent years, the New Mexican Moros y Cristianos has been celebrated on the feasts of Santa Cruz or the Holy Cross, and Santiago. What began as a triumphalist display of power in colonial times has evolved into a discourse of resistance for Nuevo Mexicanos, reclaiming the Spanish language and expressing pride in culture and homeland now dominated by Anglo Americans. Across the valley in



San Juan Bautista, *the Martyr – Bracho*, Zacatecas, Mexico

San Juan Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, the saint is honored with ritual bathing, processions, and Summer Buffalo and Comanche dances.

#### DE-COLONIAL MOMENTS: CASTRATION OF THE BULL OF EMPIRE AND THE TRANSMOGRIFICATION OF SANTIAGO

Where morisma narratives are rich with scripted texts, other celebrations like the Matachines dances and the patronal saints days are rich with choreography and a kinetic play of symbols. Words



Summer Comanches, Fiesta de San Juan – Ohkay Owingeh, New Mexico

become contextual and hover at the edges of the festivals. In several key fiestas, dramatic actions conspire to contest and dismantle the colonizing visions of signification and submission they were assembled to transmit.

In the northern Matachines dances performed in the upper Río Grande Valley from Las Cruces, New Mexico, north, besides the situational comments of the crowd, the only words in evidence refer to characters, moments in the dance, and details of costume. The various movements of the dance, each with distinctive violin and guitar music, are named for choreographic elements or for the main character featured. *La entrada* or entry is the first movement, and *La cruz* features the dancers in a cross formation. *El Monarca* focuses on the animated dancing of the king, also known as Moctezuma, while *La Malinche* highlights the crisscross journey between the lines of dancers of an angelic little girl dressed in white said to be his bride or his daughter. *El toro* features the defeat, death, and castration of the bull by the *Abuelos* or masked ancestral clown spirits. The *Matachines* or *danzantes* are spirit warriors ten or twelve in number said to represent the Disciples of Christ or the tribes of Israel or Mexico. Their costumes include a headdress decorated with saints and fringe, hung down the back with ribbons, and shaped like a bishop's mitre. The term for it is *cupil*, the Nahuatl word for crown, for it is constructed not like the mitre but like the crowns that Aztec nobles wore, pictured in the codices. The *guaje* or gourd rattle they carry in the left hand is another word of Nahuatl origin, further evidence of mestizo or native origins. In the right hand dancers carry a *palma*, literally a palm frond or trident sword said to represent the Holy Trinity, which they swirl in elegant arabesques. In iconographic terms the palm

is also a symbol of martyrdom. Early in the dance, while the dancers kneel, as if dead or in another dimension, a seated Monarca lends his palma to Malinche who passes it in mysterious circular motions around his outstretched hands in a moment often called *La conversión de Moctezuma* for the moment of his conversion to Christianity.

People mostly watch in silence or laugh at the antics of the abuelos. They also offer observations about the struggle between good and evil, said to be represented by the bull. Occasional comments can be poignant hints at deeper meanings, such as this comment a child made to his father at the Alcalde, New Mexico, Matachines in 2009:

Papá, ¿por qué le cortan los huevos al torito, si ya está muerto?

Dad, why do they cut the balls off the little bull if he's already dead?

No response. It is obvious that the normal practices of animal husbandry do not include the castration of animals after their death. There are symbolic dimensions here, since the bull is the totem animal of Spain, brought during the conquest and associated with the conquest in the native imagination. The choreographic narrative and "hidden transcript" of the Matachines is complex indeed, representing spiritual encounters and the coming of Christianity.

The Chichimeca or southern style of Matachines (from Las Cruces south) features a cast of fewer characters, less complicated choreography, and lively, more frenetic music with loud drums and

occasionally a violin. The *danzantes* are brightly dressed, usually in red, with distinctive *naguillas* or kilts, hung with reeds that jangle with the movements of the dance. The Virgin of Guadalupe is often embroidered on the back of shirts or vests, or present on *paños* or kerchiefs worn from the shoulders. A gourd or metal rattle marks the tempo, along with a stylized clacker that resembles a bow and arrow and is aimed and shot, although the arrow is fixed and never takes flight. Headgear is either a headband or sometimes stereotypical Plains-style feathered war bonnets. Dance leaders are called *capitanes* or sometimes *Comanches*. Young girls also dressed in red play the Malinche, and there can be as many as three or four in a dance. The ancestral *viejos*, or old men of the dance, wear terrifying simian masks, carry whips, interact with Malinches and the crowd, and are overpowered and

“killed” by the dancers. The movements of the dance are varied, often named after animals, and are combined in varied ways, depending on the symbolism or iconography of the feast day. Crowds watch in silence or laugh at the *viejos*. Peripheral comments are often revealing. While watching the *Matachines* at the Feast of San Juan in San Juan del Valle, Chihuahua, on June 24, 2009, an audience member observed how and why particular movements of the bows resembled wings beating:

Hacemos la danza del gavilán  
para honrar el águila de San Juan.

We do the dance of the dove hawk  
to honor the eagle of Saint John.

The symbolism of the dance is not esoteric, but is not always specifically articulated. The totem animal of San Juan the Evangelist here is called up to honor San Juan the Baptist on his feast.

One of the most notable de-colonizing trans-

formations, not only in greater Mexico but all of the Americas, is the indigenous appropriation of Santiago, the patron saint of Spain and the Iberian Reconquest. When the warrior saint comes to the New World, his epithet changes from Matamoros to Mataindios, from the Moorslayer to the Indian Killer. Associated with horses and with the primal



*Matachines, Fiesta de Guadalupe – Tortugas, New Mexico*

force of thunder, by the end of the colonial period he becomes the special protector of natives in a symbolic reclamation that varies from group to indigenous group.

Santiago’s first appearance in New Mexico is literary. The epic poet Villagrà places him and the Virgin herself at the bloody battle of Acoma in January of 1599. A three-day siege breached the almost impregnable fortress pueblo, perched high on a sandstone mesa. Six to eight hundred of the defenders and their families were slaughtered, and survivors were mutilated and taken into servitude in the most grievous violation of human rights in the history of New Mexico, an abuse of power for which don Juan de Oñate was charged, tried, and punished with exile to Spain. Although there is no memory among the Acoma people of Santiago at the tragic battle, the saint is transformed into “Santiak”, a hobbyhorse dancer who playfully and powerfully represents the mounted saint on his July 25<sup>th</sup> feast day as in other Queres pueblos.

One of the most dramatic transformations of Santiago takes place the same day in the

village of Jesús María, twelve kilometers north of Aguascalientes, the first stop on the Camino Real south of Zacatecas. Unlike the historically costumed Moros y Cristianos of Zacatecas, those of the village of Jesús María Dolores all wear wooden masks except Santiago himself and the only female character in the play—Toci, the wife of the Aztec sun god Huitzilopochtli. With masks and indigenous characters, this morisma is profoundly Mesoamerican in character. The grey-faced, turbaned Moros are mounted on horses and enjoy a military advantage over the white-faced Cristianos, who wear extravagant straw hats decorated with colored tassels. The *Rey de los cristianos* or Christian king wears a large elaborate mask with a long carved beard. His soldiers are called *Chichahuales*, a term of Nahuatl origin meaning strong and determined. They are dressed in huarache sandals and white pajamas, emblematic of their indigenous origins, despite their masked transformation into white or mestizo Christians.

In stark contrast to the almost endless *parlamentos* or scripted speeches of Zacatecas, there is no dialogue at all, only a series of *escaramuzas* or skirmishes, ringing with the sounds of the steel machetes of the Moros clashing with the hardwood swords of the Chichahuales. Not a word is spoken by the characters, but everyone in the crowd, including children, already knows the narrative, which they gladly share with visitors:

Seated on his throne in Heaven, God notices the wars and pitched battles that are taking place below on the earth. The Rey Cristiano has been grievously wounded and is near death in a coma. Disturbed with the mayhem, God calls Santiago to his side and orders him to descend to earth to make peace. Santiago appears to the Rey Cristiano in a dream and tells him the plan. He will come to earth to heal him and help him prevail in the battle. The warrior saint comes down to earth on his white horse and defeats the moros, one by one. They lie on the ground either dead or agonizing. Santiago returns to heaven and is scolded by God, who tells him:

–I wanted peace on earth, not death and destruction. I need the moros alive.

He then announces to Santiago:

–Now I am giving you the power that only I and my son Jesus have: the power to resurrect the dead. Now go and bring them back to life.



Santiago, from *Moorslayer to Redeemer* – Jesús María, Aguascalientes, Mexico

Santiago descends to earth again and rides his white horse three times over the bodies of the moros. On the fourth time, he touches each one, and they come back to life one by one.

The rest of the celebration is a joyful *Juego de Moros y Cristianos* at its best. The Moros ride back and forth for an additional hour by the line of Chichahuales, clashing swords, not in combat, but in jubilation. The next day the spectacle is repeated, but a new character appears, a female named Toci, the wife of Huitzilopochtli, who rides among the Chichahuales and dispenses food from her basket to keep them strong.

The most significant aspect of this fiesta is the transformation of Saint James himself, from Santiago Matamoros, the merciless Moor-killer, to Santiago Redentor, the redeemer. In most areas of Latin America, the transformation is never this overt and explicit, and never so boldly dramatized. In one afternoon, Santiago is transformed from the most formidable enemy of the natives, into their redeemer and protector.

#### DIS-ORIENTALIZATION: TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM FOR GLOBAL CONVERSATIONS ON JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

In observing the festivals of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, visitors are struck with the persistence of cultural memory and wonder about the continuing resonance of events that happened so long ago. Are these dramas some kind of bizarre antiquarian pursuit? How can they seem to speak so profoundly to contemporary people? Can the study of these traditions transcend anecdotal description and begin to theorize exemplary cultural processes instrumental in understanding cultural and political dilemmas of the present day? These community rituals revisit Christian Europe's millennial antagonisms with Islam and Judaism that have forged cultural habits with grave political consequences. The dreamlike ideas and representations of Oriental and Indigenous "others" are distorted and essentialized in art, literature, and academic disciplines, creating a legacy of troubling discourse which the great Palestinian Christian scholar Edward Said identifies as Orientalism. With the defeat of Islam in Spain in 1492, a supercharged social imaginary is born that traps the West in a globalizing and colonizing impulse, which does not allow us to think about what is best for others without projecting or forcing our values onto them.

This is not a clash of civilizations as some have characterized it, for Islam, Christianity, and Judaism are faces of the same civilization. In scholarly dialogue with Said, the Moroccan cultural historian Anouar Majid asserts that the political turmoil that surrounds us is rather a deadly clash of messianic fundamentalisms. His quest to develop a theory and practice of Dis-Orientalization has led him to

revisit the Iberian "Re-conquest" and the era of "Convivencia" or cultural tolerance that preceded it, in search of a broader archetype of cultural and political relations. He also makes a call for Americanist scholars to reconsider the cultural arena of greater Mexico, where Native Americans were forced by a new conquest to join in the global conversation.

We believe a new paradigm of Dis-Orientalization can be identified in the Indo-Hispano rituals that evolved after the conquest of Mexico. These photographs and discussion can help to decipher the embodied cultural knowledge enacted on plazas along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and to visualize the imagination of mestizo peoples as they dramatize their own liberation, their own destiny, and place in the world.



*Repentance and Conversion of Argel de Ozmán – Bracho. Zacatecas, Mexico*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bonfil Batalla, Guillermo. *México profundo: una civilización negada*. México: CIESAS, 1987.

Gandert, Miguel with Enrique Lamadrid. *Nuevo México Profundo: Rituals of an Indo-Hispano Homeland*. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2000.

Lamadrid, Enrique with Miguel Gandert. *Hermanitos Comanchitos: Indo-Hispano Rituals of Captivity and Redemption*. Albuquerque: UNM Press, 2003.

Majid, Anouar. *We are all Moors: Ending Centuries of Crusades against Muslims and other Minorities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

**ENRIQUE R. LAMADRID**'s research on the contexts and corridors of traditional Nuevomexicano culture has led him up and down the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and into its watersheds with photographer and colleague Miguel Gandert. Lamadrid co-curated the permanent exhibit at El Camino Real International Heritage Center. At UNM he teaches folklore, literature, and cultural history and is chair of the Department of Spanish & Portuguese. His research on cultural hybridity culminated in his and Miguel Gandert's acclaimed book, *Hermanitos Comanchitos: Indo-Hispano Rituals of Captivity and Redemption* (UNM Press, 2003). Most recently, Lamadrid collaborated with Estévan Arellano and Amy Córdova on the prizewinning children's book *Juan the Bear and the Water of Life / La Acequia de Juan del Oso* (UNM Press, 2008).

**MIGUEL GANDERT**, a native of Española, is a fine art and documentary photographer and Professor of Communication and Journalism at UNM, where he received an M.A. in photography. Gandert, who continues to photograph in black and white, sees documentary work as both a form of art with a strong capacity for expression, as well as a way of telling stories and understanding complex cultural relationships. His series, *Nuevo México Profundo, Rituals of an Indo-Hispano Homeland* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 2000), was the subject of a book and one-person exhibition for the opening of the National Hispanic Culture Center of New Mexico in 2000. His work is featured in a forthcoming book with Chris Wilson on public spaces in New Mexico (Trinity University Press, 2010).



Los Chichahuales, *Soldiers of Santiago* – Jesús María, Aguascalientes, Mexico

**February 25–27, 2010**

UNM / National Hispanic Cultural Center  
Annual University of New Mexico Conference on Ibero-American Culture & Society

**MOROS, MORISCOS, MARRANOS Y MESTIZOS:  
Alterity, Hybridity, and Identity in Diaspora**

**CONFERENCE SESSIONS**

Narratives of alterity, hybridity, identity, resistance, diaspora, exile, immigration.

Cultural theory of Orientalization and Disorientalization.

Morisma Festivals (Moros y Cristianos) in Spain and Latin America.

History of Spanish: Ladino Spanish, Arabic influence.

Romancero and Cancionero (narrative and lyric poetry).

Folklore, Foodways, Agriculture.

Muslim - Jewish - Christian Relations.

Jews, crypto-Jews, and Conversos on both sides of the Atlantic.

Cultures in Motion: Immigration— Mexicans in the U.S. / Muslims in the E.U.

**KEYNOTE PRESENTERS & PANELS**

Anouar Majid, University of New England  
Michelle Hamilton, University of Minnesota  
Victor M. Solís, Instituto Cultural de Aguascalientes  
Lucia Costigan - Ohio State University  
Gregory Rodríguez - New America Foundation

**PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT**

“Las Morismas del Camino Real de Tierra Adentro”  
by Miguel Gandert

**LIVE PERFORMANCES**

Matachines Nuevomexicanos  
Romances e Inditas: Concierto

COORDINATOR: Enrique R. Lamadrid, [lamadrid@unm.edu](mailto:lamadrid@unm.edu)

CONFERENCE WEBSITE: [www.unm.edu/~spanconf](http://www.unm.edu/~spanconf)

# THE PARTICIPATION OF CRYPTO-JEWS IN THE SETTLEMENT OF THE FAR NORTHERN FRONTIER OF NEW SPAIN, 1589-1663\*©

By Stanley M. Hordes

## The Frontier as Refuge

Before, during, and after the two aberrant periods of inquisitorial persecution against the crypto-Jews<sup>1</sup> in New Spain, it appears that the far northern frontier served as a haven for *conversos* attempting to avoid arrest by the Holy Office. Solange Alberro, in her ground-breaking 1988 work, *Inquisición y sociedad en México, 1571-1700*, emphasized this fact in her analysis of seventeenth-century Zacatecas. The second-most important city in the viceroyalty of New Spain, Zacatecas served as an important mining center and mercantile distribution point for the region.<sup>2</sup>

Alberro argued that the great distance of Zacatecas from the center of authority in Mexico City, and its geographical isolation from other major communities “facilitated laxity and backsliding, practically assuring exemption from punishment” by the Holy Office.<sup>3</sup> The permissive atmosphere of this northern mining community fostered an environment where heretical acts lost their character as social transgressions, and, as a consequence, behavior that would not have been tolerated in the capital passed virtually unnoticed in *tierra adentro*. The frontier offered two major advantages for crypto-Jews seeking anonymity: remoteness from inquisitorial officials and an ample market for the goods and services provided by *converso* merchants. Alberro observed that, although several members of this community were denounced before the Mexican tribunal, only a minority of these cases were ever prosecuted.<sup>4</sup> The testimony provided by inquisition records, however fragmentary, presents a unique window into the role that these crypto-Jews played in the economy and society of the northern frontier.

On the basis of this documentation, a clear picture emerges of *converso* participation in commerce. The trade with the northern mining area was largely controlled by merchants based in Mexico City, who received on consignment such diverse items as wine from Spain, silk from the Philippines, cacao from Venezuela, cloth from *obrajes* in Tlaxcala, and wax from Campeche, and who then sold this merchandise on credit to

traveling merchants bound for Zacatecas and other mining towns. These individuals comprised a mobile, adventuresome group, seldom remaining in one place for more than a few years at a time. For many, their trading experience in the mining areas was but one of several spheres of mercantile activity in which they had engaged during their lifetime. With few exceptions, these crypto-Jews were immigrants from Portugal and Spain who had come over at a young age to seek their fortunes. Their experiences reflected the needs and the hardships of the environment in which they lived. Some of them participated in the defense of the mining frontier against Indian attacks. Others suffered the loss of their wares along the highway at the hands of robbers. The danger and risk of their enterprises necessitated the development of interdependence and cooperation among the travelers, both crypto-Jews and Old Christians alike. Often, groups of traders undertook journeys together or joined in *compañías* for mutual aid and protection.<sup>5</sup>

Religious observance on the part of crypto-Jews of Zacatecas and the surrounding areas tended to follow the same pattern demonstrated in other parts of New Spain. Customs included abstaining from eating pork, *porging* of animals prior to slaughter, and fasting on Yom Kippur.<sup>6</sup> Inquisition records even cite the existence of a synagogue in the city from the early seventeenth century.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, like their co-religionists living elsewhere in the viceroyalty, Zacatecan *conversos* followed similar patterns of endogamy, taking care to marry within the community.<sup>8</sup> Despite the formal prohibition of judaizing activity in New Spain, the practice of the Law of Moses in Zacatecas was, according to Alberro, “conscious, coherent, and deliberate,” thus indicating that the northern mining region functioned effectively as a zone of refuge.<sup>9</sup>

## Crypto-Jewish Settlement in New Mexico

“If Zacatecas constitutes a zone of refuge in comparison with the central region of the viceroyalty,” according to Alberro, “New Mexico is, as [France V.] Scholes states, ‘a heaven for social outcasts from the mining camps of Zacatecas, Santa Bárbara and Parral’ . . . . That is to say, the zone of refuge from the zone of refuge.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, it appears that New Mexico, like the mining areas of Zacatecas, also served as a focus of settlement of crypto-Jews seeking to escape persecution from the Mexican Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition.

The campaign of the Mexican Holy Office against the crypto-Jews of Nuevo León in the 1580s and 1590s,

was to have a direct impact on the exploration and settlement of New Mexico at the end of the sixteenth century. Upon the arrest of Governor Luis de Carvajal by the Inquisition for tolerating the presence of *judaizantes* under his administration, he left behind in Nuevo León as lieutenant governor of the province a seasoned military leader, Gaspar Castaño de Sosa. Like Carvajal, Castaño was born in Portugal, and was possibly of crypto-Jewish origin.<sup>11</sup> Soon after receiving word of Governor Carvajal's conviction and appearance in the *auto-da-fe* of February 24, 1589,<sup>12</sup> Castaño rounded up the approximately one hundred seventy colonists (comprising men, women and children) in Cerralvo and led them on an uncharted expedition to the north. This "Colony on the Move," as Matson and Schroeder<sup>13</sup> referred to it, reached the Río Grande,<sup>14</sup> traveled upriver to its confluence with the Río Pecos, and trekked up the Pecos, crossing Glorieta Pass into the Río Grande Valley, finally stopping near the pueblo of Santo Domingo, in an attempt to establish the first permanent Spanish colony in New Mexico.

Under the terms of the Spanish colonial system in the late sixteenth century, however, the Castaño de Sosa *entrada* of 1590 comprised an illegal expedition. Not only had Castaño failed to secure permission from the viceroy to leave Nuevo León (although his emissaries had made attempts to do so), but also he had neglected to inform anyone in authority that he was embarking on such a venture. Moreover, Castaño's was the only expedition into the northern frontier of its day not to include a priest or any member of a religious order.<sup>15</sup> The close ties maintained by Castaño to Governor Carvajal, the coincidence of the timing of his hasty (and illegal) departure for the north upon hearing of Carvajal's problems with the Inquisition, the absence of a priest on the expedition, and the allegations of his own familial ties to the crypto-Jewish community, all suggest strongly that Castaño might have initiated the dangerous *entrada* for the purpose of leading other crypto-Jews to a secure haven on the far northern frontier.

When the viceroy of New Spain was informed of Castaño's departure from Nuevo León, he sent Juan Morlete, a former associate of Castaño's, to arrest him and his entire party, not for practicing Judaism, but for having conducted an illegal expedition. Castaño was convicted of treason and exiled to the Philippine Islands, where he died shortly thereafter.<sup>16</sup> Many of the survivors of the *entrada* returned to Nuevo León and participated in the founding of the town of Monterrey in 1596.<sup>17</sup> Others remained in central Mexico, fearful,

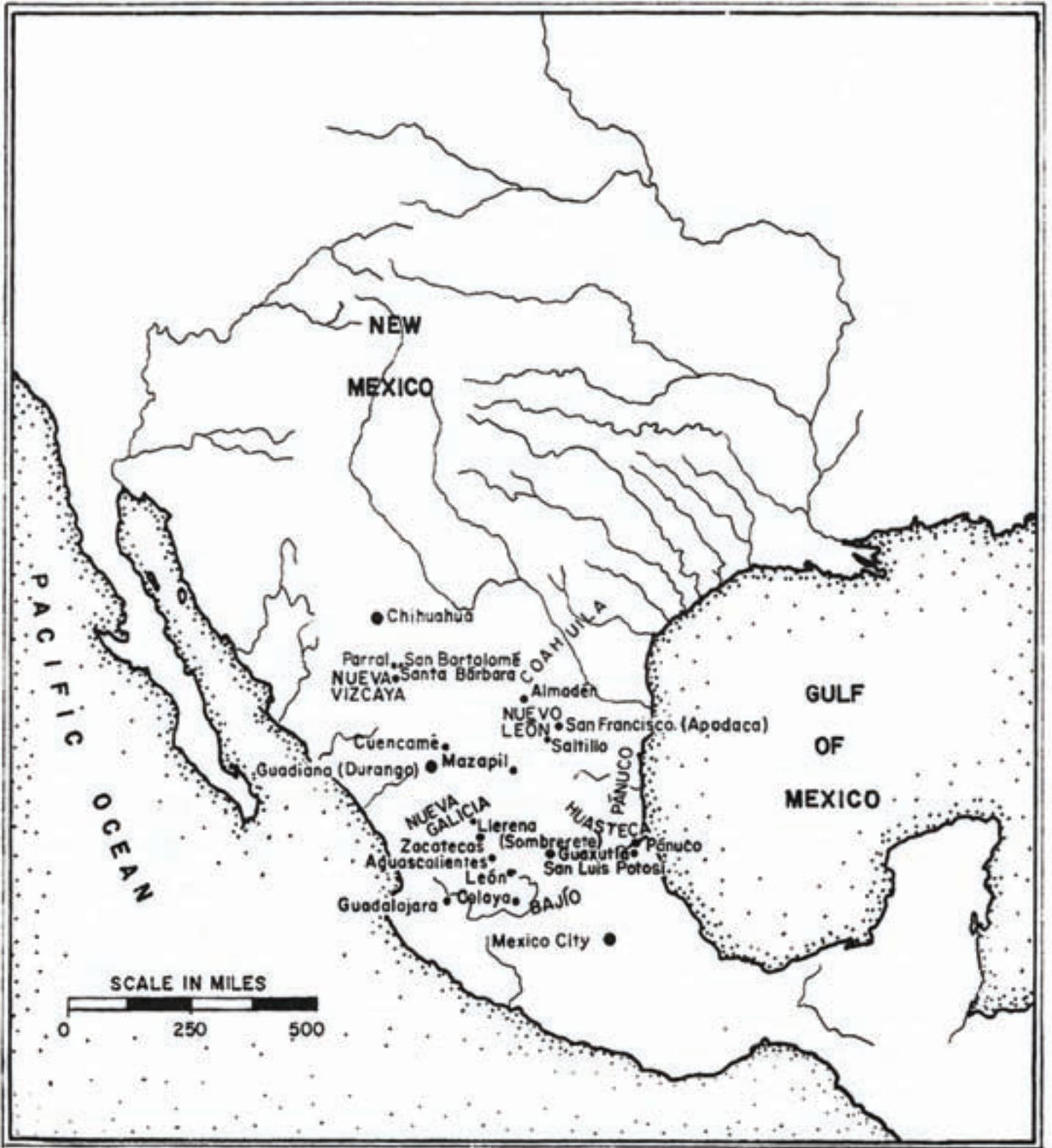
perhaps, of attracting the attention of the Inquisition, now in the throes of its vigorous campaign against the *converso* community of New Spain.

By the late 1590s the king had realized the efficacy of establishing a defensive outpost in the far northern frontier of New Mexico. Viceroy Luis de Velasco chose don Juan de Oñate, the son of a wealthy and powerful northern miner, himself a descendant of converted Jews,<sup>18</sup> to serve as *adelantado*, and charged him with the task of establishing a new colony in the distant frontier of New Mexico. Among the people whom Oñate approached to join him in this effort were some of the survivors of the Castaño de Sosa expedition. After all, they had returned from New Mexico just a few years earlier and consequently knew well the route northward and the terrain, and had firsthand knowledge of the Pueblo Indians who inhabited the lands to be conquered and occupied. In short, Oñate must have realized the potential for these survivors of the Castaño expedition to help him establish his new colony on a strong footing.

For their part, those survivors who did not return to Nuevo León might well have felt themselves somewhat vulnerable to arrest by the Inquisition, which, as has been demonstrated, was in the midst of its heaviest phase of activity against Mexican crypto-Jews. Genealogical research has indicated that several of the participants in both the Castaño de Sosa and Oñate expeditions can be traced back to Jewish or crypto-Jewish origins.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the presence of New Christians in New Mexico from the earliest years of Spanish settlement, the Inquisition, represented in the colony by the Franciscan friars, appeared unconcerned about the possibility of the practice of Jewish heresy in its midst. This was due to a variety of factors, including the general disinterest by the Mexican Holy Office in *judaizante* cases in the early seventeenth century, and the remoteness of New Mexico from the capital. Perhaps most significantly, the Franciscans were preoccupied with the struggle for power with the civil authorities in this far northern frontier outpost.<sup>20</sup>

During this period of inattention it appears that several more generations of descendants of *conversos* emigrated northward along the Camino Real into New Mexico.<sup>21</sup> It was not until 1662 that Inquisition agents in New Mexico began to focus on crypto-Judaism. At four o'clock on the morning of August 27, agents of the Holy Office burst into the home of Governor Bernardo López de Mendizábal, arresting his wife,



*Tierra Adentro: the mining frontier of New Spain.*

From *To the End of the Earth*, by Stanley M. Hordes. Copyright © 2005 Columbia University Press. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.

Teresa de Aguilera y Roche. Also taken that year were the governor himself and Sargento Mayor Francisco Gómez Robledo. All three were charged with secretly practicing Judaism. Arrested on unspecified charges of heresy were Capitán Cristóbal de Anaya Almazán, Sargento Mayor Diego Romero, and Capitán Nicolás de Aguilar.<sup>22</sup> The documentation generated by the politically motivated trials of these individuals offers a glimpse into crypto-Jewish activity in New Mexico during the period preceding these arrests, when neither the inquisitors nor anyone else in the colony appeared to have been bothered by such heretical practices.

Testimony emanating from these trials reveals customs clearly identified as Jewish being practiced by early New Mexican settlers. Several witnesses testifying against Francisco Gómez Robledo insisted that it was common knowledge in the colony that his father, Francisco Gómez, was a Jew.<sup>23</sup> The elder Gómez, born in Coima, Portugal, came to New Spain in 1604 in the retinue of Juan de Oñate's brother, Alonso, heading north to New Mexico shortly thereafter. During his nearly half century in the colony, Gómez held several civil and military positions.<sup>24</sup> Not only was Francisco Gómez Robledo found to have been circumcised,<sup>25</sup> considered by inquisitors as a certain indication of judaizing,<sup>26</sup> but his younger brothers, Juan and Andrés, were as well. It is worthy to note that in the 1662 testimony against the latter two, the witness, Domingo López de Ocanto, conveyed the impression that knowledge of the circumcisions was widespread among the community:

They were asked if they knew, or if they had heard of any person or persons who were circumcised.

He replied that he only knows that Juan Gómez and Andrés Gómez, sons of Francisco Gómez, deceased, citizens of the Villa of Santa Fe, who are of the age of this witness, when they were young boys used to bathe together, and that it appeared to him that they had their parts circumcised, *and that all of the young men of that age know this . . .* [emphasis added].<sup>27</sup>

As a result of this revelation, Inquisition prosecutor, Rodrigo Ruíz suggested that:

Juan and Andrés Gómez, brothers, sons of Francisco Gómez and doña Ana Romero [read Robledo] with regard to the aforesaid sign of circumcision or cutting, which demonstrates that

they are observers of Judaism, as a consequence should be severely castigated by the Holy Office with the penalties established by law . . .<sup>28</sup>

Despite the clear indications of Judaic identity and practice, and the stern admonition by prosecutor Ruíz, Francisco Gómez Robledo was acquitted of all charges, and neither Juan nor Andrés was ever prosecuted by the Inquisition.

So, too, did the record generated by the trials of Governor Bernardo López de Mendizábal and his wife, Teresa de Aguilera y Roche, suggest a connection to Jewish background. López, arrested for *judaizante* in 1662, swore that he was of pure Old Christian noble origin, and that none of his ancestors had ever been castigated by the Inquisition.<sup>29</sup> He rather conveniently neglected to mention that one of his maternal great-grandfathers, Juan Núñez de León, had been penanced by the Mexican Inquisition for *judaizante* in 1603.<sup>30</sup> Testimony against Aguilera included Sabbath observance, such as changing linens and bathing on Fridays, and reciting prayers in secret on Friday evenings.<sup>31</sup>

Cristóbal de Anaya Almazán, as cited above, had been arrested on an unspecified charge of heresy. His testimony, however, appears to have suggested a fear of charges against him for practicing Judaism:

Item -- he also says and declares that in August of the previous year, in the pueblo of Sandía, having complied with the order brought by the Holy Tribunal, don Fernando de Durán y Chaves said to the witness that he had taken back that which the Holy Tribunal had ordered, to which the witness responded to him, I, too, take back what I said so that the people should not be saying what is being said, that perhaps they arrested me for practicing Judaism, which was said before don Agustín de Chaves, Padre fray Raphael, and doña Catalina Vásques, from whom I also ask for mercy as a Catholic Christian.<sup>32</sup>

During the course of the 1660s persecutions in New Mexico, testimony emerged from the trial of Governor López that shed light on the Jewish practices of another early colonist. Padre fray Nicolás de Villar, related that during lent of 1657, one of his Franciscan brethren had told him of a young girl, the eldest daughter of Portuguese blacksmith Manuel Jorge, who had confessed to him that, "she observed the Law of Moses with exquisite rites and ceremonies." The priest did not report her heresy to anyone, since the

Mexican Tribunal was 500 leagues distant, and he was not aware of the presence of any Inquisition official in the colony.<sup>33</sup>

## Conclusion

The examples cited above suggest that the crypto-Jewish identity and practices of early New Mexico colonists were quite well known both to the general populace and to religious officials. But, absent extraneous factors, in this case the effort in the 1660s on the part of the Franciscans to break down the political power of Governor López de Mendizábal, the authorities, both civil and religious, appeared to be unconcerned about this heresy in their midst. In this sense, the New Mexico experience supports the thesis that the frontier served as a haven for those fleeing from the authority of the Inquisition. The farther one found oneself from the metropolis, the greater the sense of toleration. In the case of the crypto-Jews, those who fled from their homes in Spain and Portugal found a relatively safe haven in central Mexico. During the two aberrant periods of persecution by the Mexican Holy Office in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, New Christians were able to escape to an even more secure environment on the far northern frontier of New Spain. Indeed, it appears that the distant outpost of New Mexico represented, in Solange Alberro's words, "the zone of refuge from the zone of refuge" with regard to its policy of toleration of a crypto-Jewish presence.

\* A longer version of this article appeared in the anthology edited by Susan Schroeder and Stafford Poole, *Religion in New Spain* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007). The author would like to acknowledge the Estate of Eva Feld for its support of the research that formed the basis of this article.

**STANLEY M. HORDES** earned his Ph.D. in Mexican history at Tulane University. His book, *To the End of the Earth: A History of Crypto-Jews of New Mexico* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), was the result of over two decades of research on the history of New Mexican crypto-Jews, sponsored by the Latin American and Iberian Institute at the University of New Mexico, where he is adjunct research professor. He is currently working on a new research project to document the history of the crypto-Jewish settlement in Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica.

## ENDNOTES

1. The term, *crypto-Jews*, refers to those people baptized as Catholic Christians and living outwardly as such, but secretly practicing Judaic rites and customs. While the terms *converso* and *New Christian* strictly should pertain to those Jews who actually converted to Catholicism, it will be extended in this article to the descendants of the original *conversos*, who lived as crypto-Jews.
2. See Peter J. Bakewell, *Silver Mining and Society in Colonial Mexico: Zacatecas, 1546-1700* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971).
3. Solange Alberro, *Inquisición y sociedad en México, 1571-1700* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988), pp. 390-402.
4. Archivo General de la Nación (Mexico) [hereafter cited as AGN], Ramo de Inquisición, Tomo 414, exp. 2, *Testificaciones de Manuel Rodríguez Núñez contra diversas personas* (1644), f. 170. See also, Stanley M. Hordes, "The Crypto-Jewish Community of New Spain," 1620-1649: A Collective Biography, (PhD. diss., Tulane University, 1980), pp. 88-94.
5. AGN, Inquisición, T. 510, f. 334, Denuncia contra Gabriel, mozo, Cuencamé (1625); T. 435, f. 445; Denuncia contra Thomas de Sosa, Zacatecas (1650), as cited in Alberro, *Inquisición y sociedad en México*, p. 403; Hordes, "The Crypto-Jewish Community of New Spain," p. 120.
6. Alberro, *Inquisición y sociedad en México*, pp. 401, 403-404.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 401, 404; Hordes, "The Crypto-Jewish Community of New Spain," p. 119.
8. Alberro, *Inquisición y sociedad en México*, p. 408.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 391-392. The quote from Scholes derives from: France V. Scholes, "The First Decade of the Inquisition in New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical Review* 10, no. 3 (1935): 216.
10. Martin A. Cohen *The Martyr: Luis de Carvajal, a Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973, reprint, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), pp. 103-104. Cohen suggested a familial link between Castaño de Sosa and the crypto-Jewish community of Nuevo León. Richard Santos, in *Silent Heritage: The Sephardim and the Colonization of the Spanish North American Frontier* (San Antonio: New Sephard Press, 2000), pp. 297-298, referred to Castaño as a "suspected Crypto-Jew." Unfortunately, neither author provided references, archival or otherwise, for these assertions. Investigations are currently underway to ascertain the family history of Gaspar Castaño de Sosa; while no specific tie has yet been established, several other Portuguese "Castaños" and "Sosas" were identified as crypto-Jews in New Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
11. AGN, Inquisición, Lote Riva Palacio, Tomo 11, exp. 3, "Proceso contra Luis de Carvajal, Gobernador del Nuevo Reino de León," f. 69; Jose Toribio Medina, *Historia de la inquisición en Mexico* (Mexico: Ediciones Fuente Cultural, 1905), p. 128; Eva A. Uchmany, *La vida entre judaísmo y el cristianismo en Nuevo España, 1580-1606*, (Mexico City: Archivo General de la Nación and Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), p. 55.
12. Albert Schroeder and Dan Matson, *A Colony on the Move: Gaspar Castaño de Sosa's Journal, 1590-1591* (Santa Fe: School of American Research, 1965).
13. The precise location of Castaño's crossing of the Río Grande is a subject of scholarly debate. Schroeder and Matson, as well as George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey, placed the site near Del Rio, Texas. On the other hand, Santos claimed that the expedition made the crossing farther downriver, near Piedras Negras. He identified the name of the crossing as *el paso grande de los judíos*, but offered no primary citation for this, beyond his reference to its use by the US-Mexico Border Commission in 1850. See: Schroeder and Matson, *A Colony on the Move*, pp. 32-33; George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey, *The Rediscovery of New Mexico, 1580-1594: The Explorations of Chamuscado, Espejo, Castaño de Sosa, Morlete, Leyva de Bonilla and*

## JACOBO DE LA SERNA

In his seminal work, *To the End of the Earth: a History of Crypto-Jews of New Mexico*, Stanley Hordes describes encounters with Hispanic New Mexicans who approached him when he was State Historian (1981 – 1985), wondering if they might be crypto-Jews because of vestigial Jewish customs practiced by their parents or grandparents.

For over three decades Dr. Hordes has been documenting the history of crypto-Jews in New Spain. The response, in New Mexico anyway, has been mixed, to say the least—from denial to embrace, with indifference or curiosity somewhere in the middle. For many who learn of their Jewish ancestry going back four hundred years, with centuries of Catholicism in between, it is of no consequence. But for Jacobo de la Serna, a New Mexican artist and a profoundly spiritual man, it has been a source of inspiration, along with his Native American and Hispanic Catholic heritage. Even before he discovered his Sephardic roots, de la Serna told Hordes, he “began creating images from the Hebrew Bible” because he was “stimulated by what he regarded as a ‘feeling of Jewishness.’”<sup>1</sup>

“The artwork that I create is a conglomerate of everything that I am, culturally and socially. I am of Iberian, Native American and Sephardic ancestry. The pieces I am moved to create are every bit a part of each of these and more. I am influenced by the visual and the spiritual of my ancestry and by the geography of the land. I feel that the Universe converges within each of us this way, and to deny a single part would be equal to removing the sun or another planet from our solar system.”<sup>2</sup> De la Serna, whose Navajo great-grandmother and Spanish great-grandfather were from the Abiquiu area, grew up in nearby Hernandez. De la Serna’s artistic media is as diverse as his origins: santero, ceramist, painter and printmaker.



<sup>1</sup> Stanley M. Hordes, *To the End of the Earth: A History of the Crypto-Jews of New Mexico* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) 266.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.mccormickgallery.com/delasernatour.html>

### ***“I am of Iberian, Native American and Sephardic ancestry.”***

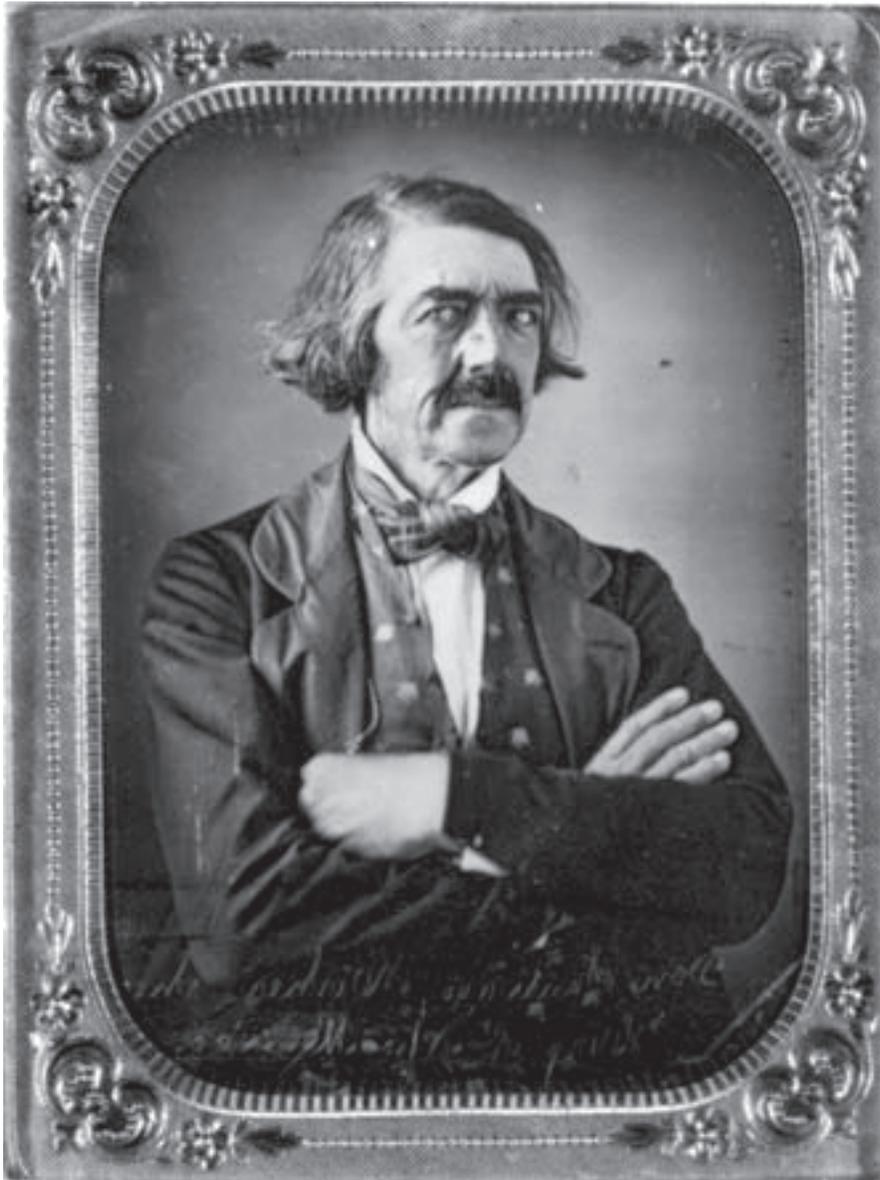
“Lights of the Anusim” (above), acrylic on canvas with mica and clay, in rich reds with gold highlights, is one of Jacobo de la Serna’s paintings that was featured in the 2008 exhibition at the Gregory Gaymont Studio and Gallery in Chicago, “Sephardic Visions: An Exhibition of Artists of Influence and Ancestry.”

“Dreidel”<sup>\*</sup> (left) is a pit-fired clay interpretation of a Hanukkah toy, one of de la Serna’s micaceous clay works being shown in a single-artist show, “Jacobo de la Serna: Reflections on Tradition,” at Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, New Jersey, through April 18. Two of his micaceous pots are on view locally at the Albuquerque Museum of Art & History, a large reverse reduction ceramic vase in the “Albuquerque Now” show running through April 18; and another ceramic work in a permanent exhibition, “Common Ground.”

<sup>\*</sup>Although the dreidel, a four-sided top, is of eastern-European origin and not part of Sephardic culture, anthropologist Seth D. Kunin believes that New Mexico crypto-Jews may have “borrowed” this from Ashkenazi Jews in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. We thank Dr. Hordes for his informative discussion about the dreidel.



- Humana* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1966), p. 249; Santos, *Silent Heritage*, pp. 286-287.
14. Hammond and Rey, *The Rediscovery of New Mexico, 1580-1594*, pp. 28-39.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-48.
16. Alonso de León, *Relación y discursos del descubrimiento, población y pacificación de este Nuevo Reino de León* (Mexico, 1649), republished in *Historia de Nuevo León* (Monterrey: Centro de Estudios Humanísticos de la Universidad de Nuevo León, 1961), p. 60.
17. José Antonio Esquibel, "New Light on the Jewish-converso Ancestry of Don Juan de Oñate: A Research Note," *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 7, no. 2 (Spring 1998): 174-190; Esquibel, "Four Additional Lines of Descent from the Ha-Levi Family of Burgos, Spain, to the Present," *Beyond Origins of New Mexico Families* (<http://pages.prodigy.net/bluemountain1/halevi.htm>), Special Feature, January 2001.
18. See Stanley M. Hordes, *To the End of the Earth: A History of the Crypto-Jews of New Mexico* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), pp. 89-90, 111-116.
19. See France V. Scholes, "The First Decade of the Inquisition in New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical Review* 10 (1935); Scholes, *Church and State in New Mexico, 1610-1650* (Albuquerque: Historical Society of New Mexico, 1937); Scholes, *Troublous Times in New Mexico, 1659-1670* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1942); Joseph P. Sánchez, *The Rio Abajo Frontier, 1540 to 1692: A History of Early Colonial New Mexico* (Albuquerque: The Albuquerque Museum, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1996).
20. See Hordes, *To the End of the Earth*, pp. 137-148.
21. AGN, Concurso de Peñalosa, Legajo 1, no. 3, "Prisión y embargo de bienes de doña Teresa de Aguilera y Roche en 27 de agosto de 1662 años," ff. 396r-397r; Legajo 1, no. 5, "Auto de prisión, embargo y remate de bienes del Capitan Nicolás de Aguilar, año de 1662," f. 475r; Legajo 1, no. 6, "Autos de prisión embargo y remate de bienes del Sargento Mayor Francisco Gómez Robledo, fecho el año de 1662," f. 245r; Legajo 1, no. 7, "Autos de prisión embargo y remate de bienes del Sargento Mayor Diego Romero—Año de 1662," f. 294r; AGN, Inquisición, T. 594, exp. 1, "Primera audiencia de don Bernardo López de Mendizábal, por proposiciones irreligiosas y escandalosas. Mexico, April 28, 1663," f. 2r.
22. AGN, Inquisición, T. 583, exp. 3, "Proceso y causa criminal contra el Sargento Mayor Francisco Gómez Robledo . . . por sospechoso de delitos de judaísmo" (1663), ff 270v, 275r, 278v, 293r, 295r-v; 308v.
23. Fray Angelico Chávez, *Origins of New Mexico Families in the Spanish Colonial Period* (Santa Fe: William Gannon, 1954, 1975), pp. 35-36.
24. AGN, Inquisición, T. 583, ff. 353r-v; 373v-374r; 379v-380v. On September 5, 1663, three surgeons appointed by the inquisitors found that Francisco Gómez Robledo had three scars on his penis that appeared to have been made with a sharp instrument. The defendant protested that he was not circumcised, but rather that the scars were caused by small ulcers that he had suffered. He asked for, and received a second examination, conducted on June 23, 1664. This time the three surgeons were accompanied by an Inquisition doctor. The second inspection not only confirmed the findings of the first, but revealed two other scars. They concluded that the scars were created "by a sharp instrument . . . [and] could not have originated from any another cause." [emphasis added] (f. 380v). Scholes appears to have misread the original document when he indicated that the inspection revealed, "'it was possible that they had resulted from another cause'" [emphasis added]. See Scholes, "Troublous Times in New Mexico," p. 193. Unfortunately, in her effort to discredit the historical basis for crypto-Judaism in New Mexico, folklorist Judith S. Neulander failed to consult the original record, relying instead on Scholes. See Neulander, "The Crypto-Jewish Canon: Choosing to be 'Chosen' in Millennial Tradition," *Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Review* 18, no. 1-2 (1996): p. 49.
25. See Hordes, "The Crypto-Jewish Community of New Spain," pp. 120-121; and David Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1996), pp. 202-207. In the case of Gómez Robledo, it appears that the foreskin was not entirely removed as part of his ritual circumcision. This is consistent with the observation by David Gitlitz: "By the seventeenth century in Mexico, some Judaizing conversos did not remove the foreskin at all, but rather scarred it with a longitudinal cut in an attempt to comply with the requirement of the law and deceive the Inquisitors. When Inquisition doctors examined Gabriel de Granada in Mexico in 1645 they 'found a mark . . . running longitudinally and with a scar, made apparently with a cutting instrument.' . . ." *Secrecy and Deceit*, p. 206.
26. AGN, Inquisición, T.598, exp. 7, "Testificaciones que se an sacado a pedimiento del dr. fiscal de uno de los quadernos que se remitieron por el comisario del Nuevo México contra Juan Gómez, vezino de dicho Nuevo México" (1662-1663), Testimony of Domingo López de Ocano Convento del Sr. San Francisco del Pueblo de Sandía, April 4, 1662, f. 119v.
27. AGN, Inquisición, T. 598, exp. 7, "Testificaciones que se an sacado a pedimiento del dr. fiscal de uno de los quadernos que se remitieron por el comisario del Nuevo México contra Juan Gómez, vezino de dicho Nuevo México" (1662-1663), Petition by Dr. Rodrigo Ruiz, México, July 23, 1663, f. 116r.
28. AGN, Inquisición, T. 594, exp. 1, "Primera audiencia de don Bernardo López de Mendizábal, por proposiciones irreligiosas y escandalosas," (1663), ff. 5v-6r.
29. AGN, Inquisición, T. 210, exp. 2, "Proceso contra Juan Núñez, balanzario de la Real Caja, por alumbrado y sospechoso de judaizante." (1598-1609).
30. AGN, Inquisición, T. 596, exp. 1, "El Señor Fiscal del Santo Oficio contra doña Teresa de Aguilera y Roche, mujer de don Bernardo López de Mendizábal, por sospechosa de delitos de judaísmo." (1663), ff. 10r-40r. Scholes, in "Troublous Times in New Mexico," dismissed the value of the testimony presented against the governor and his wife, as well as against Francisco Gómez Robledo, arguing that "Actual eyewitness accounts . . . were given by only four or five persons who were members of the López household" (p. 160), and that such testimony represented nothing more than "petty gossip and spiteful rumor-mongering" (pp. 196-197). Furthermore, he pointed out, both López and Aguilera either denied the charges, or explained that the timing of their practices was purely coincidental. It is this author's opinion that testimony by a number of eyewitnesses should not be summarily disregarded simply because they were servants. Nor should the obviously self-serving explanations of the defendants be given particularly heavy weight, either. Many scholars of the Mexican Inquisition, including this author, have suggested that the Holy Office was often motivated by political concerns extraneous to the issues of heresy. But the mere fact that the inquisitors, or even the witnesses, themselves, may have maintained other agendas, does not necessarily discredit the validity of the charges of crypto-Judaism. See, for example, Hordes, "The Inquisition as Economic and Political Agent: The Campaign of the Mexican Holy Office Against the Crypto-Jews in the Mid-Seventeenth Century," *The Americas*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (July 1982).
31. AGN, Inquisición, T. 610, exp. 7, "Denunciaciones contra Juan Domínguez de Mendoza. Nuevo México" (1667), Denuncia de Christóbal de Anaia Almazan, Santo Domingo, May 3, 1666, ff. 66v-67r.
32. AGN, Inquisición, T. 593, exp. 1, "El Santo Oficio contra Bernardo López de Mendizábal por proposiciones heréticas y sospechosos en el delito de judaísmo" (1662), f. 162r.



**DON SANTIAGO KIRKER,  
APACHE SCALPER, Part I**

By Hal Jackson

Drawings by Francisco Uviña

*The following article on James Kirker is an edited and shortened version of an article I wrote for Wagon Tracks, the journal of the Santa Fe Trail Association in November 2006. I think CARTA members will be interested in Kirker because of his many escapades along the Camino Real.*

*I was contacted by the BBC last spring and was asked to assist a crew that was to shoot a documentary of Kirker in May 2009. I did help them out and that documentary, "King*

*of the Wild Frontier," will air in the United Kingdom in May 2010. It will likely be picked up by PBS and shown in the United States later. The producer sent me a DVD copy of the documentary and I can say they did a fine job of bringing Kirker to life. There is a long interview in the documentary with the Kirker relatives who still live in the Las Cruces area. I hope you enjoy my efforts to tell Kirker's story.*

—Hal Jackson

## Kirker's Early Years

James Kirker was born in a small village near Belfast in 1793. He was part of that group of people called the Borderers in the British Isles. These people had lived along the troublesome English-Scottish border and as their numbers grew and agrarian reform progressed, many moved to northern Ireland. In fact, the many problems of the 20th-century in Northern Ireland are a direct result of the mainly Protestant Borderers who arrived on the scene in the eighteenth century. And many of these same folk moved to North America beginning in the eighteenth century. Andrew Jackson was the first president to spring from this Borderer well, James Polk the second. When Americans state that their roots are Scots-Irish they refer to the same tough-as-nails stock.

To avoid being drafted into the British army to fight in the Napoleonic wars, James Kirker sailed for the United States, arriving alone in New York City in 1810. He was sixteen years of age at that date. In 1812 James joined the crew of a privateer that sailed to prey on British vessels during the War of 1812. Privateers were commissioned to patrol the oceans to intercept British ships and were allowed to keep the cargoes of such captured vessels. Kirker served on the *Black Joke*, and after many escapades off the Brazilian coast returned to New York City.

Serving on a privateer had risks and advantages for a young man such as Kirker. The principal advantage was that Kirker immediately became a United States citizen when he entered service. The disadvantage and risk was that if his ship was captured he might be treated by the British as a traitor.

Returning to New York, Kirker met and married a young widow, Catherine, who owned and operated a grocery store. With his new wife he fathered a son, James B. Kirker. Shortly after the birth of his son, Kirker headed west with several other Irishmen he knew. Kirker, as did most other Irish immigrants, had many friends and relatives to help him in his new life in America. He had kin living in southeastern Pennsylvania, as well as a cousin David Kirker, in St. Louis.

## St. Louis

Kirker arrived in St. Louis in 1817. His arrival must have been about when the first steamboat made it up the Mississippi to St. Louis—the *Zebulon M. Pike* docked in St. Louis on July 17, 1817. James began working for John McKnight of the firm McKnight and Brady, another pair of Irish friends. Irish like McKnight and Brady wielded most of the economic power in St. Louis at this time. Their business empire included

banks, ferries, and a shipping company in addition to a fleet of boats and various hotels and warehouses.

About 1819 Kirker went into business for himself opening a grocery store. His cousin David was his principal clerk.

James had heard the story, as had everyone, of the Robert McKnight-James Baird party (Robert was John McKnight's brother) that had traveled to Santa Fe in 1812 and had been arrested upon arrival. The traders, ten in all, had been taken south to Chihuahua City by 1814, where they were tried and convicted. Baird was sold to a man in Durango, where he tried to escape but was captured and placed in solitary confinement for nine months. Robert McKnight ended up in Galeana (*see map*) during his confinement doing mining work; he later opened a mercantile store in that small town. Generally the Mexican authorities would release prisoners to various communities where they were expected to serve out their time because it cost less than incarceration. Both McKnight and Baird used their imprisonment to their advantage later.

Finally, in late 1820, the men in the McKnight party were released and allowed to return to the United States. In January 1821 three men from the McKnight party arrived in St. Louis. As Robert McKnight was not among the three stragglers, his brother John decided to send a party to New Mexico in search of him. This party, the John McKnight venture, included Thomas James and James Kirker's cousin David. It had become a business venture as well as a "rescue" mission and James Kirker may have sent some goods with his cousin David. The party left St. Louis May 10, 1821 and headed down the Mississippi thinking they could reach Santa Fe by water.

Their original plan was to descend the Mississippi to the Arkansas River, and ascend that river to Santa Fe. (We sometimes laugh at Pike's bungling in 1806-1807, but here we are in 1821 and people still don't know which river goes where). Luckily the party encountered Hugh Glenn who informed them they could not make it by water. They switched to horses and headed west where they ran into a large group of Comanches in present-day Oklahoma. These Indians would not allow them to pass because they had an agreement with the Spanish to protect this frontier from foreign encroachment. It was very tense for the McKnight party until a squad of Mexicans, (note the word "Mexicans") arrived to allow them to pass; it was just at the moment the Spanish lost power in Mexico and the new Mexican government opened the province of New Mexico to trade with foreigners. David Kirker behaved badly at

this confrontation and showed cowardice, which came back to haunt James Kirker later.

The McKnight party departed St. Louis before William Becknell left Franklin, Missouri, on his trip to Santa Fe. The former arrived in Santa Fe a few weeks after Becknell, and so it is Becknell who is remembered as the “opener” of the Santa Fe Trail (SFT). Becknell, on his return to Missouri, noted that “two other men joined his party at San Miguel del Vado.” One of these men was David Kirker. Robert McKnight was located and he returned to St. Louis at this time.

### First Kirker Trip on the Santa Fe Trail

In 1824 James Kirker made his first trip to New Mexico with a party of trappers and eighty or so traders. William Becknell and M. M. Marmaduke were the leaders of that caravan, which was to use the Cimarron route opened by Becknell in 1822. Kirker was counted among the trappers, but he carried some trade goods in addition to his trapping equipment. Augustus Storrs and Robert McKnight were also in this caravan.

It is not clear whether Kirker returned with the Becknell-Marmaduke party or remained behind to trap beaver. By early 1825 he had returned to St. Louis where he sold his furs and took care of some financial matters concerning his businesses in that city. In May 1825 Kirker was in Franklin preparing for his second trip on the SFT, this one commanded by Augustus Storrs.

Arriving in Santa Fe, Kirker may have applied for and received Mexican citizenship. There is no clear evidence that he actually obtained Mexican citizenship at this time, but he was issued permits to trap beaver later on, in the 1830s; such permits were only issued to citizens of Mexico. His citizenship is important because between 1825 and 1847 he used all three nationalities (British, American, and Mexican) to his advantage. He spent the winter of 1825-1826 trapping in southern Colorado, returning to St. Louis in the spring to sell his pelts.

### Kirker and Kit Carson

James made his next trip west in the summer of 1826, joining a westering party at Fort Osage, Missouri. A complete list of the participants of this party is lacking, but Stephen Turley owned much of the merchandise. McGaw, Kirker’s first biographer, has Kirker as a wagon master in the party. It seems that Andrew Broadus was a member, and if he was included so was a young man by the name of Kit Carson. Carson mentions in his autobiography witnessing the amputation of Broadus’s arm after a gun mishap. If we place Carson and Kirker in this party it would be the beginning of a long acquaintance between the two frontiersmen.

### Santa Rita and Mexico

Kirker arrived in Santa Fe in 1826 with the Turley train and kept traveling south to the copper mine at Santa Rita. [Santa Rita mine is fifteen miles east of Silver City, NM; there is no longer a town there. *Ed*]. Santa Rita del Cobre was a copper deposit discovered in about 1799 and worked from that time. When Kirker arrived, the mines were operated by Robert McKnight and Steven Courcier. Kirker made Santa Rita his home base until 1834, a span of eight years. He wore many hats during this important period.

James trapped along the Gila river in winters, led copper ore trains from Santa Rita to Chihuahua City on the Copper Road, and even did some prospecting.

Most of Kirker’s trapping was accomplished without benefit of a Mexican license. To market the contraband pelts Kirker would meet an American merchant going north on the Camino Nacional (the old Camino Real had, of course, been renamed after independence from Spain in 1821). These traders would transport his pelts to Independence or St. Louis for eventual sale. This shadowy business of Kirker’s slowed when James Baird, a member of the 1812 McKnight group, who had returned to Chihuahua and become a Mexican citizen, led a somewhat successful campaign against illegal trapping.



The Indian situation in northern Chihuahua and eastern Sonora was deteriorating during the 1820s and 1830s. The Mexicans, in 1821, inherited the Spanish policy of trading food and supplies for peace. It was “Peace by Purchase” during the colonial period and had worked reasonably well from the 1590s to the end of Spanish rule. For a variety of reasons, the Mexicans did not maintain good relations with the Apaches or Comanches. Apaches had been living near the many presidios where they obtained their rations. Certainly some young Apache bloods would wander off once in a while to accomplish a little “harvesting” of Mexican communities, but in general this system worked in a sort of Golden Age between 1780 and 1821. By 1830, when the Mexicans had stopped giving rations, most Apaches had abandoned the sedentary life near the presidios and returned to one of stealing livestock.

This change in circumstances resulted in warfare that would last, in Mexico at least, until the 1890s. Apaches raided ranches, towns, and even cities, where they would steal horses and mules, and these livestock then would be traded to entrepreneurs such as Kirker who would sell them to American traders. (See Gregg and Webb on how the traders who bought the livestock would arrive in El Paso where the Mexican owners, to the Americans’ chagrin, would reclaim them based on the brands.)

Kirker and others used arms and ammunition for currency in their Apache trading. By 1840 the Apache was far better armed than his Mexican opponent who usually depended on a bow, club, or lance to protect himself. Much of northern Chihuahua state was depopulated during this period with attacks being reported even in the streets of the capital city, Chihuahua.

### Don Santiago Finds a Refuge at Bent’s Fort

Finally, in 1832, a treaty was signed at Santa Rita between the Chihuahuans and the Apache. The Treaty of Santa Rita actually helped Kirker and others because now the “barterers” could trade with the Apaches without fear of breaking any Mexican laws. The Mexicans, always somewhat naïve, assumed that

raiding would now stop and the Apaches would finally become farmers.

Kirker married a young woman, Rita Garcia, from southern Chihuahua state in El Paso del Norte in 1831. He had not divorced Catherine, his wife in New York, and therefore was committing bigamy. Petra, the first of many children from his union with Rita, was born at Janos in 1833.

By 1835 Kirker, by then commonly known as don Santiago Querque, was recognized for what he really was: a gunrunner. The Mexican government labeled Kirker an outlaw and put a price of \$800 on his head. James eluded the Mexican troops sent after him, and in September 1836 joined a traders’ train headed back to Missouri. Kirker abandoned the caravan at Bent’s Fort, putting him out of reach of the Mexican authorities, as Mexican sovereignty ended at the Arkansas River.

Kirker remained at Bent’s Fort for about twenty months. He traveled west into the Rockies to trap and generally “hung around” the fort. He met a large number of displaced eastern Indians, Delawares and

Shawnees, while at the fort. Some of these Indians were to follow him the balance of his life, including his final trip to California. One very important Indian whom he befriended was Spybuck. Spybuck, part Shawnee and part French, would be Kirker’s chief lieutenant in battles to come.



### The Scalp Hunter

Manuel Armijo became governor of New Mexico in August 1837, and quickly rescinded Kirker’s arrest warrant and invited him back to New Mexico. Kirker immediately returned to Santa Fe, where he was reunited with his wife Rita and children.

The reason that Kirker was now welcome in New Mexico is that Apaches had begun a series of attacks on Mexican settlements, with the first being at Santa Rita in January 1837. Soon after that attack the entire borderland of Chihuahua and Sonora was defenseless. It was at this time that a new form of mercenary warfare began. One could obtain a *permiso* (permission) from the government, which allowed the holder to raise a

private army. These armies were expected to locate and attack hostile tribes, recover stolen livestock, and receive prizes or premiums for their successes.

In April of 1837 an American named John James Johnson attacked and killed twenty Mimbrenño Apaches in southwestern New Mexico. Johnson had clearly set a trap for the Indians and this single battle signaled the

beginning of the War of Apache Scalps, which was to last until 1891.

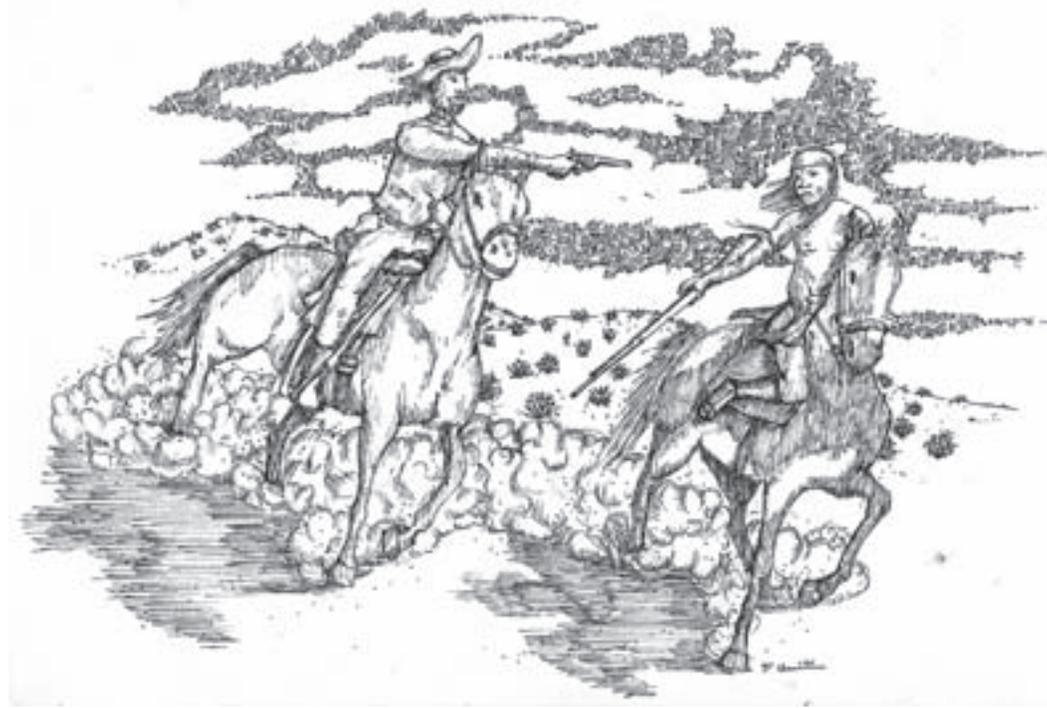
by the uprising, and it was hoped that Kirker could reopen it. His party found an Apache village with 247 residents near Galeana, which they attacked. There were fifty-five warriors killed, nine women captured, and Kirker destroyed the village. This was the opening salvo in the "Kirker Wars."

Between battles in the Kirker Wars, James continued to trade with various Apache groups.

There was no one Apache "nation," but instead each small group negotiated on its own. It is conceivable that Kirker could destroy one group and still do business with another. James continued to get livestock from the Apaches in return for rifles and ammunition.

#### **Battle at Rancho de Taos**

Matt Field's saga about Kirker was published in the *New Orleans Picayune*. It seems that Kirker took his band north from Santa Fe to Taos, instead of going south to punish



the Apaches raiding in Chihuahua. This northern swing would pit him against Jicarilla Apaches and perhaps some stray Utes.

In late July 1837, a fund of \$100,000 was established to help eradicate the Indian menace. It was seen as a fight to the death; the Mexicans believed they must exterminate the Apaches or they would be exterminated by them. The plan was to pay \$100 for each male scalp, \$50 for each female scalp, and \$25 for each captured Indian child.

All of the above took place while Kirker was at Bent's Fort, but many Mexicans in Chihuahua state had Kirker in mind to carry out the new program. Robert McKnight, especially, wanted James to return and help out.

In 1838 Kirker raised a small group of twenty-three, including several Shawnee (Spybuck among them), in in order to relieve Santa Rita and allow supplies to get there from Chihuahua. The Copper Road connecting the mines with the capital was completely shut down

the Apaches raiding in Chihuahua. This northern swing would pit him against Jicarilla Apaches and perhaps some stray Utes.

James and fifty of his followers were camped near the small community of Rancho de Taos. (This is the small village just south of Taos with the famous San Francisco de Asis church in its plaza). Apaches raided Kirker's camp stealing horses, which they took up the canyon to the southeast. Kirker and his men quickly followed and went up to high ground above the Indians, where they stopped the Apaches with a volley of shots. The Jicarillas who survived the attack headed back to Rancho de Taos, where they entered the plaza and tried to gain entrance to the church, thinking they would be safe there.

Kirker continued his attack, killing even more Apaches until the Indians asked for mercy. Kirker allowed the few survivors to leave, perhaps hoping they would spread the word. Forty Indians had been killed in the episode. (For a more detailed version of events—by someone on the scene—read Field's account.)

## The Second Kirker War

The conflict at Rancho de Taos is considered the opening salvo in the second Kirker War. Don Santiago passed into Chihuahua in November 1839. With him were fifty-nine Delawares, Shawnees, Americans, Englishmen, and Frenchmen, his usual contingent of borderland ruffians at this time. Although Kirker was generally welcomed in Chihuahua, there were some in the government who were opposed to a foreigner leading a ragtag army in their state. Those opposed to Kirker thought that the Mexican militia and army should be able to control the Apache menace. But, repeatedly, the Mexican forces had demonstrated that they were unable to stand up to the Indians.

So it was that in the fall of 1839, Governor Trías and Kirker embarked on a *proyecto*, a project, to contain the Apaches. Kirker agreed to raise an army of two hundred, of whom fifty were to be Mexicans. Kirker and his men were to receive a small amount of money for each day served, but the real money would come from killing Indians. He was to get 50 pesos for each male over fourteen killed or delivered as a prisoner. For women and children, he would receive 25 pesos. For proof of the deaths, Kirker brought back scalps. Scalping was a tradition brought west by the Indians from the eastern U.S., such as the Delawares and Shawnees accompanying Kirker. This method of accounting soon became the accepted manner in Chihuahua.

Kirker, in January 1840, moved north along the Copper Road to Casas Grandes. Hearing of a large Apache encampment north of there, he took most of his force to La Boca Grande (near Ascensión, see map), where he attacked the camp at dawn. Ten warriors were killed and he captured twenty women and children, plus he recovered more than seventy head of livestock. Kirker returned to Chihuahua City and then began moving into the Bolsón de Mapimi, a very large and arid region southeast of the capital. He was reported to been in Parral in February and to have killed fifteen warriors there and captured twenty more near that city.

Kirker and his band moved north from Parral and were next in action at the Laguna de Santa María in northern Chihuahua. In an attack on May 8, 1840, they killed six warriors and captured thirteen others. They also rounded up over 120 head of livestock and repatriated eight barrels of *aguardiente* that the Apaches had stolen from Mexicans. (Aguardiente is a distilled drink from grapes, somewhat like a brandy.)

Finally, in June of 1840, Mexican authorities grew tired of Kirker's freelancing and canceled his contract. James apparently took the cancellation in stride, for he was next found in Chihuahua trying to settle some



unfinished business. In 1836 James had been robbed by certain Navajos and Zunis of pelts and goods worth \$5000. The goods had been recovered soon after by then governor Pérez. Pérez, according to Kirker and others, had sold these pelts and goods without reimbursing Kirker. James went to court to gain redress. His appeal was not successful at this time.

Security work for McKnight occupied Kirker during late 1840. He was attempting to keep the Copper Road open so ore could be sent south to the mint in Chihuahua and supplies could make their way north to Santa Rita del Cobre.

Late 1840 and early 1841 produced some of the worst times in Chihuahua and Sonora. If the Comanches are added to the mix, then the states of Coahuila, Durango and Zacatecas must be added to the



list of the unfortunate. The situation reached a point where Kirker was called out of “retirement” to join the governor, García Conde, in yet another proyecto.

James worked at bargain rates during this proyecto. For each dead Apache he was to receive five silver pesos, and two-and-a-half pesos for each mule recovered. As Ralph Smith said in his biography of Kirker: “no student of the borderlands would seriously accuse James of profiteering at these rates.”

### **Kirker Peace**

Finally there was a period of peace following the signing of the Kirker Treaties in April of 1842. This peace was a result of a document called the Kirker Protocol which outlined the Apache demands. Almost every one of these eight protocols made reference to transgressions by either don Santiago Kirker or don Roberto (Robert McKnight). The Kirker Peace from 1842 to 1845 allowed James to find other employment, not in the line of fire in Chihuahua.

### **Back in the Scalp Hunting Business**

The “Kirker Peace” lasted from 1842 until the spring of 1845. Kirker himself is not mentioned in any official documents or newspaper accounts during that span. After a stint at Guadeloupe y Calvo in southwest Chihuahua state, Kirker most likely moved north to his part-time home at Corralitos, a ranch north of Casas

Grandes. There are some fanciful stories of several battles with Apaches that Kirker was supposed to have been in, but these are not supported by the facts.

During the Kirker Peace not all was entirely peaceful. Some minor Apache raiding occurred, especially when the Mexicans failed to provide the agreed upon rations. Recall that Apaches were not the only problem facing the Mexican government at this time. The Comanches made annual treks from their homes in Texas, crossing the Rio Grande at two spots in present-day Big Bend National Park to steal livestock in southern Chihuahua, Durango, and Zacatecas. The Comanches were far better organized and presented an even bigger problem than did the Apaches, and they had no truce with the Mexicans.

In December 1845, Chihuahua Governor Ángel Trías issued an order to increase defenses of Chihuahua. Don Santiago was called upon to help in the northern portions of the state. In late December James and about 170 armed men—Shawnee, Delawares, and Mexicans—attacked an Apache encampment west of Galeana. The Apaches were aware of the impending attack, but the Kirker force won a victory nevertheless. A meeting after the battle between Apache leaders and Mexicans seemed to assure a temporary peace. After some give and take, the Mexican in charge wanted peace, not extermination; a minor skirmish occurred, and the Apaches left the scene.

Early 1846 found the situation, if possible, worse than ever. Apaches were continuing to attack Mexican

settlements where they would kill, plunder, and run off the livestock. Kirker was told to go to one of the worst hit towns, Namiquipa, which had been menaced by Apaches two weeks before Kirker and his band arrived on March 4, 1846. From Namiquipa Kirker headed west following the Apache trail. He recruited men for his small army as he went, mostly Tarahumara Indians. Now he had an army composed of Delawares, Shawnees, Tarahumaras, Americans, and Mexicans.

On March 20 Kirker attacked an Apache village, Chuhuichupa, only a few miles east of Sonora and on the western slope of the Sierra Madre Occidental. Only one Apache was killed but a great deal of cattle, bridles, saddles and other goods were captured and distributed to the victors.

The campaign in the west only infuriated the Apaches, leading to ever more attacks. On May 19, 1846, over 200 Apache warriors hit Janos killing one, kidnapping two, and stealing over 300 head of livestock. And Janos was the site of a presidio!

We now have a confluence of events. First, the Apaches were gaining strength and devastating the Chihuahua countryside. Secondly, war with the United States was at hand with an invasion on the horizon. James was to be involved in both sides of that story.

**“DON SANTIAGO KIRKER,” Part II,** will appear in the Spring 2010 Chronicles.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Biography

McGaw, William Cochran. *Savage Scene*. New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1972.

Smith, Ralph Adam. *Borderlander: The Life of James Kirker, 1793-1852*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999.

### General Interest

Connelley, William Elsey, ed. *Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California*. Kansas City, Missouri: Bryant and Douglas Book and Stationery Co., 1907.

Edwards, Frank S. *A Campaign in New Mexico*. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1966.

Field, Matt. *Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail*. John Sunder, ed. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960.

Golley, Frank B. "James Baird, Early Santa Fe Trader," *MHS Bulletin*, Volume XV, No 3, 1959, pp. 178-179.

Gregg, Josiah. *Commerce of the Prairies*. Edited by Max Moorhead. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954.

Griffen, William B. *Utmost Good Faith: The Patterns of Apache-Mexican Hostilities in Northern Chihuahua Border*

*Warfare, 1821-1848*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982.

Jackson, Hal. *Following the Royal Road: A Guide to the Historic Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006.

Moorhead, Max L. *New Mexico's Royal Road: Trade and Travel on the Chihuahua Trail*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958.

Pancoast, Charles Edward. *A Quaker Forty-Niner, The Adventures of Charles Edward Pancoast on the American Frontier*. Ed. Anna Paschall Hannum, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1930.

Ruxton, George F. *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains*. New York: Harper and Bros. Publishers, 1848.

Webb, James Josiah. *Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade, 1844-1847*. Ed. Ralph Bieber. Glendale, CA.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1931.



**HAL JACKSON**, cultural geographer, is professor emeritus of geography at Humboldt State University, California, and is currently part of the adjunct faculty of the University of New Mexico's Department of Geography. Author of *Following the*

*Royal Road: A Guide to the Historic Camino Real de Tierra Adentro* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), Hal has led tours down and up and up and down El Camino from Mexico City to Ohkay Owingeh. He resides in Placitas, New Mexico.

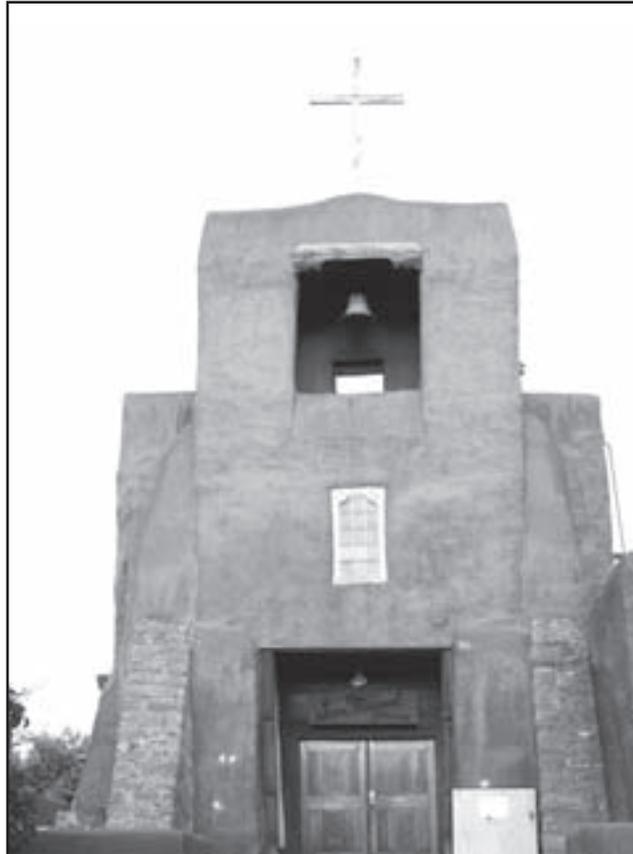


**FRANCISCO UVIÑA CONTRERAS** is the co-author and illustrator of *Cornerstones' Adobe Architecture Conservation Handbook*. He currently teaches design studio and historic preservation courses in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of New Mexico. Mr. Uviña

received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Architecture with a minor in Art History in 1994, and a Masters of Architecture and Graduate Certificate in Historic Preservation and Regionalism in 2009, from the University of New Mexico. In 1990 he received a scholarship for summer study at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México in Mexico City. Francisco worked for Cornerstones Community Partnerships from 1994 to 2008, assisting with field assessments and documentation of historic buildings as the Architectural/Technical Manager, where he currently performs contract work.

## FEDERAL PLACE: San Miguel Chapel, Santa Fe

“The building, some of its walls predating the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, is one of the most significant Spanish Colonial resources on the trail,” wrote Mike Taylor (NPS) and Sarah Schanger (BLM) about San Miguel Chapel in the Fall 2009 *Chronicles*. They noted the critical drainage and structural stability problems that the NPS and Cornerstones Community Partnerships would be working together to correct. A few weeks later Cornerstones announced they were to receive a significant grant for this work. The following is from a Cornerstones’ press release dated December 15, 2009.



Photograph, Jim Gautier

### **Cornerstones Community Partnerships Receives Save America’s Treasures Grant For Preservation Work at San Miguel Chapel, Santa Fe, New Mexico**

Cornerstones Community Partnerships is the recipient of a Save America’s Treasures grant for preservation of San Miguel Chapel in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Sponsored by the National Park Service, the grant of \$200,000 is intended for repairs and preservation of one of the nation’s oldest churches, illustrative of the United States’ Spanish colonial and Native American heritage.

Partnering with St. Michael’s College (owner of the chapel), Cornerstones Community Partnerships has been assessing and strategizing on behalf of the ongoing job of repairing water damage to San Miguel

Chapel’s base structure, establishing a new drainage system, and patching or replacing adobe on the exterior and interior walls. Architects, engineers, archeologists, art historians, and more have been called in as consultants. “This grant is very timely,” says Cornerstones Executive Director Robin Jones, “and will call for massive community support. Save America’s Treasures is a matching grant program. For every dollar of federal funds awarded, the grantee must supply a dollar for dollar match of nonfederal funds.” Program Director Jake Barrow also announced that a special strategy committee is being formed to plan the ongoing work.

The SAT grant will serve as a catalyst for the Parish and St. Michael's School to enlarge their participating community. Interested people may join in work days modeled on other Northern New Mexican communities where once a year volunteers turn out to mud plaster the adobe walls of their churches. Training will include how to make adobe bricks and the steps involved in laying bricks and mortar. Trainees and volunteers will then assist in the tasks required in the adobe repair and the mud plastering. "We've received a National Endowment for the Arts grant, to be applied specifically to a young people's training workshop this summer," reports Jim Gautier, Cornerstones Board President. "One of Cornerstones' most successful programs has been the connection of elders training the young in traditional and sustainable building practices."

San Miguel is the key site in the Barrio de Analco Historic District, the oldest continuously inhabited residential neighborhood in the United States and a National Historic Landmark (designated in 1968). Oral history holds that the barrio was founded by a group of Mexican Indians from Tlaxcala (a state south and east of Mexico City). The church was constructed under the direction of Franciscan friars to serve a small



Photograph, Jim Gautier

congregation of soldiers, laborers, and Indians who lived in the Analco Barrio. By the early-eighteenth century, San Miguel had become one of the principal ecclesiastical buildings in the provincial capital.

Established in 1986, Cornerstones Community Partnerships assists communities in the preservation of historic structures, promotes the use of centuries old building practices, and supports the continuum of cultural values and heritage unique to this region. The work is carried out in partnership with Hispanic and Native American communities throughout New Mexico, neighboring southwestern states, and



Photograph, Jim Gautier

northern Mexico. Cornerstones' community-based approach fosters the involvement of youth, supports strong, unified communities, and helps ensure that cultural traditions and heritage are passed on to future generations.

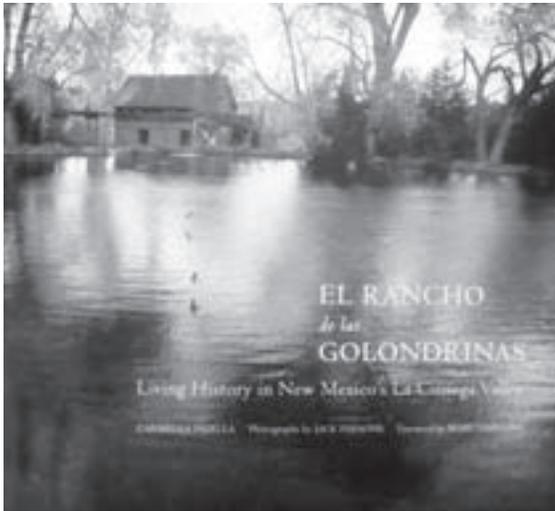
*Editors' Note: José de Urrutia, a draftsman and second lieutenant, drew a map in 1766 depicting Santa Fe's city plan, including the nearby mountains, the Rio del Santa Fe, acequias (irrigation ditches), churches, government buildings, and neighborhoods. The plan shows several royal roads emanating from the central plaza, including Camino del Alamo, that portion of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro from Santa Fe to El Alamo (near La Ciénega) and south to Mexico City. The nearby San Miguel Church is situated on Camino de Pecos, now known as Old Santa Fe Trail.*

*Please reference the 1766 Urrutia map online at [www.newmexicohistory.org](http://www.newmexicohistory.org). A version of the 1766 Urrutia map can be found on page 2 of Hal Jackson's Following the Royal Road: A Guide to the Historic Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006).*

*CARTA members willing to assist with the preservation of San Miguel Church are asked to please contact Jake Barrow, [jbarrow@cstones.org](mailto:jbarrow@cstones.org) (505) 982-9521, or Jean Fulton, [jeanfulton@earthlink.net](mailto:jeanfulton@earthlink.net) (575) 528-8267.*

## BOOK REVIEW

Louann Jordan



*El Rancho de las Golondrinas: Living History in New Mexico's La Ciénega Valley* by Carmella Padilla, photographs by Jack Parsons, with foreword by Marc Simmons. Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe, 2009. Clothbound; \$39.95

One of Santa Fe's best kept secrets has finally been discovered. Although El Rancho de las Golondrinas in La Ciénega, New Mexico, was founded 300 years ago and the living history museum on the site opened in 1972, many residents of Santa Fe, just fifteen miles away, have never heard of it! Now, because of a beautiful new book, the secret is out. *El Rancho de las Golondrinas: Living History in New Mexico's La Ciénega Valley* by Carmella Padilla, with photographs by Jack Parsons, brilliantly presents this museum to the world. Padilla, an award-winning writer on New Mexican culture, lives on the museum property. Parsons, who illustrated several of Padilla's other books, has been photographing Las Golondrinas since before it opened. Marc Simmons, eminent New Mexican historian and a founding member of CARTA, wrote the foreword.

Padilla opens the book with colorful and intriguing descriptions of La Ciénega Valley and its history. Founded about 1710 by Miguel de la Vega y Coca, the ranch, which became El Rancho de las Golondrinas (ranch of the swallows), was home to his growing family and an important *paraje* (stopping place), the closest one south of Santa Fe on El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. On November 9, 1780, New Mexico governor Juan Bautista Anza and 151 soldiers spent the night there as they traveled on El Camino Real. Although information on the early history of the ranch is scarce, the 1800s are well documented, making this book a good

resource for life in La Ciénega and Santa Fe during that period. The estate inventory of the possessions of Capt. Manuel Delgado (1739 – 1815) is especially interesting and includes his "...thirteen dress suits of velvet, silk, and cashmere, including one of black silk velvet."

The families of museum founders Leonora Curtin and her husband, Finnish diplomat Yrjö (Y.A. or George) Paloheimo, are profiled with historic photographs and memorabilia from the Acequia Madre house, the Curtin home in Santa Fe. The Curtins were active in Santa Fe's Spanish cultural and artistic activities, notably the forming of the Spanish Colonial Arts Society and its Native Market, precursor of today's Spanish Market.

The final section of the book is a selection of photographs of the buildings dotting the 200-acre landscape, some restored, some reconstructed on original sites, and some period examples moved there from other locations. Also featured are the volunteers in historic dress who make this a living history museum by demonstrating heritage skills, from blacksmithing to sheep shearing.

Padilla has done an amazing job of researching and organizing the history of Las Golondrinas. Students of New Mexican history and professional historians will find a wealth of historical information here. It is a "must have" for everyone's Southwest library.

*Louann Jordan retired in 2008 after thirty-five years at El Rancho de Las Golondrinas as a volunteer and staff member. As Curator of Exhibitions and Advertising, Jordan curated nineteen special exhibits in the Chapel and the Exhibit Hall. She designed and drew the museum map.*

El Rancho de las Golondrinas  
334 Los Pinos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87507  
(505) 471-2261; [www.golondrinas.org](http://www.golondrinas.org)

*\*Editors' Note: For more about Leonora Curtin Paloheimo, her mother, and grandmother, see Virginia Scharff and Carolyn Brucken's "The House of the Three Wise Women: A Family Legacy in the American Southwest," in California History, 86, no. 4 (2009): 44-59. The Curtin women are featured in the exhibition "Home Lands: How Women Made the West," organized by the Autry National Center in Los Angeles, and curated by the authors of the article and the publication accompanying the museum exhibition. The show will be on view at the Autry, April 16 – September 6, 2010; Missouri History Museum, October 15, 2010 – January 15, 2011; and New Mexico History Museum, June 15 – September 15, 2011.*



J. CISNEROS '89

"Pasajero del Camino Real," 1989. Courtesy  
Doña Ana County Historical Society, Las Cruces, NM

## With Respect and Affection: CARTA MEMBERS BID FOND FAREWELL TO MR. JOSÉ CISNEROS (April 18, 1910 – November 14, 2009)

Avid historian, inspired illustrator, and always the quintessential gentleman, José Cisneros (El Paso, TX) was much loved and admired for his personal integrity, superb artistic talent, and sincere humility. Many of you may remember that CARTA presented its first-ever award for Lifetime Achievement in Art and History to Mr. Cisneros. It was at this event that Mr. Cisneros gave fourteen of his prints to El Camino Real International Heritage Center, where they are on display. His images also grace the tile walls of the Fray Angélico Chávez History Library in Santa Fe.

The following is reprinted with permission from the *El Paso Times*, November 15, 2009.

EL PASO. José Cisneros, the modest, self-taught artist knighted by the king of Spain and celebrated in Texas, Mexico and across the United States, died Saturday.

Cisneros, regarded as a legend for his vivid pen-and-ink sketches of Spanish conquistadores, Franciscan missionaries,

frontier settlers and Apache warriors, was 99. Born in Villa Ocampo, Durango, in 1910, Cisneros had only a fifth-grade education but was revered as a historian with a sketchpad, an artist who illustrated more than 300 historical books and publications. Stories of the United States-Mexico border and the Southwest burst alive with Cisneros' touch and meticulous attention to detail. Often described as a world-class illustrator, Cisneros built an international reputation with pen-and-ink illustrations of Mexican, American and Spanish history. He was best known for detailed pen-and-ink drawings of horses and Spanish horsemen that he often described as his favorite subjects.

King Juan Carlos of Spain knighted Cisneros for contributing to the understanding of history through his art. In 2002, President Bush awarded Cisneros the National Humanities Medal for his work as an artist and historian. Cisneros also received the National Cowboy Hall of Fame Wrangler Award in 1985 for his book, "Riders Across the Centuries."

Felix Almaráz Jr., a professor of history at the University of Texas at San Antonio and contributor to "Borderlands: The Heritage of the Lower Rio Grande Through the Art of José Cisneros," once said of the artist: "Cisneros finds little nuggets of information and then translates them into an artistic expression of high quality."

"We all told him we loved him and kissed him good-bye," his daughter Patricia Cisneros Pride said, adding that her father always taught the community to "value work, live every day, and to thank God for everything they have."

Ever modest about his legacy, Cisneros questioned in a recent interview with *El Paso Times*' Style magazine whether he deserved a lifetime of accolades. "My work is what has given me the name that I have, but I don't think I deserve it because there have been a lot of great artists in El Paso who have been forgotten," he said. "There is no recognition of them and they were lost forever."

Cisneros taught himself to read and write. Displaced by the Mexican Revolution of 1910, his family eventually settled in El Paso-Juárez in 1925.

John O. West, a retired University of Texas at El Paso professor and Cisneros' biographer, once described him as a giant in accurately depicting Southwestern history. "If we didn't have people like José, we'd forget our past. He tells the truth, yet he has a romantic attitude," West said once. West and his wife, Lucy, escorted Cisneros to Spain in 1998, where he became the first recipient outside of the country to receive the prestigious Universidad de Alcalá Award. "His legacy is the rich scholarship of Spanish influence on the Southwest," Lucy West said. "He was a classic gentleman, a very humble man."

Color-blind since birth, Cisneros continued to draw in recent years until his vision deteriorated to the point that he had trouble writing his name. He never lost or abandoned his passion for a lifetime of artistic and literary work that brought him widespread recognition over the years, fame that he often downplayed.

"I'll die with my pen on the paper," he once said.



*El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*

*Trail Association (CARTA)*

*P. O. Box 15162*

*Las Cruces, New Mexico 88004-5162*



Musicians – Ciudad Juárez, Mexico